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MIRTH AND MADNESS

At no other time of the year does the behavior of the American people as closely approach insanity as at Christmas. One glance at a red-colored date, five sixths of the way through the December calendar, and an entire nation hurries into incredible activity. Like the fabled hordes of the Ghengis Khan, its people descend upon welcoming stores. Every available mailbox bulges with every kind of greeting card. Forests of evergreens disappear overnight. There is a spontaneous generation of several million red-coated, white-bearded imbeciles who roam street and store for weeks, with no other function than a periodic bellow of inane and unnerving laughter. The people eat and the people drink—furiously. They laugh and they talk—with a vengeance. They are imparably, indescribably, unimaginably. and absolutely violently happy.

When the child of God disentangles himself from this rampaging madness, he ponders a sober "Why?" Who or what can be responsible for this universal fervor? Approaching a typical specimen on the Eve of Christmas, he may ask, "Sir, what does all this hubbub mean?" To which question comes quick and hearty reply, "Why man, it's Christmas. You know, Dicken's A Christmas Carol and that sort of thing. 'Tis the season to be jolly." And just before the festive soul goes rah-la-laing unstably down the boulevard, comes the consummation, "Jesus was born." Ah yes, Jesus was born. But it's hardly the answer one expected. Is that the foundation upon which this monstrous tower of December-babble is built? Upon the birth of Jesus?

The child of God needs no special brilliance to realize what the ungodly merry-makers understand by the "birth of Jesus." A little baby lies in a manger. Several well-rubbed, golden Guernseys moo contently over him. A beaming mother nestles "non-travailingy" in a shiny-yellow, non-prickly strawstack. At the door of this rustic "stable" stand three rich uncles about to deliver the child from any inconvenience he might have. Throw in a halo to indicate something about "divine" approval and that is the birth of Jesus. Everybody likes babies and cows and rich uncles and happy endings, "Why man, 'tis the season to be jolly.

Out of every pore of the American celebration of Christmas seeps irony, deep, rich, and horrible. The rioting unbelievers have the right answer, "Jesus was born." But He is not the creature of their stable scenes and His birth is not an isolated event. He "came down from heaven" and He went to the cross and He accomplished His purpose, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see: and that they which see might be made blind" (John 9:39). And the blind ones frolic at the occasion of their condemnation. They are jolly in the season of their woe. But not completely. Through the rauous din of revelry is heard the thin, penetrating wail of despair and fear. At times very loud, at times scarcely audible, the cry of a horrified world acknowledges that death reigns and all is vanity. The world despairs and the world fears because the Babe was born and they believe not, for "he that believeth not is condemned already . . . the wrath of God abideth on him."

Because the Babe was God in human flesh, became the man of sorrows, and is the Lord of Glory, Christmas is the season of merit for the elect of God. Their joy is rooted infinitely deeper than in presents and trees. God gave His Son into the dirty poverty of Bethlehem for the salvation of His people. And that is the reason why the Christmas mirth of believers not only exists, but exists powerfully as a joy which cannot be swallowed up in sorrow. To their wretched cry, "Lord, be merciful to me a sinner," comes the reply, "Your sins are forgiven you." As they, too, peer fearfully into a war-threatening future, they hear the
reassuring words. "All things work together for good to them that love God." And some may mourn at Christmas with real tears but the mirth is not drowned. For death itself stood doomed when the Babe was born.

Merry Christmas, indeed. Not the Christmas of hollow customs and empty actions. Not the anxious merriment that frantically intensifies itself as the drumbeat of judgment rolls ever louder. But a Christmas—"good tidings of great joy... a Savior who is Christ the Lord" and the merriment of "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." 

d. j. e.

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

the Incarnation

REV. R. VELDMAN

"And the Word was made flesh." John 1:14a

Incarnation! What a miracle, and what a mystery! It means: coming into or being clothed with flesh.

We might, of course, also speak of the birth of Christ.

However, that is not enough. The mere word "birth" does not express what really happened in that wonderful stable. Every person who ever lived was born. There's nothing special about that! But no other person was ever incarnated. The latter, therefore, is the richer concept by far. It explains what really took place that first Christmas night. It tells us that someone, who existed before he was born, came into our human flesh—God's eternal Son.

Incarnation! Remember that word when you and your children sing: "Christ, the Savior, is born!" Understand as deeply as you can: that birth of Jesus was the Incarnation of the Word.

That incarnation, more forcibly perhaps than anything else, demonstrates the truth of Scripture: "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of you, it is the gift of God." Salvation is of the Lord!

That means, that nothing of all that pertains to the wonderful work of our salvation is of us—nor is it because of us. It is all, from beginning to end, the free, sovereign, eternal love and good pleasure of God.

Two

Where is that demonstrated more clearly and beautifully than in the stable of Bethlehem? Of course, also all God does IN reveals that same free and sovereign, wholly unmerited and unsolicited grace of God. With us is only darkness, lie, guilt, death. Regeneration, that spiritual resurrection from the dead; faith, that gift of God; conversion, justification, sanctification; all speak of pure, undiluted mercy. However, that free and gracious aspect of our redemption is even more clearly revealed in that which God does FOR us in that blessed moment, wherein the Word dwelt among us, the fulness of time.

Indeed, that is true of all God does for us in the Son of His love. They are all miracles of sovereign grace. Think of Calvary! Were you there when they crucified my Lord? Did you have anything at all to do with that wonderful cross? And think of His resurrection! Who must not confess from the bottom of his soul: nothing of us, that no man should glory!

Even so, where is this sovereign grace of God revealed more beautifully than in the manger of Bethlehem? There is your salvation, and mine. There the wonder of all wonders, the Incarnation of God's Son, is accomplished in the way of the sign of signs, the Virgin Birth. There the initial miracle of your redemption takes place; the very heart of God's marvelous counsel is
revealed. There is the first link of that golden chain of salvation which God Himself forged for us in the fulness of time.

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

That did not happen when Jesus died, or arose from the dead, or even when He ascended to heaven. Did that ever strike you?

That happened when Jesus was born.

Our Heidelberg Catechism gives a rather adequate explanation of this wonder of the Incarnation, when it says in Lord's Day 14: "That God's eternal Son, who is, and continued true and eternal God, took upon him the very nature of man, of the flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost." So simple, and yet so profound! So brief, and yet so comprehensive! As a definition which, young and old can apprehend, it leaves little to be desired. Such is the wonder of the grace of God.

"That God's eternal Son." The Second person of the Holy Trinity!

He is the one and only person, subject, "I," involved in the miracle of the Incarnation. "The Word became flesh," John 1:14. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." John 3:16. "This is My beloved Son, in Whom I am well pleased."

Also, He remains the only person, subject, "I," involved in the miracle of the Incarnation. When the Word becomes flesh He does not become a human person. The Mediator is not two persons. He, Who assumes humanity on Christmas morn is and remains God's eternal Son. Whenever the Mediator says "I" the eternally begotten of the Father is speaking.

"That God's eternal Son, Who is and continued true and eternal God."

Hence, that eternal Son is God. Everlastingly He is coessential and coeternal with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Eternally He lives the full divine life in the full divine essence; possesses all the divine attributes. He is the righteous, holy, good, almighty, never changing God.

And, He remains true and eternal God, also when He enters into our flesh and blood. That never changes.

"That God's eternal Son, Who is and continued true and eternal God, took upon him the very nature of man."

That is the incomprehensible but infinitely glorious miracle of the Incarnation, the adorable mystery of Bethlehem. Understanding that we don't see in that manger a mere infant, helpless and dependent, but we see God's eternal Son wrapped in swaddling clothes, and we say: What a darling baby? No! We say: The Word is become flesh, and dwelt among us!

Notice, He did not change from God into man, like the water changed to wine and the rod of Moses into a serpent. That is not the humiliation of Bethlehem. The Son remained what He was—eternal God. And He became what He was not—finite man.

And both these natures He united in His single person, the Second Person of the adorable Trinity. The unity between the natures, therefore, must not be sought in the natures themselves. They were not fused into one, somehow. The unity must be sought in the one Person who possesses and lives in both natures.

Let's stress particularly the phrase "took upon Him."

That tells us that the lowly birth of Christ was an act of Christ Himself. It was not forced on Him, but He assumed our flesh and blood voluntarily. It was not done to Him, but by Him. It was not a fate, but an act. We do nothing to our birth, the Son of God did everything to His. Christ is not working for us only at the end of His life; also at the very beginning.

It also tells us, that the birth of Christ was an act of infinite and conscious love. The manger is just as much an act of love as the cross. Between the two lies a whole life of love.

Hence, "He took upon Himself." That's not a mere dogmatic formula. We are not interested in bare formulas. This is the voice of supreme, eternal love, for how well He knew that from Bethlehem the way could lead only to Gethsemane, Calvary, hell. Truly, neither voice of man or angel can express the love that is contained in this most basic of all confessions "that the Son of God took upon Himself the nature of man."

BEACON LIGHTS

Three
This blessed miracle of Christmas was realized in the well-known way: "Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary."

Hence, Jesus was born of Mary. That implies so very much.

It tells us, that He became real, genuine man. He was born as all men are born, out of one of the women of our race. He was flesh of Mary’s flesh, blood of Mary’s blood, bone of Mary’s bone, muscle of Mary’s muscle. He bore our flesh and blood, therefore. He was not a stranger to our race. If he had been, He could never have been our Savior, for then strange blood would have flowed from the cross, and strange blood cannot atone for the sins we committed. He was man like you and me, man like His brethren in the heart of Africa or on the most forsaken islands of the sea. Therefore He could save them. If you had met him on the streets of Jerusalem you would have seen nothing that was not purely human. Except! Somehow you would have sensed that you were in the presence of sorrow such as the world had never known.

Born of Mary He assumed the flesh and blood of the children. The Bible lays great emphasis on that point. The Son of God assumed human nature out of the seed of Abraham, out of the house of David. He entered our race in the very heart and center of the covenant line. Therefore He was the Lion of Judah’s tribe; the root of Jesse; the seed of the woman; the end and blessed culmination of David’s royal line.

Yet, wonder of wonders, He was without sin. This was true in every sense of the word. The guilt of sin was not imputed to Him. The stain of sin did not cleave to Him. Never was He guilty of even the slightest transgression of God’s holy law. How could this be? Christ knew no guilt because He was not a human person, but the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. And He was without the pollution of sin because He was conceived by the Holy Ghost. Who preserved Him in Mary’s womb from all the stain of sin. Hence, He had to be made sin; our iniquities had to be laid on Him; Himself He knew no sin.

Born He was, therefore, of the Virgin Mary!

There is the sign of all signs that confirms the wonder of all wonders – the Incarnation of the Son. Not only was Mary a virgin when she conceived the Christ. She was still a virgin after she had brought forth; the only woman in history of whom this can be said.

We know how the world has always ridiculed this miraculous conception and nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ. Such a virgin birth, they say, is a scientific and biological impossibility: The fools! As if all things are not possible with God. We shall not dignify such unbelief and proud folly with anything resembling a detailed refutation. There is only one reason why men reject the Virgin Birth: they reject the Incarnation itself. For one who believes the latter it is easy enough to believe the former. In fact, one who truly believes the Incarnation would never expect anything else than a corresponding miracle in the physical aspect of Jesus’ birth. For such an one there could be nothing more unnatural than a natural birth; nothing more natural than a supernatural birth.

Hence, conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary! An unfathomable mystery? Yes, indeed! So is the conception and birth of any child. How then could the birth of the Christ be anything else? Who will explain it? Not I! We agree with him who said: We honor this mystery most by being silent.

* * * *

What does all this avail us?

Thus, and thus only, that Christ can be our Head and Redeemer, Who can prepare eternal salvation for us, and us for eternal salvation.

Thus, and thus only, He can be the Lamb without spot and blemish to reconcile lost sinners with the living God. Now when He suffers and dies our nature suffers and dies. And behind that human nature is ever the infinite power of the divine to sustain and strengthen to the very end.

Thus, and thus only, our Mediator can apply that redemption thus wrought and exalt our finite human nature to the glory God has prepared for us.

If only we may know that that Christ our Savior too!

And what is necessary for that?

Eyes of faith!

Four
Eyes that were opened by almighty grace!
Eyes that were made to see in His weakness God's glory; in His swaddling clothes the majesty of God; in His simple manger God's mighty throne; in His crown of thorns God's crown of eternal victory for us.

Eyes like those of Mary, who sings: "My soul rejoices in God my Savior."

Eyes like those of Thomas, who may look into the face of this Jesus and worship: "My Lord and my GOD."

Then Christmas is really Christmas!

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**seminar synopsis**

**LAMMERT LUBBERS**

In 1957, a committee was appointed by the Federation of Protestant School Societies to investigate the possibility of setting up a Protestant Reformed Normal School, an institution where all Protestant Reformed teachers and prospective teachers would receive their formal training.

This committee, consisting of T. Langeraak, G. Van Overloop, T. Niewhoff, F. Hanko, and Rev. H. Hanko, after much work, came to the Federation with the advice to set up a Seminar instead. This Seminar would consist of all teachers, prospective teachers, and ministers who were interested in establishing a normal school, whose duty it would be to write papers on various assigned subjects pertaining to education. These papers would be discussed, criticized, and filed away until they could some day be used as a basis for instruction in the normal school.

This committee also accompanied their advice with reasons. A few being, that there were not enough finances to institute a normal school, that there were few teachers available to instruct in this normal school, and there was no available material to form a basis for instruction (the Seminar, then would provide at least some material to be used by instructors to teach in this school).

This committee also submitted a list of rules which would govern this Seminar — who would conduct its affairs, how subjects could be provided, when it would meet, where it would meet, and who would lead it. The rules even stipulated "that the Federation advise our school boards to consider for appointment only those teachers who show evidence of having faithfully performed the work of the Seminar."

In 1959, the committee again investigated the matter of establishing a normal school; this time in particular reference to the matter of its being an accredited school by the State, and the North Central Accrediting Association. If our normal school would not be accredited by the above, our teachers could receive no certificates to teach from the State; and therefore, instruction in our grade schools would be considered invalid. The committee found the stipulations of both the State and the N.C.A.A. extremely stringent, lengthy, and costly. They concluded that it was well nigh impossible to set up this school at this time. However, a recommendation was made that perhaps Calvin College would be merciful enough to recognize and give credit to those subjects taught in our own normal school.

The Seminar then was not the rudimentary plan for the instruction of teachers and prospective teachers; but, rather, it was established as a means to reach a much more desired goal; namely, that of a Protestant Reformed Normal School.

The Seminar, having been in existence now for some five years, has developed into something far more than a means to an end. The end which was an ideal had a tinge of lofty optimism implied in it. A normal school without a corresponding liberal arts program would be like one receiving a Seminary training in only subjects like Catechetics,
Hermeneutics, and Church Polity. Professional courses must be based on a knowledge of the liberal arts. The possibility of sending teachers to a college such as Calvin to receive the general training in the arts and sciences and then taking them back to our normal school to "clean up the damage" by some Protestant Reformed methods course would be, to press the analogy, like sending seminarians to Calvin Theological School for Dogmatics, and bringing them back for professional training in the art of preaching and leading catechism. I realize that the figure suffers by being pressed to an extremity; however, we should always remember that What is taught takes precedence over How it is taught. The normal school is not the ideal in our present circumstance.

Through a well-planned program the Seminar committee has provided for a thorough study of the problems faced by our schools. The essential questions all teachers in our schools face are first, how can I be an effective teacher, and secondly, how can I make the education in the school distinctly Christian. In our schools which were set up and are maintained on the basis of Scripture as reaffirmed in the Three Forms of Unity, the teacher is faced with this dual responsibility of distinctive education and real education.

The Seminar has faced this problem squarely in the discussion of a series of papers in the past five years. The History of Education was the first general subject treated. The authors of these papers outlined education among the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans: medieval educational structures and those fostered by the Enlightenment; and finally, the educational pattern of the last two centuries in Europe and America. The next general topic, and the one the Seminar has nearly completed, centers around Educational Psychology and Pedagogy. The first paper in this series, "The Scriptural Principles of Psychology," was followed by a discussion of the soul, mind, will, and emotions. Papers followed on such subjects as the "Influence of Sin on the Child," "Teaching of Moral and Spiritual Values," "Obedience," and "The Relation of the Child to the Family and the Church." At the next meeting of the Seminar the last paper on this subject will be discussed, "Methods of Teaching in Our Schools."

Seminar was organized to fulfill a need, which was mentioned before in this paper. Somehow it has gone much farther than this. The Seminar has become an opportunity for educational principles to be clarified. It is a place where teachers in service as well as prospective teachers can benefit from the experience of others: a place where our educational system through the contribution of ministers and teachers can have its feet placed squarely on truth. Moreover, it is a movement which shows that Protestant Reformed education is not only an accomplished fact, but a living challenge!

CRITIQUE

A Christian Christmas?

AGATHA LUBBERS

Boys and girls, men and women, grandparents and grandchildren, uncles and aunts, nephews and nieces, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters all look forward to the celebration of Christmas. Many countries celebrate festivals during the Christmas season and many countries have added traditions to the celebration of Christmas. Christmas is a time when halls are decked with bows of holly, trees are burdened with tinsel and flickering lights, store fronts are cluttered with manger and fairyland displays, and carols clash dissonantly with the incessant tinkling and clanging of bells. Christmas is a time when city clubs and social organizations solicit one's dimes and engage in all manner of philanthropic activities. Christmas is a time of "cheer"
and “good will” by all men to all men. Christmas is a time of giving in order to receive. Christmas is a season of caroling and wassailing.

This is the Christian Christmas?

Is the Christ of the Scriptures in all your thoughts as you prepare to celebrate the birthday of the King? Is the suffering Savior of His people and judging Lord of all men remembered on the day selected in His honor?

The struggle of the militant church of all ages has been to maintain a healthy respect for the holy things—those which rightfully belong to that church. This is also true of the militant church today. How, then, do all the traditions and observances which distinguish the Christmas season from all others fit into proper observance of the birthday of the King? Can you and I worship the King when we are drawn away from the true worship by things which are not essential to this worship?

There are many aspects to this problem. In order that we may illustrate this problem, we have decided to limit our discussion of the Christian Christmas by investigating only one of the many symbols which have come to us through the ages. This symbol more than any other has taken a big place in the American celebration of Christmas.

I am told that the Christmas tree business is today a multimillion dollar business. Many conjectured opinions have attempted to solve the relationship between the birthday of Jesus and the decorations of the stately evergreen tree. Some have added to the collection of conjectures on this score the legend that “Martin Luther was out walking one night, and the stars suggested to him lights, which he then placed upon a fir-tree to brighten the Christmas of his son.” (1) Some suggest that the Yule Log was the ancestor of the Christmas tree. Others assert that the Christmas tree is a symbol of the tree of life.

While all of these ideas have merit we can say in general without fear of evere contradiction that this custom must have had its origin in the veneration of the ever fir tree by the pagan Norsemen and tree worship of the ancient German tribes. Certain it is too that the common people contributed the tree to the celebration of Christmas. It did not come from the church institute. Even other celebrations in Europe centered in the ornamentation of special trees. The May-pole was a tree and garnished trees stood on Palm Sunday, Easter, Ascension Day, St. Nicholas Day (Dec. 6) and New Year’s Day. The Christmas tree may belong to this family but if it does it is the only accountable survivor.

The established church frowned on the tree and its contributions to Christmas. In the 1740’s Reverend Johann Konrad Dannhauer of Strassburg said: “Among other trifles with which the people often occupy the Christmas time more than with God’s word, is also the Christmas or fir tree, which they erect in the house, and hang with dolls and sugar and thereupon shake and cause to lose its bloom. Where the habit comes from I do know not. It is a bit of child’s play . . . Far better were it for the children to be dedicated to the spiritual cedar tree, Jesus Christ.” (2) It is reported that Roman and Protestant clergy agreed with the sentiments expressed by pastor Dannhauer.

What must be one’s attitude toward the “helter-skelter” skurrying of the Christmas season is one’s automatic response? What must be the Christian attitude toward Christmas gifts and adorned Christmas trees? Do pagan customs and origins condemn all participation in the practice? Does a distinctive and antithetical life in this Christmas season imply a complete break with the customs of the Christmas season?

Can one say with a tree in his window, a wreath on his door, with candles on his mantle, and gifts under his tree:

“Let heaven be glad, let earth rejoice,
The teeming sea resound with praise;
Let waving fields lift high their voice,
And all the trees their anthem raise.
So let them shout before our God.
For, lo, He comes, He comes with might,
To wield the scepter and the rod,
To judge the world with truth and right.”

2. Ibid. p. 75
Christmas in our Schools

HENRY W. KUIPER

Dear Protestant Reformed Youth:

I was asked to write a few lines for you this month in connection with the proper celebration of Christmas in our own Christian schools. Certain areas were suggested, such as "Should we do this?" or "Ought we do that?" I feel that the idea behind the suggestions was to reflect on whether or not certain of these things were permissible. However, the following was written in the firm belief that in the measure that we as parents and as young folk heed the command of God in this aspect of education, in that measure we will not even have the TIME (much less desire) to busy ourselves with those things which are the world's distortion of this beautiful season.

May God bless and equip us all, and especially you as the youth of His church, to walk discretely and circumspectly in these special days of the Christmas season, 1961.

CELEBRATION OF THE ADVENT OF
CHRIST JESUS

Celebration of the Advent
Is the topic of these comments.
Manner of the celebration
By the children of the promise,
As in schools they daily gather,
is the focus of attention.

Schools these are of special nature;
Schools where parents of the covenant
Teach the children God has given
In the truths His love has planted
Deep into their hearts and conscience
By the mouthpiece of His servants.

Question of the celebration
Which demands our keen attention
Is concerned with all involvements
Of the manner and procedures
That may answer to the purpose
Of this joyous recollection.

Schools of any type or manner
Occupy the place of parents
In the time the children gather
There to daily be instructed.
Hence, we see these obligations
Borne so carefully by God's children.

Therefore all the celebrations,
Programs, singing, gifts and joying,
Should conform to admonitions
God has given in His Scriptures.
Surely parents through our teachers
Must demand this strict adherence.

Calling have they plain to answer
Questions of their sons and daughters
That pertain to fact and meaning
Of God's Word become Incarnate
(Even as the young of Israel
Learned of stones from Jordan's bottom.)

It is true that children question—
But the matter isn't altered
Should they cease this wondrous asking,
For command to teach them always
Is concise and clear and binding—
Is not on their will dependent!

Teach them all of God's commandments;
Teach them of man's sinful nature;
Teach them how God gave the promise
Unto man in Eden's garden;
Teach them how the church looked forward
Through the ages for Messiah.

Teach them for what glorious purpose
God decreed to send Immanuel.
Teach them of God's sovereign wonder
As into our flesh He entered;
Teach them what a glorious thank-song
Now is theirs—Forever shall be!!

Even as we laud His coming
We see via dolorosa—
His to walk in love, obedience
For all those the Father gave Him.
This the babe, born in the stable,
Completed on the hill of Calvary.
More we see in Jesus' coming:
We see glorious Easter's morning,
When o'er death He rose triumphant.
She see glories of Ascension
To the Father who had sent Him,
Sacrificial work completed.

What an endless stream of mercy
He has shown for us to tell them!
Time is short to tell the story
And the glories of its meaning —
So we want no introduction
Of man's earthly deviations.

Substitutions, man's traditions,
May not hold their place among us!!
Gravitation toward corruptions,
(Heathen handed down to heathen),
Surely must detract from essence
Of our spirit's contemplations.

Crowd we days with gifts and holly?
Crowd them with the glistening pine tree?
Crowd them with those empty greetings
Spoken without thought or meaning?
This we do that covenant children
May the Christ-child see more clearly?

God forbid that covenant parents
Should so use the Christmas season!
Father let us point to beauties
Of the coming of Messiah!
Teach our children in this season:
ALLELUIA!! God sent Jesus!

RUTH vs. ERROR

A HISTORY of the Jesuit Order

REV. R. C. HARBACK

Its Origin
The Jesuits, or the Society of Jesus (S.J.)
is the name of a notorious religious order in the Romish church. The name “Jesuit” was never used by the founder, being used derogatively to mean one who used the name of Jesus too freely, or unwisely. The founder was the Spanish fanatic Ignatius Loyola (Inigo Lopez de Recadel of Loyola). He was tough, swashbuckling, gallant and rich. He spent much of his time in amorous adventures. As the result of an injury received in battle with the French he began to consider more serious matters, and contemplated the adventure of a religious life. However, his only intellectual ability at this time consisted of a little reading and writing. Learning in those days was despised and left to priests! To develop the leadership qualities he believed he needed to make something of himself in the religious world, he entered college at the age of 33. (Luther was 41 then.) This was in Barcelona. Later he continued his studies in Paris. He felt that it added to his training to devote himself to the virgin Mary, and to pilgrimages to the holy land. At the same time he conceived the nebulous idea of a new religious order of the knighthood. He thought of it as a military company, an army, a flying squadron, trained in defensive and offensive fighting, with disciplined might, well equipped with knowledge of strategy, surprise and camouflage. Such a fighting force was felt necessary due to the detrimental effects Romanism suffered from the Protestant Reformation, and from var-

BEACON LIGHTS
ious evidences of unpopularity throughout the world. For the people of Europe were striving more and more to rid themselves of the bondage of Rome. The Jesuits labored to tighten that bondage. Luther preached liberty in Christ. Loyola rebutted with unquestioning submission to the hierarchy. The weapon of the Protestant Reformation was the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. "The shield of the Romish church was a secret society."

To crystallize his plan with constitution, laws, and wide constituency. Loyola claimed direct divine inspiration for his ideas and authority. This did not first set well with the pope, nor with his committee of cardinals appointed to study the matter. They refused their approbation on the grounds the society was unnecessary, and would endanger the welfare of the church. But Loyola succeeded in removing these objections by making an offer irresistible to any pope. He pointed out that the society would have the usual three vows of poverty, celibacy, and monastic obedience common to Romish orders, but in addition would impose a fourth vow of blind, uncritical obedience to the pope, swearing to go wherever he would command, and labor for the cause of Romanism without any financial support from the pope or the church at large. This new body would have for its purpose the enslavement of all the world to Roman authority, devotion to the pope, the putting in motion of effectual opposition to Rome's enemies, and the countering of attacks and set-backs caused by them. The pope then perceiving how this scheme perfectly suited the Romish spirit and genius, approved and ordered the establishment of the new society, making Loyola its first general. This was in the period of 1540-41. The pope's insight was soon substantiated in the fast growth and power of the order, its swift increase of membership over the world, its amazing wealth, and its becoming the most competent and effectual order in the church.

Its Object

We are familiar with the fact that Romish orders are, generally, ascetic, monastic, withdrawing from the world, retiring to solitude, silence and seclusion for the purpose of developing piety and influencing mankind by good example and prayer. But the Jesuits were formed for action! They were not to be primarily meditative, but mobile. They were soldiers, not monks, and their only chief on earth the pope. They took upon themselves to instruct the ignorant, proselyte or persecute enemies of Rome. To accomplish this without hindrance, they were given total exemption from the reclusions and rigors of other orders. Hence, they are not bound to the tediums of processions, parades and the endless monkish austereities. They are required to attend all the major political, social, labor, economic, educational and religious functions of the world, and to mingle in the affairs, including the revolutions, of the nations. They must live closely to any and every part of life which has influence upon religion, and which may be turned to the advantage of the Roman church. Their purpose is to have a Romish majority in the fields of politics and education. Today we are dangerously close to having public education under the dominance of a Roman-controlled government. The Jesuits have gained almost absolute control within the Roman Catholic Church. Every power in the world is viewed as properly belonging to papal control. To realize this aim, the priests become psychologists to a degree, study the nature and character of men in high rank in order to cultivate their friendship. The cause of Rome must be fostered in these ways. This is not scorn, satire, irony, exaggeration, or unhistorical, unscholarly exposure. It is well-grounded fact borne out by current events, to say nothing of familiar history. Nor will it do to charge the world with the employ of name-calling, such as, "busy-bodies, mischief-makers, politicians with no attachment to country"? Let them make their defense standing in the white light of Scripture, and not in the darkness of sophistry and paralogy.

Its Polity and Policy

Other societies are of voluntary association, and membership persists according to the consent of the individual member. But the Jesuits submit to permanent blind obedience and are controlled by an absolutely totalitarian monarchy. We must say a word about the principle of "blind obedience." The rebuttal to the charge of blind obe-
dience is that all obedience must be blind to some extent, even as the tired cliché has it, “Theirs not to reason why, Theirs but to do or die.” It is further insisted that the subject taking exception to any given command may appeal in the constitutional way, and by discussion and arbitration have his case cleared up. But this necessitates going through labyrinthine channels to make a disposal of the case. To go through a hierarchical system would be like an attempt to unravel a ton of cooked spaghetti.

A further word on this matter of blind obedience. One must submit even to the point of sacrifice of the intellect and abandonment of personal freedom. This principle binds to the doing of any act—the commission of assassination—or any evil that good may come. The Jesuit principle, “the end justifies the means,” has been denied, has been admitted but explained away, has been defended on philosophic grounds, but not according to Scripture. It is not surprising then that Jesuits must yield to their superiors matters of conscience, natural inclination and personal sentiment. Neither the severity of a convent, nor the cell of a monastery can compare with this iron-clad despotism, the impact of which is impressed upon all its members, and felt in all its operations. In order to qualify for membership in the order candidates must bare their conscience, inmost thoughts and desires to their superior. He must not only confess his sins, auricularly, and reveal his own personal defects, but also bare the passions of his soul. He must subject himself to this psychomystical fluoroscopy every six months. Official record files on him note his personal qualities, foibles and anything else of importance concerning him. This “dossier” is not complete without formal deposits of daily detailed information added year by year until the novice attains the age of thirty-three. Only then may he take the vows and become a full-fledged Jesuit.

The order therefore has complete knowledge of the novice’s character, temperament and capabilities. The general of the order, with the aid of these minutely detailed registers, can then select the most apt for any project or espionage he may dictate. There may possibly be no secret Jesuits, but every member of the society has a shadow, and is either always in the company of another member (as with the nuns), or constantly kept under surveillance. The society continually spies on its own constituency.

Its Progress, Power and Influence

As the order from its inception promoted the cause of education, it took upon itself the task of educating youth, of instructing the people, of missionary effort to convert the heathen nations to Romanism. Jesuits were the directors of education in all the Romish states of Europe. They had a Jesuit college in almost every town in Germany, established colleges under stress of great peril in Ireland, and were never entirely expelled from England. They now have schools and colleges in every state in the Union.

They were the father-confessors of kings, and under them were of higher rank than prime ministers. They were as personal astrologers to the elite and eminent of the post-reformation age. They, of all the Romish orders, enjoyed the esteem, interest, and confidence of the papal hierarchy. For they were the most avid and adroit champions of papal power.

Increasing in power they also accumulated vast stores of wealth. There were devious ways of circumventing the vow of poverty. The Roman church has always been uncommonly wealthy. But the Jesuit order has resources of its own. They have built cathedrals of massive architecture. (Dynamite had to be used to dismantle the massive walls of the Jesuit college of Quebec, torn down in 1880 by order of the provincial government.) These edifices are constructed with numerous side chapels, are of staggering beauty and richness in marble, gold inlays, exceptional lighting effects, the blending of striking artistry on walls and ceiling. This is complemented with great music and impressive ceremonies which greatly impress the mystically-minded worshipper.

Wealth is also accumulated by their working themselves into the business of international trade, holding commerce in West and East Indies, owning warehouses in Europe. This led to the desire to acquire property, when finally possession of Paraguay was secured. The people here were heathen, ignorant, illiterate, subsisting by hunting and fishing; and as can easily be
believed, knew practically nothing of docility, much less, of government. This was a challenge not too great for the Jesuits, who immediately began cultivating and civilizing the savages, teaching them to farm, build, form villages, and establish a society sustained by arts and manufacture. This worked so well, and so held the Indians that a few Jesuits could control a hundred thousand of them. Ostensibly advancing the good of mankind in this fashion, the aim was to form Paraguay into an empire and power militarily, politically and commercially, with a view of extending their dominion all over South America.

Within the mammoth body of Romanism there is, paradoxically, a dog-eat-dog spirit, or a Satan casting out Satan state of affairs. To keep the Paraguayans under the influence of their own society, they taught them to hate and have no dealings with their Spanish and Portuguese neighbors. Men appearing from these neighboring settlements were not permitted to have any contact or conversation with the subjects of the Jesuit. Nor was any Indian privileged to enter the house of a Spaniard or a Portuguese unless in the company of a Jesuit priest. The learning of either the Spanish or any European language was withheld from the natives. To weld their empire into thoroughly controlled security and unity the Indians were given a European military training, armed to the teeth, and disciplined in strict military. Jesuits also control French Canada, and the French language itself, which is a powerful means of keeping the people isolated, and keeping out any ideas or advances in civilization not in harmony with the church. Administration, diplomacy, politics, exploration and labor are also Jesuit-controlled.

-To be continued-

HELPs FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE

Book of REVELATION

by REV. H. HOEKSEMA

LESSON XXXV (Revelation 14:1-5)
(On the whole the text of the Revised Version is better here than that of the King James Version; hence, it is followed in these notes.)

1. Vs. 1. The Lamb on Mount Zion and the 144,000. a. This vision stands in contrast to the preceding in so far as (1) The church was pictured as oppressed in the world by the anti-christian powers of darkness. (2) Here the same church appears as safe and secure, and as reigning with Christ on Mount Zion. b. Mount Zion is not heaven, nor is it represented in the vision as being in heaven. In the O. T. it is the royal mount of David on which was established the theocratic throne. On this mount God has set His king to reign. Ps. 2:6. Hence, the mountain is symbol of the royal rule of God's Anointed. c. On the mount stands the Lamb. (1) That Christ appears here as the Lamb denotes that He attained to His royal dominion at the head of His people in the way of suffering. (2) With the Lamb On Mount Zion
That He stands on Mount Zion represents that He exercises His royal power as God's king, and that, too, in spite of all the fury and raging of the devil and the anti-christ as pictured in the preceding chapters. From Mount Zion He rules over His own and over all the world. d. The 144,000 are the same as those mentioned in ch. 7:3, 4; for which see the notes on that passage. Hence, they are (1) Not the glorified church in heaven, nor the saved out of Israel, nor a special group of glorified saints. (2) But they represent the complete number of the elect as they are in the world at any period of the new dispensation. (3) That they are represented as being with the Lamb or Mount Zion signifies that even while they are in the world believers have the victory in their Lord and reign with Him. (4) Of their forehead they have the name of Christ (a sign and seal that they belong to Him as His brethren), and of His Father (a sign and seal of their belongings to God as H
children). No one can separate them from Christ and from the Father. Cf. the seal in Rev. 7:3ff.

2. Vss. 2, 3. The song of victory. "And I heard a voice from heaven" etc. a. This voice does not proceed from the 144,000.

(1) These are represented in the vision as being on the earth, on Mount Zion, but the voice proceeds from heaven. (2) A distinction is plainly made between the 144,000 and them that sing this song, for it is said that the former may learn it. b. The voice is described as the voice of many waters (as of a great multitude): as the voice of a great thunder (very powerful); and as the voice of harpers harping on their harps, i.e., their song is accompanied by playing on the harps (signifying victory and joy). It is the voice of the glorified saints in heaven, cf. ch. VII:9-17. c. And they sing a new song. The song is new because it is the song of complete redemption and final victory; the viewpoint of the singers is heavenly. They see no longer "as in a glass darkly," but face to face. And they sing before the throne of God (in His presence, as His servants, to His glory); and before the elders (the representatives of the church of all ages); and before the four living creatures representatives of brute creation). See ch. IV, d. And only the 144,000 could learn that song, i.e., they cannot only understand it, but appropriate it and by faith sing it, even while they are still in the midst of an oppressing world. For they reign with Christ and by faith they have the victory.

LESSON XXXVI (Revelation 14:6-8)

1. The angel proclaiming an everlasting gospel, vss. 6, 7. a. "And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven." (1) Another vision here, as is evident from "and I saw"; yet the vision is closely related to the preceding one. (2) "Another angel" in distinction from angels that were mentioned before in the book of Revelation. (3) He is flying in the midst of heaven, i.e., of the firmament, because the whole world must hear his message. b. "Having the (or better 'an') everlasting gospel (the 'A.V. has 'eternal good tidings') to preach unto them that dwell on the earth," etc. (1) The angel must proclaim a gospel (the original does not have the definite article)

3. Vss. 4, 5. The description of the 144,000. a. They are not defiled with women, for they are virgins. (1) The original word for "virgins" was frequently applied to men. (2) The expression does not intend to extol the special sanctity of celibacy, as some would have it. (Some explain that these 144,000 represent a special group of saints that were never married!). (3) The meaning is that they are virgins in relation to the world, and are not defiled with its lust. They kept their garments clean, and had no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. b. They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth: i.e., not in glory, as a kind of special retreat in heaven, but here, in this world. In their confession and walk they are the disciples of the Lamb; they follow where He leads by His Word and Spirit, and that, too, regardless of the sufferings they may have to bear because they keep His Word. c. They are those that are purchased, redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb, from among men, i.e., out of all nations; and that for the purpose of being a firstfruits unto God. (1) Firstfruits of the full and final harvest: the regeneration of all things in the new creation. (2) And consecrated to God. Cf. Jas. 1:18. d. In their mouth was found no lie, which means that positively they confessed the truth of God. e. And they are without fault or blemish, i.e., in Christ they are holy in the spiritual ethical sense of the word. They are described, of course, from their ideal spiritual viewpoint, in their relation to the Lamb.

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presented as the Creator and Lord of the universe: “that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”

(b) He must be feared, and glorified, and worshipped. The meaning is evidently: Fear and glorify and worship not the beast, but God. (5) And the particular reason and ground for this “gospel” is that the hour of God’s judgment is come. Final judgment is about to take place. There is no more delay.

Note. The significance of this vision is not that towards the end of this dispensation there will be a special preaching of the gospel to all nations once more; nor that men will be given a special period of repentance, for (1) The contents of the message is not Christ and redemption, but very specifically judgment. (2) It is very definitely proclaimed that the hour of God’s judgment is already come. (3) The two angels that follow proclaim this judgment upon the wicked as an accomplished fact. Rather does it proclaim that which is “good tidings” to the faithful, that the time is come when all must confess that God is God, and the worship of the beast shall have an end.

2. The Fall of Babylon, announced, vs. 8.

a. “And there followed another (a second, R. V.) angel, saying, Babylon is fallen,” etc. The second angel announces the fall of Babylon, and that, too, emphatically as an accomplished fact. (1) This is the first time we read of Babylon in the book of Revelation, yet the text presupposes that it is well known what is meant by Babylon. In Scripture Babylon occurs: (a) As the capital of the country of Shinar, founded by Nimrod (Babel), Gen. 10:10. (b) As the capital of the Chaldean empire of which Nebuchadnezzar was the great head. It was a great city (cf. Jer. 51:31, 32), 60 miles in circumference. Its walls were 350 feet high, 87 feet thick and in it were 100 gates of brass. Cf. Isa. 45:1; 2 Jer. 51:58. (c) As the enemy of Jerusalem, Kings 24:1-17; 25:1; 2; 1 Chron. 6:15; Chron. 36:6, 7; Jer 24:1; 29:1, 2; 52:28ff.

(d) As the head of gold on the image of the worldpower, Dan. 2:32, 37, 38; the lion, Dan. 7:4; a great naval power, Isa. 43:14; a great military power, Jer. 5:16; (e) As glorious, mighty, arrogant, oppressive, careless, pleasure-loving, boastful, self-confident. Isa. 13; 14:4ff; Isa. 47:7, 8. (f) As destroyed in the day of the Lord, Isa. 13; 14:4ff; 21:1, 2; 47:1ff; Jer. 25:12-14; 51 (“my people go ye out of the midst of her,” vs. 45). (2) In the book of Revelation it occurs (besides in our passage) in ch. 16: 19; 17:5; 18. (3) And a clear reference to Babylon there is in II Cor. 6:17; cf. Isa. 52:11; Jer. 51:45. (4) From all this (especially, too, from the passage in II Cor. 6) it should be evident that Babylon in the N. T. is (a) Not that ancient city rebuilt in the future, as some would have it; neither the city of Rome, though it is a phase of it; nor papal Rome; nor the false church.

(b) But the antichristian empire considered from the viewpoint of its center and seat of government, proud, boastful, rich and mighty, cruel and ungodly and oppressing the people of God, the Jerusalem of the new dispensation, the mighty world-power of Rev. 13. She is here presented as fallen.

b. The ground of her judgment: “she made all nations drink of the wine of wrath of her fornication.” (1) The wine of her fornication: fornication is, as often in Scripture, to be taken in the sense of spiritual fornication, apostasy from the living God, idolatry, ungodliness. With this she filled the nations, made them drunk; all nations, for the antichristian kingdom is universal.

(2) And “the wrath of her fornication,” because in this antichristian wine there is the wrath of God!

**CURRENT COMMENTS**

**THE MINISTER SHORTAGE**

**JIM JONKER**

Among the problems which face our churches at the present, one of the greatest undoubtedly is the shortage of minister of the Word. And, the problem seems t-
be growing worse instead of becoming less serious. The need seems more acute, for the supply is declining in proportion to the increase of the demand. Many words are expended in prayers and sermons in the hope of alleviating the lack. Yet very little action is ever taken. We can, and I am sure we do, trust the Lord completely to supply shepherds for His sheep. But this cannot give us the obligation or the right to simply sit and wait for this to happen.

I would like to offer some criticism of our attitude and actions and, I hope, give some suggestions to give us an improved, positive approach. There are two basic reasons, I feel, why we have this problem.

First, there is a widespread and almost complete apathy on the part of almost all of our people, even those who should be directly concerned. This is not revealed by words, for we constantly hear talk urging our young men to seek this calling. But we have reached the point where talk is cheap. No one seems at all interested in helping and advising and encouraging individuals. No one contacts young men who seem qualified; no one investigates possible or probable candidates. While it is true that he who is called must receive the call from the Lord, this is no mystic voice from heaven or the letters "P.C." emblazoned on the skies. It is a call that is revealed very practically and through means, talents, and circumstances which the Lord uses. To answer this, this involves a decision on the part of the individual, a decision which is by no means an easy one to make. Yet, the person who faces the call has to go it entirely alone, seldom receiving the help he so often craves. And even after he has made his decision, he is almost completely a forgotten man until he shows his face in a seminary classroom or on a pulpit.

Secondly, the lack of interest and moral support is also revealed in a lack of financial support. The one who feels called to the ministry is certainly not looking at financial gain or abundance of earthly reward. The student, however, often has a real problem and struggle to make ends meet. Many churches, e.g., the Christian Reformed, are quite ready to give students considerable financial help. Yet we do not seem to consider this aspect as part of our calling as churches. Article 19 of the Church Order states, "The churches shall exert themselves as far as necessary, that there may be students supported by them to be trained for the Ministry of the Word." We apparently feel that very little exertion is necessary.

I know, we have the student aid fund. But that is turning out to be a misnomer. In the first place, the student is not asked if he has a need nor is he offered assistance, but he has to take the initiative himself, which he is often loath to do. Secondly, while we do not intend to support those who do not become ordained in our churches, we simply refuse aid to students who would like to go to a graduate school. Thirdly, the students who probably have the greatest need of finances, the married students, cannot receive help.

It seems to me that it is time this situation be remedied. I would suggest a program along the following lines. First, consistories and members of congregations should constantly be on the lookout for potential ministers. They should find out what vocations the young men are seeking and their reasons. They should personally urge and advise qualified youths to prayerfully and carefully consider the highest calling. And they should not wait with this until the person is almost through high school or in college. Nor should they fail to continue their interest, advice, and encouragement to those who prepare for this task.

Secondly, these potential students should be brought immediately to the attention of the theological school committee. The committee should make it their business to be personally and vitally concerned with each prospective student. They should offer the guidance they are qualified to give. Perhaps one of the ministers should be named as a personal advisor to the young man, to be available for consultation regarding his problems and doubts and certainly to help him plan his high school and/or college schedule of subjects relative to the requirements of the seminary.

Thirdly, financial support should be offered willingly. The students should be consulted in regard to their financial situation and the churches should be eager to fulfill their obligation to aid the cause of the Kingdom in this way. Secondly, while
the advisability of a student going on to graduate school may perhaps be questioned, to refuse him aid on this ground seems to reflect more selfishness than concern for the preaching of the Word in our churches. Thirdly, if the churches feel that supporting a man’s family is too much exertion, let them give him at least as much aid as they would give to an unmarried man. We seem concerned that a minister get a good wife; yet, at the same time, we tell him that if he should dare to marry, he can count on no help from us. We have at the present a prospective student who is married; we also have older married men who are interested in going to the seminary. We will undoubtedly have young men who will want to marry and who should not be placed under undue stress to wait until graduation. (Note—the young people did not make this mistake in adopting the constitution of their scholarship fund.)

If we follow a program similar to this, I feel that we will be rewarded not only with more young men, but also with the joy of giving and helping, with an increased awareness of the importance of this office, with a greater appreciation for it, and with a more blessed fellowship within the communion of saints.

Instead of simply looking to heaven for ministers, let’s also look around us for men. Instead of praying prayers which almost seem unheard and then relaxing in our apathetic chairs, let’s reflect a living faith by our action.

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**NEWS**

**FROM, FOR AND ABOUT OUR CHURCHES**

**MRS. C. KREGEL**

Our schools and their auxiliaries have resumed their usual full schedules. We are pleased to report that another Protestant Reformed School has opened its doors, this time in Loveland, Colorado. Miss Ruth Kui-

per is the teacher. The men of the congregation cooperated in preparing the school building and grounds for the opening day.

An enjoyable evening was spent by the people of our Oaklawn and South Holland churches when they had a dedicatory program for their new school. Prof. H. C. Hoeksema was the speaker. After the program refreshments and open house made this event still more pleasurable. It was on November 30, 1955, that this Association for Protestant Reformed Education was organized, and on September 5, 1961, that the school was opened.

Hope School’s P.T.A. held its annual business meeting October 12. Featured on the program was a book review by Miss W. Koole on “How Great My Heritage.”

Rev. A. Mulder spoke at the open house of Adams St. School on November 2.

A goodly number of people came to enjoy the pancakes served by the Adams Athletic Association on October 28.

* * *

South Holland reports that Ed Holleman has returned home from his term of service in Korea. Wm. Rutgers has just been inducted into the service; the Young People Society bade good-bye to him at a farewell outing September 22. Here is his address:

Pvt. William Rutgers, US 55721786
Co. E 17th Bn.
6th Training Regt. U.S. ATCA
Fort Knox, Kentucky

Another member of our South Holland Church has a change of address:

Pvt. Frank Van Baren, US 55704142
Co. A. 18th Bn. 6 Tng. Regt.
U.S. ATC Armor (BCT)
Fort Knox, Kentucky

Louis Kamps, of our Hudsonville Church, left for the service (his second shift) in September.

Kalamazoo Protestant Reformed Church also has a serviceman, Harold Triesenberg who was called to leave in October. His address follows:

Pvt. Harold Triesenberg, US 55707602
3rd Platoon Co. D 118N 4th Regt. (BCT)
Fort Knox, Kentucky

I wonder whether our three servicemen Fort Knox have gotten together.

**Sixteen**
A member of First Church has a change of address:

Pvt. William P. Doezema, 1899267
"X" Co. Group 13
1st I.T.R. 2nd Bn. MCB
Camp Lejeune, N.C.

We have been a singing church these last couple of months. Beacon Lights sponsored a Reformation Day Singspiration in our Southwest Church on October 29. Oak Lawn was the scene of a singspiration on September 10, put on by the Ladies' Auxiliary of the School. The Young People's Society of South Holland sponsored a singspiration in their church on October 15. Loveland's Young People's Society arranged singspirations after the evening service on September 24 and November 12.

The music of Christmas is in the air. The pupils of Adams St. School were to present a Christmas program Dec. 7 at the school. Hope School's students plan to present a program, "O Worship the King" on December 21 in First Church. A Christmas Singspiration is to be held December 17 at Hope Church. The Hope Choral Society plans to present a Christmas program on December 24.

Those in Grand Rapids and vicinity will have the privilege of closing the old year by attending a program by the Men's Chorus in First Church, Sunday, Dec. 31 at 9:00 P.M.

We have also been an active church. Among the lively after-recess programs enjoyed by our South Holland Young People's Society were the following: a debate on the subject, "Resolved that the Church is living today in a period of apostacy; an essay on "Communism"; a pamphlet report on "The Gospel"; a panel on the question, "What gospel must be brought to the unchurched?"

Often our societies join for a meeting with one or more of the neighboring societies. A Fall Mass Meeting of young people was held at Hope Church on November 7. League meetings were held by both the Eastern and Western Ladies' Leagues. The Men's League and the League of Mr. and Mrs. Societies also had their annual fall meetings. The young people of Hull, Doon, and Edgerton met for a Reformation Day program on Nov. 5. The program included a speech by Rev. B. Woudenberg of Edgerton, special numbers from the societies, and congregational singing.

We have been, moreover, a witnessing church. Rev. J. Kortering spoke at the annual meeting of the Reformed Action Society on the subject, "Propulsion or Compulsion, Which Way for Reformed Action." The Church Extension Committee of the South Holland-Oaklawn area has been sending out pamphlets, Standard Bearers, and reprints of an article called "Reformed Faith and Arminianism" from the magazine "Faith and Life." Now they are planning to send out a series of pamphlets on the Lord's Prayer by Rev. J. Heys, and on the Ten Commandments by Rev. G. Vanden Berg.

The Reformed Witness Hour announces that it has become "of age." In October this distinctively Reformed radio ministry celebrated the beginning of its twenty-first year of radio broadcasting! An anniversary program, commemorating the one thousandth broadcast, will take place, D.V., on January 25 in First Church. ALL of our Protestant Reformed young people are invited to attend the "party." An interesting evening has been arranged, plus "coffee and cake" in the church basement following the program. You will be disappointed (and so will the Radio Committee) if you don't attend.

Our list of "Future Conventioners" is evidence of the fact that we are a growing church. They include the following:

A son born to Mr. and Mrs. S. Dykstra (Hope)
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. C. Westra (Southeast)
A son born to Mr. and Mrs. George Vroom (South Holland)
A daughter born to Mr. and Mrs. A. Buiter (South Holland)
A son born to Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Holstege (Hudsonville)
A son born to Rev. and Mrs. Gerald Vanden Berg (Oaklawn)

Membership transfers:
Dale Kuiper transferred from Edgerton to Loveland.
The H. W. Kuiper family transferred from Loveland to Oaklawn. First Church welcomed Mrs. Robert Decker from the Oakdale Park Christian Ref. Church. Oaklawn received membership papers of Mrs. Robert Haak from First Church. Miss Hulda Kuiper joined South Holland Church. Formerly she was a member of First. Mr. Raymond Hoven and daughter Sheryl Lynn joined Southeast; they had been members at Plymouth Heights Christian Reformed Church. Southeast received membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. H. Kaiser from First Orthodox Protestant Reformed Church. Kalamazoo received Mr. and Mrs. C. Dusseldorp and Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Langelaan from what was formerly the First Protestant Reformed Church of that city, but is now Bethel Christian Reformed Church. First Church welcomed Miss Ann Dertien, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Diepstra, and Mr. and Mrs. Kelly Tucker from the First Orthodox Protestant Reformed Church.

* * *

Wedding bells rang on September 8 for Duane Brummel and Audrey Colenbrander (Hull); and on Friday, October 6, for Marvin Kamps and Nancy Ellen Vander Laan (Hudsonville).

Called home:
Mrs. Dale Huizenga of our Kalamazoo Church; Mrs. Grace Doornbos of our church in South Holland.

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May the good news of the coming of the Savior, and the hope of His second coming, be the light that fills your hearts and homes this Christmas.

REV. G. VAN BAREN
BOX 18
DOON, IOWA

a wish for CHRISTMAS BLESSINGS

May we be blessed by cradled King,
Sound forth the song the angels sing,
And in our joy find that true mirth,
With trusting hearts know peace on earth.

BL STAFF