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The Glorious "Way of Sorrows"

Youth of His Church, our thoughts are once more drawn to Christ on Calv'ry. Because we are each one a member of His chosen race, we seek to know the story and its meaning, though we surely cannot comprehend the reason why. Does mere man deem he knows the central motivation of that love wherewith the Father loves him? Or think that he can follow God's decree that he, from all the rebel race of man, should be an honor-vessel to His Name? He who is a sinner and himself the seeker of God's throne? He thinks he plumbs the depth of this? Ah, no! Our contemplation is too earthly: our comprehension cannot encompass Him who made us, that Wondrous Sovereign God, whose ways and thoughts much higher are than ours!

Yet surely we must seek Him and we do. By grace, we seek to know much more, each day anew, concerning Jesus' work so that our awe is multiplied, as are our praises to our covenant God. Thus taught of God, we are the stronger in this vale to see our way and in it magnify His Name.

Your writer pens the verse below that we may note from whence all our perception comes; confess it, youth, that in ourselves we differ not a whit, and in so noting we may say that all His ways upon this earth until now-celebrated Easter's dawn, from cradle-crib to cross of curse, were filled with lowly meekness of the Lamb of God, whose pow'r was not yet seen:

It was not ours: the sight that sees,
On night long past
In stable dim,
The Christ, born there because the town
Was full, no room for Him.
That sight was giv'n, a gift that's free
To all His own:

To those who trod
Long miles from East, from nearby hills...
They saw the Son of God!

Long lines of women, children, men
Have traveled since,
Have since seen Him
In lowly shed; no palace cheers
For King, but cattle din.
'Tis faith, the gift that makes our sight
See Majesty,
Where outwardly
Are only signs of poverty.
Faith tells us it is He.

Thus we have seen the coming of our Lord. Though surely in His coming He saw sorrow, His Word reveals that depths were yet to come. The Righteous One, invested with the flesh of creature, dwelt in the midst of sin and death and shame! Small wonder, then, that all His earthly sojourn was: "way of sorrow," "way of suffering." "way of death and shame"!

Before His coming was the veil, the wall of separation. Created good, man chose the lie, then sought it, spoke it, loved it in his soul. The Holy God winks not at sin, has purer eyes than evil to behold, cannot abide man's foul abomination. What says the ancient prophet, Isaiah sent of God? Man's sins have made a separation, 'twixt the Righteous God and all the sons of men. The wall was there? Oh, yes. And sin caused its erection: no sin communes with God!

But look! The wall allows a passage to the yonder side, and yonder side means Father, joys of life and bliss, communion with the living God. One who was called and made to be the shedder and the bearer of lamb's blood, by God's decree, gained
access to the mercy seat. and Israel was not consumed.

For God had spoken, at the fall, a word of promise sure and never could that word be broken. He made His covenant with His chosen race of men. Therefore the wonder of the blood which penetrates the veil which showed the ransomed chosen ones the faithfulness of God the Lord, and let the dying breathe their last in peace.

The Lord was coming, and in the blood of sacrifice Israel saw the reason why. By faith they saw it, rejoiced in hope of faith, laid down their heads and died.

The Lord was coming, and when the time was full, He came. Rejoice, oh Church! Messiah, Christ Jesus, The Lamb of God has come! In Bethlehem? A stable? Yes, Bethlehem . . . a stable. The advent of our Lord.

The way of sorrows. The only Righteous One then dwelt upon this earth: He grew, He taught, He suffered in this vale. Made to be sin was He who knew no sin because it was the Father’s will, which will He came to do. That will led Jesus to the Cross so that His sheep might have the right, when all life’s din is done and finished is the walk of faith, to hear His word: “Well done!”

Let us beware our speech when telling of His work! He tells us plainly: “limited’s the work for those that Father gave me.” He came to ransom all His sheep and this He does; the goats rejected scorn Him sent from heav’n above. Then the ghastly veil is rent from top to earth, and ended is the sacrificial work for which He came. And you and I, as chosen sons of God, have access to the Throne, have knowledge that our sins no longer are the barrier ‘twixt the Righteous God and us, the chosen creatures of His hand. Our sins are gone. clean gone and nevermore shall spectral rise before our soul, nor testify that we must dwell without, outside the glorious presence of our God.

Rejoice, young hearts, for all that God has done. It has been said, “What hath God wrought!!” Indeed. what hath God wrought!!! All endless eons will not tell the sum. H.W.K.

Equality - In Prayer?: Yes

CALVIN REITSMA

“Mister Jones, will you please close with prayer?” Every week our Young People’s Society ends in this manner, for each time a male member of the society leads in closing prayer. But I think the young women in our society also have a place in the leadership of prayer. Therefore, to the question: “Should women be allowed to assume prayer leadership in the presence of a man?” I answer YES! The young women have received the right to speak, vote, debate, and read scripture in the society. In all these activities the young women are considered equal with the young men; yet, when it comes to prayer, the young women are placed in a position of subordination. The purpose of this article will be to explain why I feel women should assume a position of equality in the leadership of prayer.

BEACON LIGHTS

Before going into a complete explanation of my views, it would be wise to explain certain of the terms used in the statement of the problem and used elsewhere in this article. When the term society is used, it refers to any organization of people under the auspices of our churches and dedicated to the purpose of Christian edification. More specifically, I am referring to the Church societies which are made up of young men and women approximately between the ages of fourteen and twenty-four. By young men and women I refer to young people who have learned to pray in the home and should be capable of public prayer if the necessity should arise.

In continuing this discussion, I would like to call your attention to the practical benefits of allowing our young women to lead in prayer. In my “definition” of young
men and women. I pointed out that each was capable of public prayer in so far as they knew how to pray. This, however, is not sufficient. Our men and women must also be able to feel at ease and to think clearly while praying in public. I am sure that you can recall the first public prayer you made. Probably you were at least very nervous, or perhaps even unable to voice your thoughts properly. With proper training where training ought to be accomplished, that is, in our younger societies, this problem of public prayer would not exist in our adult societies. In talking with some of the women who are members of women's societies in our church, I found that, not having had any previous public training, they were afraid of making mistakes and asked to be excused from leading prayer. In fact, I have been told that the ratio of women who do not accept prayer leadership to those who do accept this leadership is very high. I feel that a situation such as this is very unhealthy for our people and societies. I believe the only solution is to urge all our young people, both young men and women, to learn public prayer when they are in the young people's societies.

But you may ask, "How can our young men and women be taught to pray in public?"

First, I think that the best way to teach young people to be sure of themselves while praying in public is to let them teach themselves. But for a person to even begin to feel at ease, he must begin to pray among his peers, that is, among those who are at an equal level of development.

Second, if our societies were established so that the young men and young women belonged to different societies, the girls could learn to pray in their society and the boys in theirs. But few, if any, of our societies are established in this way. The members of most of the young people's societies of our churches are both boys and girls. But may we teach only the boys how to pray in public? I do not believe that we may; yet, this is what we are doing. This I believe to be unfair to the women in our churches. Therefore, for the sake of our women and their societies, I feel that we must urge the girls in our young people's societies to close with prayer.

But I usually meet with opposition when I suggest this idea. And what is the first and main objection? It is "The Bible says that women may not pray in public." The opponents usually refer to two texts: I Cor. 14:34 and I Timothy 2:12.

Let us first consider I Cor. 14:34-35: "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church."

I would like to first call your attention to the fact that Paul is speaking about the attitude of women in the Church, that is, in The Worship Service.

First, Paul wrote this advice to keep order in the church services. When Paul wrote that the women should not ask questions until they could ask their husbands at home; he seems to indicate that the women did not understand all the practices that were going on or the teaching during the worship service. Therefore, the women asked their husbands questions, causing a disorderly meeting. Therefore Paul exhorts them to save their questions until a more expedient time.

Second, Paul is not speaking about the Church and all church related societies. If he is including all activities, he does not allow the women to form their own societies or even to vote, discuss, or ask questions in the society, especially if it is a mixed society of males and females. If the verses referred to the societies as the Church, the women could not open or close the meetings of even an all female society because Paul writes: "Let your women keep silence in the Churches." I believe that it is plain to see that Paul is speaking here about the attitude of women in THE CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICE, not in societies or other activities.

I would also like to briefly call your attention to I Timothy 2:12 where we read: "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

First I call your attention to the preceding verse were Paul writes, "Let the women
learn in silence with all subjection.” Here I believe that Paul again is only speaking about the Church Worship Service proper; otherwise, we would be forced to conclude that the women have no voice in any society, whether a mixed or an all female society.

Second, I believe that verses 11 and 12 belong with the whole passage 8 through 15. In verse 8, Paul exhorts the men to pray the righteous prayer and to pray for men of all positions. He seems to indicate here and in the following verses that only the men are to lead these prayers and teach during the church worship service. I also think that Paul is exhorting both men and women to pray their own “private” prayers; but that the women do not do it and shame the Church at the same time by wearing costly apparel, gold, or pray with boldness and pride. But I do not believe that Paul is saying here that women may not pray in the presence of a qualified man.

Third, in 1 Cor. 11, Paul seems to infer that women may prophesy and pray in public; but I think he is referring to smaller and less formal meetings than the Church Worship Service. An example of such a meeting would be the prayer meeting in the house of Mark’s mother (Acts 12:12).

In conclusion I would like to say that I agree that the women may not teach or lead the congregation in prayer during the Church Worship Service. But I do not believe that the Bible is forbidding women to pray, discuss, or ask questions in less formal meetings such as our young people’s society. Therefore, I urge that we permit the women in our societies to accept prayer leadership.

**Equality - In Prayer?: No**

ROSALYN TRYON

In these modern times, placing women on an equal plane with men is the growing trend. This trend toward “equality” is also reaching into the churches in America. Many of the Christian Reformed Churches now allow women an equal voice and vote in matters of the individual church’s government and doctrine. As a natural result of this trend, questions have also been raised in our own Protestant Reformed Churches regarding the position of women. The young people have raised the question: “Should women be allowed to lead in prayer in public in the presence of a man?” To this question I feel I must reply, unequivocally, NO! The purpose of this essay is therefore to explain my negative answer to the above question.

The first step toward a complete analysis of this problem is an understanding of the problem’s scope and the terms used. When we use the term “women” we are not referring to the youngest just learning to pray in the home, but to a person who has previously developed the ability to pray. “Public,” of necessity, must now refer to something outside the home environment, and in this case, most specifically, the Young People’s Societies within our Church. In defining the scope of the problem, a man must, like the women, have previously developed the ability to pray while in the home. On these grounds the discussion of this problem will be based.

The second step in the analysis of this problem must be a comprehension of the Biblical position of women.

First, what does the Old Testament say about woman’s position? In Genesis chapter 2, the story of woman’s creation from the rib of Adam, the father of all men, is told. Eve was created to be a helpmeet unto Adam. Note: woman was created a helpmeet, not a leader. The position of woman was accentuated in Genesis 3:16 when the woman was given the direct command to be subject to her husband: “... and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over thee.” This command comes as a direct result of the fall and is explained by Paul in 1 Timothy 2:14: “And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”
I Timothy 2 also is an evidence of the position of women in the New Testament. In the first section of this chapter, Paul deals with the objects of our prayers. I.e., for whom should we pray? The second section explains how Christian men should pray, and continues with an explanation of the position of women in public worship. (Here we should note the meaning of public worship: It not only includes the church service per se, but also any place where Christians gather to offer praise and thanksgiving to God. This would therefore include prayer in our Young People’s Societies.) God through Paul states women’s position in public worship as this: “But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.” 1 Timothy 2:12, and continues by explaining that women, by virtue of their position and purpose in creation, ought to remain subject to the man also in the exercise of public worship. This of course does not imply that there should be no women’s societies, but simply that women should not assume leadership over men in public worship.

We can see that, although both the Old Testament and New Testament are explicit regarding the position of women in creation and the exercise of public worship in mixed society, there are a few seeming exceptions to the rule:

The first evident exception is the leadership of Miriam, Moses’ and Aaron’s sister, in songs of praise to God (a form of prayer). This is merely a paradox in Biblical interpretation however, for in this case Miriam led only the women of Israel in prayer. Thus, the position of the subsection of women in public worship established by the Bible holds true here also.

Acts 12:12 is often used to show that women led prayer in the Bible. This second exception is obviously fallacious as no reference is given to prayer leadership on the part of either men or women in this passage. “And when he (Peter) had considered the thing, he came to the house of Mary the mother of John, whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.” Obviously, no reference is here given to women’s leadership in prayer.

Another passage which supposedly constitutes a third exception is 1 Cor. 11. Again, in this passage no reference is given to women’s leadership in prayer and I do not feel we can infer woman’s leadership from this passage. Rather, here I feel we can infer woman’s subordination in prayer exercise for in verse three it is stated: “But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ: and the head of the women is the man.” Can we infer that women should lead in prayer from a passage which does not even mention this leadership, but rather infers the opposite?

I therefore feel that since it is the obvious position of the Bible that women should not assume prayer leadership, and since no legitimate instance has been given where the Bible states otherwise, we should conclude that women should not be given prayer leadership in mixed society.

In the third step of our analysis of the question, we must ask ourselves: Would the leadership of a woman in prayer in the presence of a qualified man be practical? I feel that no necessity has been expressed to warrant such a great change in our young people’s societies (this would not apply to those societies which allow women to lead in prayer at present).

As has already been mentioned, a woman as we are considering her, would have previously developed the ability to pray in the home. As a result, the theory that taking prayer leadership in mixed societies would train a woman to pray is obviously fallacious.

In connection with the basic training received in the home it has been stated that further training in public prayer is necessary, particularly for future use in women’s societies. Again, I fail to see why this would necessitate such a change in many of our Young People’s Societies. Could not this public prayer training be done where it is needed and used, that is, in the women’s societies? Is it so vital that this public “training” be done in our mixed societies that we break the bonds of Biblical tradition and the established position of women in our societies as well? To these questions we answer NO. Obviously, if this prayer training could be done in another place, where difficulties of Biblical propriety and traditional bonds would not arise, it would be far better to do it at that place and not in a mixed society.

Because the ability to pray could be
developed in the home and in our women's societies, I therefore feel no necessity has been expressed which is great enough to warrant such a change in so many of our young people's societies.

Since it is the obvious wish, yea command, of the Bible that women should not lead in public prayer and since no worthy practical necessity has been expressed to warrant a change in the accepted procedure in many of our young people's societies, I therefore conclude that women should not be allowed to lead in public prayer in the presence of a man.

CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

OF TOLERATION

Intolerance is one of the charges leveled most consistently at the heart of the church which has the calling before Jesus Christ, as King of the Church, to remain pure in doctrine and in practice. When this purity of doctrine and uprightness in practical living is maintained in the church and in the lives of the saints respectively, then she is pronounced intolerant and she becomes an offense to those who are wicked and rebellious.

Many philosophers and writers have taken the pen and have extolled the virtues of the tolerant man. They have made every attempt to promulgate a philosophy of life which has at its very heart the toleration of all religions and of every creed. "Only in the way of toleration and eventually enmulfication and unification of all religions and every creed can this society continue to exist," they say. Two of the early writers concerned with toleration are John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau. In "A Letter Concerning Tolerance" John Locke writes:

... however clearly we may think this or the other doctrine to be deduced from Scripture, we ought not therefore to impose it upon others as a necessary article of faith because we believe it to be agreeable to the rule of faith, unless we would be content also that other doctrines should be imposed upon us in the same manner, and that we should be compelled to receive and profess all the different and contradictory opinions of Lutherans, Calvinists, Remonstrants, Anabaptists, and other sects which the contrivers of symbols, systems, and confessions are accustomed to deliver to their followers as genuine and necessary deductions from the Holy Scripture. I cannot but wonder at the extravagant arrogance of those men who think that they themselves can explain things necessary to salvation more clearly than the Holy Ghost, the eternal and infinite wisdom of God.

To me it becomes very evident that Locke, who was a broad churchman, does not really recognize the absolute authority of Scripture as being perspicuous concerning the doctrines which should be taught by the church. He would wish that this be left to the discretion of the individual and that no hierarchy of values be superimposed on any man. It is also true that Locke is an empirical, pragmatic philosopher who denied the existence of absolute moral principles and was more concerned with the preservation of society than he was with the preservation and development of the true religion. All religions that tolerate others are to be tolerated but those cults or
religions that have tenets or practices which violate the doctrine of toleration are intolerable and may not be permitted to exist within the “free society.”

This is the prevalent philosophy of life of the man of the street, generated by the lie of the Devil in our American culture. This is that which is proudly referred to as our common American heritage. Boldly promulgated is the doctrine that all forms of religions are to be tolerated. These conceptions, I claim, arise very naturally from the totally depraved heart of reprobate man. One who is a believer can even detect these motions of sin within himself. It is so much easier by nature to tolerate than to condemn; it is so much more natural to deny than to maintain the cause of God and of his Christ in midst of the world.

Rousseau also has something to say on the matter of toleration. In The Social Contract, he writes:

Those who distinguish civil from theological intolerance are, to my mind mistaken, the two forms are inseparable. It is impossible to live at peace with those we regard as damned; to love them would be to hate God who punishes them: we positively must either reclaim or torment them.

Wherever theological intolerance is admitted, it must inevitably have some civil effect; and as soon as it has such an effect, the Sovereign is no longer Sovereign even in the temporal spheres: thenceforth priests are the real masters, and kings only their ministers.

Now that there is and can no longer be an exclusive national religion, tolerance should be given to all religions that tolerate others, so long as their dogmas contain nothing contrary to the duties of citizenship.

Rousseau argues that the neutral ground of toleration is the only workable solution to an otherwise insoluble problem. This Godless humanist will have nothing of a God who either loves or hates nor of a Christianity which has these as fundamental and inherent tenets of doctrine. This Modernist would “water down” the position of Christianity to the point that it contains no revealed truth and is absolutely lacking in all that is distinctively Christian. All truth becomes subject to a relative standard established by depraved man; and this is no standard for judging the validity of the dogmas of the church.

I should like to think that tolerance is the product of the imagination of men that “hold down the truth in unrighteousness.” These men are those described by David as the “fools who say, ‘NO’!!! God.” Those who advocate the doctrine of tolerance advocate a cold impossible neutral ground in the battle of the ages. One cannot simply tolerate; he is either for or against; he must either love or hate. His rationality and morality prohibit such an attitude.

In Matthew 10:34 the Christ of the Scriptures, the originator of true Christianity says: “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.” Here Christ refers to the fact that he is the rock of offense, the stone at which men stumble except they receive the unction of the Holy Spirit and be drawn out of darkness into his marvelous light.

It is evidently set forth in the Scriptures that Christ was an exceedingly intolerant man. He could not tolerate the lie or any mitigation of the truth. Even though the injunction of God is that “we should love our enemies,” it remains a fact that the wrath of God is upon “his enemies” and we cannot love those enemies of God and of His Word. The ethical principle of discipleship and of Christianity is a leaven that works through all of life. A Christian cannot love that which God hates and cannot hate that which God loves. God hates all that which is not to His honor and His glory; all that does not exalt Him above all the Creation and above all other gods.

There is no place, therefore, for tolerance or toleration in the world and life view of the Christian. The spiritual life of the Christian is directed by principles which are antithetically opposed to all wickedness. It is ethically impossible for the Christian to hate righteousness or to love wickedness and toleration of incorrect doctrines is likewise impossible. All that mitigates the principles implicit in the life of the Christian must be hated and those things that are in conformity with the principles of Christianity are to be practiced, because they are upheld by the doctrines which are part of the Christian’s world and life view.

Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift and for revealing the better way, the wholly different way which leads to Glory.
I. The Pre-deluvian Conditions

Genesis 6:1-8

These verses relate the amazing truth concerning the total depravity of man and the rapid development of sin during the first sixteen hundred and fifty years. Contrary to the notion contained in the common grace theory that God restrains sin in the unregenerate, this passage demonstrates the truth that sin develops organically and with such rapidity that the entire world became ripe for judgment just a little over seven hundred years after Adam died. Various reasons for this rapid development are given here and may serve as salient points for discussion.

In verses 1 and 2 mention is made of the multiplication of men on the earth and the fact that there were mixed marriages between the "sons of God and daughters of men". This multiplication of men was not sinful but was in accord with the command of God but, men being sinners, their numerical increase gave occasion for wider and more varied sin. Ten sinners perpetrate more sin than one, etc. Is it always true that the larger any organization of wicked men becomes, the more corrupt it also is? Take, for example, labor unions today! What about the time when the whole world will be united under anti-christ, the man of sin?

These same verses speak of the intermarriage of the "sons of God and the daughters of men." This is the second contributing factor in the rapid development of sin. It has reference to the intermarriage of the church and world, a reality that does not contribute to the moral and spiritual elevation of the world but rather results in the degeneration of the church. The "sons of God" represent the children of Seth who chose to marry the "daughters of men", i.e., the children of Cain. They did so because they saw that the latter were "fair." Lenski says, "of pretty faces and shapely forms." Loosing sight of basic distinctions, disregarding moral virtues in the selection of wife or husband are certain evidences of an advanced degeneracy.

To be rejected for obvious reasons are the views based on heathen legend and mythology that claims that the contrast between "sons of God" and daughters of men" demands that the former be divine and the latter human. Procksh simply offers the superscription, "The Marriage With Angels," for this section. Meek translates, "the gods noticed that the daughters of men were attractive: so they married those whom they liked best." Lenski replies: "Such an approach introduces the mythological element as well as polytheism into the Scriptures and makes the Bible a record of strange and fantastic tales and contradicts the passage of Matt. 22:30: 'For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are as angels in heaven.' For the expression used here (vs 2) 'they took to themselves wives,' is a standing expression for marital union. This verse does not refer to adulterous irregularities but to permanent union."

The third factor contributing to the rapid development of sin is the "contending of the Spirit of God with man" (vs. 3) This is not to be understood as though God was striving with man to restrain him, to check his sinning and even to convert him. It is no common grace struggle in which God loses and man wins. Rather, to strive means "to testify against, to judge and to condemn." This God, by His Spirit, did in and through the prophets such as Enoch, Seth and Noah. But this would not con-
time forever. It would come to an end. This testimony had an effect upon the wicked. It hardened them in their iniquity. It was to them a savor of death unto death. Through this testimony of the Spirit their sin became the greater and it brought them closer to the final judgment.

In close connection with this must be mentioned the pre-deluvian persecutions. Though not specifically mentioned, this was the reaction of the wicked world to the "striving of the Spirit of God." (Cf. Jude 14-16) Consider in this connection the murder of Abel by Cain, Lamech and his boasts (Gen. 4:23), Enoch's translation. This also explains why the church numbered only eight souls at the time of the flood.

Finally, sin developed rapidly because "there were giants in those days in the earth." (vs. 4) These were "mighty men, men of renown." These were great men in more than one sense of the word. Physically and intellectually giants. Men of great worldly achievement. Think of Jabel, Jubal, Tubal-Cain. These were giants in industry, art, culture, etc. The Hebrew here has "Nephilim." One meaning of this verb is to "fall upon, to attack." This verb could readily yield this noun in the sense of "attackers, robbers, bandits." So you have the thought: the descendants of the godly patriarchs abandoned their spiritual heritage, God was moved to determine their destruction, and there were also violent attackers and robbers abroad in those days. Luther describes them as "tyrants." They received a reputation the world over by their violence, but a reputation better deserving of the term notoriety. The world in those days, as now, did not esteem godly men highly. Only the wicked had a name.

Three things arrest our attention at the close of this passage. First, there is the statement of vs. 5 describing the totality of the depravity of the nature of man. This cannot be taken as applying only to the men of that day. This is descriptive of man as fallen in Adam. He is incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil. "Every imagination of the thought of his heart is only evil continually." Discuss this truth of depravity in relation to the claims of the common grace theory in this regard! Also confer with the Confessions on this matter!

Secondly, mention is made here of "God's repentance" and His determination to destroy man and beast from the earth. The repentance of God does not involve a change in God for He is immutable. See Jer. 26:19, Duet. 32:36, Ps. 106:45, etc. and then discuss the meaning of this repentance.

Thirdly, the contrast: "But Noah found grace." We notice that Noah did not "earn" this grace. Neither was Noah "perfect" and this being the reason God favored Him. But he "found grace." God had chosen him to comfort His people and through him the church was to be delivered out of the hands of its enemies. This is the sovereign purpose of God's grace.

II. Preparations for the Flood (Ch. 6:9-22)

Verses 9-14 describe the actual pre-deluvian conditions in the world. On the one hand there was Noah and his three sons. Noah was "a just man and perfect in his generations." This is not moral perfection but denotes that principally he lived in the fear of God with his children and held before them the precepts of the Lord which he himself honored. Noah was completely justified before God. This justification is of grace. The expression connotes a life of true faith and sincere consecration. In contrast to Noah was the rest of humanity which had corrupted its way upon the earth. (vs. 12) The earth was corrupt and filled with violence. (vs. 11) These verses describe the form of moral corruption prevalent in the earth. The Hebrew "Chamas" (violence) means "high handed dealings, violation of all right." Men did as they pleased, despising God's law and corrupting all human relations. All this God saw. Indeed the earth was in so short a time ready to be judged.

In considering the instruction given to Noah concerning the building of the ark (vs. 14-22), it must be noted that in the minutest detail these instructions are of the Lord. This applies later to the building of the temple which plan was also wholly of God. Of significance this is because these things point to the plan of salvation which in its origin, detail and execution is of God alone. In the heart of man such a plan could not arise. Who could see the wisdom
and purpose of building such an ark upon an earth where it had never as much as rained? To carry out this plan would occasion only the mockery, reproach and ridicule of evil men. This Noah experienced as he "did according to all that God commanded him," preaching righteousness, condemning the world and built an ark to the saving of his house.

To be noticed in these instructions God gave to Noah is that God not only gave detail concerning the actual construction of the ark but also made detailed provision for the preservation of those to be saved in the ark. (vss. 19-21) God not only saves His people but He preserves them in the way of that salvation to the very end.

Concerning the plan of the ark we quote from Rev. H. Veldman: "The entire plan is of the Lord. This is true of the ark. All the details relative to this strange ship are given Noah by the Lord. A cubit is approximately one and a half feet. What is meant by gopher wood cannot be stated exactly. A probable explanation is that such a boat was made of interwoven willow branches and palm leaves with a coating of bitumen (asphalt) outside, used today on the rivers and canals of Mesopotamia. The ark had three stories, with a window in the upper story. Verses 16 does not mean that this "window" (light in Hebrew) would be only a cubit square, but within a cubit of the edge of the roof; this "window" refers to a space for light, and in which the window, or lattice for opening and shutting could be fixed; we do not know the detailed arrangement."

Verse 22 emphasizes Noah's obedience. Obedience is the crown and chief evidence of faith. Consider what James writes about this obedience or working of faith. (James 2:18 ff.) In obedience of faith Noah walked with God and all things were made ready for the impending judgment and the deliverance of the church.

Cults and Sects

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

MARY DECKER

The religious system, currently known as Jehovah's Witnesses, was originally known as Russellism and was conceived by Charles Taze Russell. Russell was born of godly parents and as a lad was possessed of a soul-haunting fear of hell. Russell was a self-styled pastor, who warned people to attend church and escape hell.

The Jehovah's Witnesses reject Christ as 'Jehovah God.' They believe He is Michael the Archangel, who became man in the Jesus who was born in Bethlehem. They do not speak according to the Law and to the Testimony, because they are destitute of the enlightenmet of the Spirit. To the Jehovah's Witnesses Jesus was not the pre-existent, divine One we know Him to be. When Jesus was in the flesh he was a perfect human being; prior to that time he was a perfect spiritual being of the highest or Divine Order. It was not until Jesus death that He received the earnest of his inheritance of the divine nature. The Jehovah's Witnesses believe the blending of the two natures produces neither one nor the other, but an imperfect thing, which is obnoxious to the divine arrangement.

The Jehovah's Witnesses deny the incarnation of Christ while Christ walked on earth. He was nothing more than a perfect human being and now He is no longer a human being. Since Christ is no longer in any degree a human being we must not expect him to come again as a human being. Christ is no longer a man but a spirit being, whom no man hath seen or can see without a miracle. Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Christ was not exalted to the divine nature until the human nature was actually dead.

The Jehovah's Witnesses deny the saving
work of Christ. They do not believe that Christ died at Calvary. The blood of Christ was not shed there, but only the blood of a mere man and as a human being, gave himself a ransom for men. The Jehovah's Witnesses believe that they, as members of Christ's body, are yielding up their lives in sacrifice during this age, and these sacrificial lives counted in with his, constitute the blood of Christ which seals the new covenant between God and the world.

The Jehovah's Witnesses deny Christ's physical resurrection. They believe Christ's human body was supernaturally removed from the tomb and we know nothing of what became of it except that it did not decay or corrupt. Christ lives as a spirit now, His spiritual being was given divine honor because of His former godly life. God miraculously hid the body of Christ.

The Jehovah's Witnesses deny the teachings of Christ on immortality. They believe that at death the soul sleeps, and that the grave is the only hell. Those who die are never again conscious. Before the millennium dawns the people of God will be resurrected and taken into heaven. Those who have not heard the Gospel will be given a chance to make up their minds. When they see the blind, deaf, dumb, and crippled gradually develop a sound body, few of them will refuse a gospel bringing them these perfect earthly conditions. If they accept the gospel during the millennium they will make amends for former disobedience to God, and they will not receive everlasting punishment. Those that will be living during the beginning of the millennium will receive this opportunity without dying. Those that do not obey the Gospel during the millennium will receive everlasting punishment which means complete extermination.

Thus the Jehovah's Witnesses deny many of the cardinal truths of Scripture such as Christ's incarnation, His redemption, His resurrection and the immortality of believers.

In this way they lack the greatest comfort for God's people and His church as expressed in Acts 20:28: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God which He hath purchased with His own blood."

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THE 1963
CONVENTION AT EDGERTON

As the host society for the next convention, we, the Edgerton Young People's Society, would like to inform you on some of the details and encourage you to attend.

The date has been set for August 20-22. The theme for our convention will be "More Than Conquerors," taken from the text, Romans 8:37. There are three different aspects in which this theme will be considered. They are:

I. In the Church
II. Overagainst an Evil World
III. In the Last Days

As our theme song we have chosen Psalter No. 126.

We have scheduled the events, to some extent, according to the usual procedure. The first day will include registration and assignment of lodging. In the evening there will be the mass meeting. As of yet we can not express our definite plans for our outing but we promise you it will not be a disappointment. The third day will open with a pancake breakfast and the convention will be concluded by the banquet. By this entertainment we hope to provide the ideal opportunity for you to get acquainted with the youth from other congregations and share in the fun and fellowship. We also hope you will have some new and exciting experiences by coming to the Midwest. We are eagerly anticipating seeing you at this convention in August.

With Christian greetings,

THE EDGERTON YOUNG
PEOPLE'S SOCIETY

BEACON LIGHTS

Eleven
"For one believeth that he may eat all things; another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." We continue to consider the matter of Christian liberty in things indifferent. Reference to such things has usually been made by the term adiaphora, a negative term not found in the Bible, although its positive form is. The word, according to Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Dictionary, means literally indifferent things. In medicine it refers to certain ingredients "which are incapable of doing either harm or good," such as the dose which might be given to a hypochondriac - sugar and water. In chemistry it refers to a neutral or neutralizing admixture. In ecclesiastical history it has reference to a part of the Lutherans known as adiaphorists, followers of Melanchton, who "conceded to the Roman Catholic Church as being non-essential certain usages" such as candles, clerical garb, holidays, etc. In ethics, it is "any practice or form of conduct not included under the essential principles of morality, and which may therefore be left to be determined by custom or individual choice; the ethically indifferent."

We do not mean to imply by the term, however, that for the Christian there is an area that might be considered neutral or indifferent in the strict, absolute sense. "Adiaphora," things indifferent, is a handy, useful term. Yet we are to understand that no material thing is really indifferent, for no material thing is unclean of itself, i.e., no material thing is inherently sinful, but the consciences of some are not fully free to realize this. A building formerly occupied by the Roman Catholic Church could, conceivably, be purchased and used by Protestants as their place of worship, without first burning the place down in order to purify it. A torture machine is not an inherently sinful thing, if it were, it would be morally wrong to have such, let us say, on display in a museum. But, it may be asked, wouldn't it be wrong to make a torture machine? Not necessarily so in itself, especially if one were constructed as a replica or a model to show historically what the church has suffered in the past. If this were wrong, it would be just as sinful for the church to keep on record pictures of the inquisitorial juggernauts used against them in times of persecution. It would be sinful, however, to make such a device with a view to its originally intended purpose! A so called indifferent thing, an adiaphoron, may be put to a very
bad use. Or the good use of an indifferent thing may become sinful. For instance, a public building may be used for the official worship of God, but when that building is also used in the cause of a secret society, it is only pro tem in the service of good. An action, as well as a thing, may be indifferent. Playing the game of chess is indifferent: it certainly is not commanded — no one need play chess; but neither is it forbidden. It is not wrong to play. But it would be wrong to play for "the pot," your own and some one else's money. It would be wrong to play and to continue to play while the house is burning down, that is, to the neglect of essential duties. A perfectly harmless amusement also becomes sinful if indulged because one enjoys the company of worldly companions it affords.

"One believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs." The one who has faith to eat all things is the strong with enlightened conscience and Scripture-based conviction. By "weak" is not meant a "sick" person on an herb diet for reasons of health, but a Mr. Creamycheese, the vegetarian, or the "don't-eat-starch-and-protein-together" people. They probably would be horrified at an egg sandwich on white bread. No such scruples hindered Elijah who gratefully received bread and flesh from God sent by ravens daily. The one who allows himself the use of everything indifferent is termed one who believes, while the one who cannot bring himself to enjoy such largeness is termed one who is weak, not implying that he is no believer in Christ, but that he is not well established in the faith. The former believes he may eat anything, whether "kosher" or "regular." The other, to live conscientiously, must limit himself to foods of the watercress variety. He feels this is the best way to keep himself from excesses and safe in holy living. There is no command that one must eat spinach, nor is there a prohibition any more against ham and pork. For Christ has made "all things . . . clean unto you" (Luke 11:41). It is definitely wrong to command abstinence from meats, for God has created them to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. "For every creature of God is good (not really indifferent), and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:

for it is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4:3-5).

The foods for us today are not only vegetables and fruits (Gen. 1:29), but also meat "of every moving thing that liveth" (9:3), including flesh of "all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth and birds of the heaven" (Acts 10:12). No more are these things "common or unclean," for "God hath cleansed them" (10:14, 15). Now everything is "kosher." The Christian may eat of all things because "all things are clean." There are no restrictions to this right except that we are to respect the weak brother by not offending him with the exercise of our liberty, and that, in addition, we are to be moderate and temperate. It should not be necessary to provide the following for breakfast: whole roast pig, sausages, chicken, veal, eggs, cheese, tomatoes, pickles, wine and vodka — unless one works outside all day at the South Pole.

"One believeth that he may eat all things." According to this same principle, which is broader than mere eating and drinking, one may subscribe to the local newspaper without, in so doing, supporting such evil institutions as the Roman Catholic Church, the liquor traffic, and burlesque shows. One may have a folding table, referring to it by its commercial name, "card table," without becoming a "bridge" addict. One has a right to another item of furniture called the television set, which need not be concealed in the basement (as though it were a "still"), and which need not be operated by a so-called "Christian antenna" — rabbit ears. How Christians shall celebrate Christmas in the home is a matter of personal choice and family background. Candy, plum pudding, cookies, ginger-bread, fruit cake, mince pie and roast goose are not necessary for that day, but who has a right to criticize the family which enjoys every bit of such abundance? A missionary to Hindus need not become a vegetarian, although he may often abstain from meat in order to be "all things to all men that by all means he may save some." The possession of wealth is in itself indifferent. But it may become wrong, especially if it blind the eye to spiritual things, if it create envy, or if it secularize the whole life. A strong sister has the right to wear jewelry which affords a legitimate enjoyment. But jewelry, as riches, often does present a strong temptation which may lure

BEACON LIGHTS

Thirteen
to a fall. If use of jewelry causes a weak sister to offend, then, if necessary, jewelry should not be worn as long as the world standeth.

"Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth. For God hath received him." The strong have a tendency to be proud of their knowledge and their greater enjoyment of liberty, and are therefore inclined to view the ignorant with contempt. The weak, on the other hand, in their ignorance, have a tendency to condemn the more enlightened who are not troubled with unnecessary restrictions. What Paul is saying is that when the strong are apt to despise the others for their narrowness, they must not! When the weak are apt to judge the others as not God-fearing enough, or ascribe to them some other improper motive, they must not! These two dangers into which both strong and weak may fall must not be permitted to occur. Brotherly love on both sides demands it. If liberty is not limited by love, the strong then become weak, in fact both strong and weak become something worse than weak.

The temperate err when they regard the total abstainers as bigoted; while the abstainers err when they consider the moderate as worldly. Notice, that which is forbidden is the despising or the judging of a brother, not the thing which the brother did. Whether women wear black cotton stockings and men black suits is a thing indifferent. For the use of this drab garb the wearers should not be brushed off as "holier than thou." Nor should the wearers judge those who do not conform to their religious whims as proud of finery, unwilling to practice self-denial or claim they conform to the world to avoid reproach.

Some people subject themselves to the "strait-jacket" principle, which is a self-inflicted slavery and a presumption. They would bind the conscience to the traditions of men, to rules and regulations which ought to be left free to individual conscience. They would impose their rules for manners, customs, dress, personal tastes, social activities, accumulation of goods, household arrangement, use of money and spare time. They make binding that which is optional, which ought no more to be done than to make optional that which is commanded. To do the latter is to fly in the face of God. To do the former is to rob man of his liberty. It is not right to legislate into the required that which should remain optional. If a man wishes to have a pet monkey, he may. If a small minority wishes the same privilege, it has the right, but no right to impose it on the majority. We need not insist on our own way in matters where no essential principle is involved.

"For God hath received him." God has certainly received the weak through the righteousness of Christ, but his weakness is not received. However, the receiving here is not a receiving of persons through Christ, but of the persons' conduct in question. What Paul is saying is that the strong has been received of God in the use of things which are now no longer prohibited. This freedom of use the conscience of the weak will not permit him to make. Hence he is liable to judge the strong as doing something unlawful. But he must understand that nothing unlawful is involved in the conduct of the strong, for God has received him and his untrammeled faith. He who has the most must not set at nought the one who has the least, nor must he who has the least judge him who has the most. The believer who is richer in the faith too often withdraws himself from fellowship with the least in the kingdom. The weak too often make unnecessary and too restrictive demands of the strong, narrowing them down to their poverty-stricken outlook. In a community where there are Presbyterian and Reformed ministers as well as Fundamentalist ministers, the latter usually make the conditio sine qua non of Christian fellowship with them their own little six-point doctrinal statement. It never (or rarely) happens that the one with the least is willing to stand on the broader and deeper ground of him who has the most. The lesser brethren have a nutshell theology and would have us crawl with them into such confines; whereas we have the whole tree, are by grace alone ingrafted branches of it, taking root downward and bearing fruit upward. So, just as we must not in pride look down with contempt upon those who do not hold the same doctrinal fulness we hold, exactly so the "lesser" brethren must not charge us with elbowing them out of fellowship, nor set themselves up as judges as to what the measure of faith, doctrine
and life ought to be. Other members of Christ's church universal ought to have a creedal, confessional and Christian outlook broad enough to receive and respect believers who have such truly catholic standards as we do, namely, that which is to be found in the Heidelberg Catechism (of German origin), in the Belgic Confession (of Belgian origin), in the Canons of Dort (of Dutch origin) and in the Psalter (of Hebrew origin). Any one who can truthfully and conscientiously say "I believe an holy catholic church," and who is not encumbered with the anti-principle of Modernism. "No Creed But Christ," ought to have no trouble standing on the above Scripture-based foundations. Such an one is "he that eateth," "God hath received him."

Our purpose should be to yield the small points with a view to winning the large. Let brethren have their way in matters non-essential, in such a way as to teach them that the unimportant must always be subservient to the important. "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision (fasting, abstinence) availeth anything nor uncircumcision (eating, indulgence), but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15). Paul to the Jews became a Jew, and to the Gentiles a Gentile, conforming to custom as long as compromise to principle was not involved. For the sake of the Jews he circumcised Timothy; but when principle required his refusal to circumcise Titus he was adamant. What is of the utmost importance is the new creation in Christ, the work of regeneration in the heart of an elect child of God, a new heart, a new spirit, new principles and actions in a new life with new love, new desires, new joys, new comforts and new conduct. All this does avail.

(To be continued)

Seminary

ROBERT D. DECKER

The undersigned, when first asked to write an article of this nature, hesitated. He has only been in the Seminary for a little over one semester and, therefore, has hardly had time to form well defined judgments concerning the school and his work done there. Nevertheless he consented to write because of two reasons. The first is because altogether too little is written about our Seminary. Secondly, an article of this nature may prove helpful to those who might be considering the ministry as their life's calling.

Our Seminary's prime purpose, perhaps one should say only purpose, is to train and instruct young men for the ministry of the Gospel in the Protestant Reformed Churches. As such it is not primarily another graduate school where advanced work is done in theology. It is the Theological School of the Prot. Ref. Churches and as such it is distinctive. All the instruction is geared to that one purpose, the training of men for the Protestant Reformed ministry. This is not to say that the instruction is not of high intellectual calibre; it is and this will be pointed out later in more detail.

What this factor does mean, however, is that the students do a great deal of preaching. They do this almost from the very start. The undersigned experienced what every one of his predecessors did. That is, on the very first day of school he was assigned a text to preach on. The sermon is usually preached toward the close of the first semester (December or January). This is to say the least a terrifying experience. Consider with me the circumstances and you will no doubt understand the use of the rather strong adjective "terrifying." This is the student's very first attempt. The sermon must be preached before the three faculty members, the other students or student, and the ministers from the Grand Rapids area. This is not all. The whole scene takes place in the rather uninspiring confines of the seminary room located in the basement of Fuller Ave. Church! Add to this the fact that while the student is preaching, his critics
are busily writing down their criticisms. The writer can assure you that when the student says "Amen" to that first sermon there is a relief that is beyond description! Then follows the criticism of each person present. In the light of this criticism the student "patches up," improves upon, and more often than not reworks the entire sermon. He then is sent out to preach. Let me hasten to add, lest there be any misconceptions, that this experience, terrifying though it may be is also a blessed and rewarding experience. The student gains through this the conviction that whom the Lord calls He also qualifies. Besides what better way is there to learn than by this way in which the student profits from the accumulated experience and wisdom of servants of God who have preached twice a Sunday for years? This emphasis upon preaching also explains why there is so much emphasis upon exegesis. The word exegesis is derived from a Greek word which has the fundamental meaning of "to lead out." Exegesis is the heart of the sermon or the foundation upon which the sermon must be built. The sermon must never be a lecture with a text as a mere "hanger on." The student soon learns this, sometimes through painful experience. The sermon must always be based upon sound and careful exegesis so that it explains the text, the Word of God.

There is one characteristic of our Seminary that is basic. It underlies all of the teaching and is unmistakably clear even to the most casual observer. The Theological School of the Prot. Ref. Churches is characterized by a profound respect for the Word of God, the Bible. In all of the teaching there is a humble attitude of faith in the Scriptures. We do not question Scripture's authority, we simply accept it in faith. From this point of view seminary work is not first of all an intellectual exercise. The emphasis is first of all and fundamentally an emphasis upon Scripture. The first question always is and must be: "What does the Bible say?" This attitude characterizes all discussion between faculty and students. The Professor's first rejoinder to a student's argument or question is: "Do you have a text or passage from Scripture upon which you base your position?"

All of this is not to say that study in our school is done in the "no creed but Christ" atmosphere of American fundamentalism. Nothing could be farther from the truth. There is a high regard for the creeds, confessions, and systematic exposition of the truth. Nevertheless this profound respect for the Word of God underlies all of the work done in our Seminary.

This is not all, from a scholastic point of view our Seminary need take a backseat to no other Seminary. The students are instructed by three able scholars. Rev. G. Vos, instructor in Dutch, is well suited for his task. His instruction, both in the Netherlands and in this country, makes him well qualified. Besides giving thorough instruction in the intricacies of Dutch grammar, he unselfishly passes on bits of advice to the student. Advice based on nearly forty years in the ministry. Prof. H. C. Hoeksema, instructor in the Old Testament branches, is a graduate of Calvin College, the Prot. Ref. Seminary, and in addition has done graduate work in our school. His lectures are always stimulating, thought provoking. Scripturally oriented, and never dull. They reveal careful research and the God-given gift of insight into the meaning of Scripture. Rev. H. Hoeksema, instructor in Dogmatics and the New Testament branches, is well-known to all of us. His theological acumen is highly recognized by friend and foe alike both in this country and in Europe. We need say no more.

Young men, do you want thorough instruction in all the aspects of the theological curriculum? You can get it at our Seminary. This, however, is not the first question to ask. Does God call you to this work? The need is great in our churches. Give this calling your prayerful consideration. If you are called you may look forward to our Seminary with eager anticipation. You will be instructed thoroughly in the theology of Scripture. You will be privileged to study under three men who are wholly dedicated to the task of teaching and propagating the Truth as God has revealed it to us. Not as important, but nevertheless having its place is the level of scholarship. To put it rather bluntly, the level of scholarship at our school is a challenge to the best minds. Do not be discouraged by that; the Lord qualifies those whom He calls. Remember, young men, there is no higher calling; nor is there a more rewarding work than the ministry.
A SUNDAY IN HOUSTON

It is Sunday morning in the big city on the gulf coast in the "deep south." And it will be a busy and big day for the missionary and his faithful helper-meet. It is springtime, really, and not simply on the calendar. Birds are singing their lusty notes, mockingbirds are running once more through their repertoire of musical harmonies; there is a freshness in the air, wafting in gently from the northland, promising that the day will not be hot, salty and humid from the gulf winds, but will be cool and invigorating. The roses are in full bloom everywhere, in gorgeous array of white, pink, and deep red. It is April and one thinks of the song from more northern climes: "What is so rare as a day in June." All nature praisethed God, and he has made every thing beautiful in its own time, and place!

Breakfast is finished and the missionary walks the distance to the Y.M.C.A. building some six tenths of a mile distant. He is first of all janitor. He is fortified with two keys, one to open the door of the "Y" and the other to open the doors within the "Y." And, confidentially, this key fits every door of every room in the "Y." Your missionary is on his honor to mind his own business! Opening the door on the large stone edifice he is greeted by the odors of sweating bodies and steam-baths which, during the night, have penetrated into the lobby. Quickly he opens the door on each end of the building and soon all is cool and fresh.

He checks the rooms marked "Club Rooms 110" where the services are held. The windows are turned ajar for ventilation, and all is checked whether the "colored man" really has everything in readiness. He has assured your missionary that he must make himself at home. He said: "You make yourself at home, preacher. Just so you don't get drunk."

It is 8:55 when the Missionary returns home. He must carry the box of Psalters into the car, the tape recorder and the amplified speaker for music for the services, played by "Fran," Case's wife. It is beautiful music on tapes, mingled organ harmonies and chimes, with a canary trying to outdo the organ with its trills and runs. That is for prelude to music! I must when I carry these heavy packages, "that it is a good thing that the Lord gave me strong arms and a strong back." At the "Y" these must once more be hussed into the building and set up.

Sunday School begins at 9:45 a. m. Correction: Sunday School is announced to begin at 9:45 a. m. At 9:40 all is in readiness and the sonorous organ tunes will peal through the building and up the hall-ways. "I wonder who will be at the service today and in Sunday School," muses Mrs. Lubbers. We listen: it is a car door slamming. The first two people arrive. They have their Wollen-sak Tape recorder with them, which is set up for the service to record the sermon at 11:00 a. m. A few more arrive, some chil-
singing special to the is a "green" in a happy and blessed sermon, too, when it is six by the clock we tune in to KFMK, 98 F.M. and listen to our own "Reformed Witness Hour" to hear the masterful preaching of our own Rev. H. H. Hoeksema on "The Condemnation of Pilate." Yes, "Domine" is become to us our "Nestor," still preaching with the freshness of youth in his old age.

By the time that the program is ended, and we have digested the message, the singing, and have enjoyed the semi-domestic part of the program, our Peter and Tom announcing, our Frau playing, our Roland leading the choir, it is again time to return to the Y.M.C.A. building. But our spirits are refreshed. The prophet of old said: "bring me a minstrel" before he prophesied. A minister needs a minstrel to preach. And so with up-lifted spirits we go once more for the evening service.

Once more, who will be present is the question. We are certain that the services will not start on the scheduled hour exactly. At 7:45 we feel that the audience has arrived and we begin the service. This time there are two tape recorders to record the sermon. It was a good hour together. And when the worship services were over, once more, the books are packed into the box, the tape-recorder equipment is disassembled, and the brethren volunteer to carry it for Mrs. Lubbers and me to the car. The doors are locked, the lights are all extinguished, and we wander our way home. A brother and a sister at the services accept our invitation for a little visit.

We listen for a little while, before retiring, to the music of familiar hymns, called "Great Music Of The Church," and retire with a prayer of thanksgiving to God. Committing the seed that was sown to the Lord of harvest, and a tune lingers in our mind: "The sower bearing precious seed . . . . ." and we think of the great apostle who said: "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God . . . ."

At the end of a Sabbath day, in Houston, we sink into peaceful slumber.

Eighteen
The Loveland Protestant Reformed Christian School

TOM DE VRIES

In April of 1959, a school society was organized by the members of the Loveland Protestant Reformed Church. This was just ten months after the Loveland church had been accepted into the Protestant Reformed denomination. The five member school board immediately began work, and worked diligently through the next two years. The board decided that two rooms in the basement of the church, which is an old schoolhouse, could be used for a school. These two rooms were cleaned out and painted, and blackboards, a heater, and other necessities of a school were added.

In September of 1961, the school became a reality, and Miss Ruth Kuiper became the first teacher. Under her were seven students in grades one, two, three, and five, with one student unclassified according to grade. At the present time, the school has an enrollment of six, and Mr. Tom DeVries is the teacher. The third grade has two boys, the fourth, a girl and a boy, the sixth one girl, and one student, who is mentally retarded, is not classified in a specific grade. The students live in widely separated areas: one ten miles to the north, one ten miles to the south, one in Loveland, and three live on a nearby farm.

The school very much reminds one of the old country school which we ourselves or our fathers possibly attended. One room is used as a classroom, while the other room is used for reading and science experiments. Singing and Bible are the only classes which are incorporated into one. Most of the students' work is done independently, since the teacher has little time to devote to one grade for a long period of time. The subject compliment is generally the same as that of our Protestant Reformed schools in the Grand Rapids area. The educational standards are equally as high as the other Protestant Reformed schools, and are higher than the local public schools.

Many interesting things can happen in a school of this type. When just three students are ill, half of the school is missing. At recess time the two girls have a hard time adjusting to the boys' rough games, although they can generally hold their own. The water supply, which consists of a cistern and a hand pump, often freezes in the winter, so water is brought in bottles from home. The local farmers' dogs, which are attracted to (or by) the children are quite numerous, and for about one-half year the school boasted three cats, which lived in a large shed in the school yard. In front of the school is a large irrigation canal which balls are mistakenly thrown into, and carried downstream. When this happens the teacher is summoned, and the ball is retrieved, sometimes as far as a block away.

A person might think that a school of this size would be very impractical and almost out of the question. However, the very opposite is true. Christian education, specifically Protestant Reformed education, is a necessity, and it should be the calling of each of our churches to see that this education becomes a reality. The people of Loveland have shown that this calling should, and can be realized, even though a school may be very small and seemingly insignificant. A small school can be just as practical and efficient as a large one; this is clearly illustrated in the Loveland Protestant Reformed Christian School.
**Music in the Churches:**

The Resurrection is a theme which the church has always loved to express in song. This season there were several musical events in our churches.

On April 14 Hope Church was filled as the Hope Choral Society, directed by Mr. Gerald Kuiper, sang the Cantata, "Life Eternal." They were to present the same program in Southwest Church on April 28, under the sponsorship of the Young People's Society of that church.

*Beacon Lights* sponsored an Easter Singspiration for the churches in the Grand Rapids area on April 7 in Southwest Church. Mr. Philip Lotterman led the singing, and the special numbers were an organ solo by Lois Schipper and a vocal solo by Dave Bol.

Doon's Young People's Society was host to the Easter Singspiration of our Iowa and Minnesota churches on April 14. The offering was for the Scholarship Fund.

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**Radio News**

The Program Committee of the Reformed Witness Hour has sent along to us a “preview” of speakers who are to be heard, the Lord willing, on our Protestant Reformed radio broadcasts the next few months. For the month of May, Rev. G. Van Baren of Randolph, Wisconsin, has taped four sermons with the general theme, “God’s Creation.” During June, Prof. H. C. Hoeksema of our Theological Seminary will be heard. His first message is to be a Pentecostal sermon, to be followed by two messages concerning the “Preaching of the Word.” The last two Sundays of June, Prof. Hoeksema treats the well known text of John 3:16, which reveals “God’s Love.” For July, Rev. J. A. Heys (South Holland, Illinois) has already recorded four sermons explaining various aspects of “God’s Church.” For further study of these subjects printed copies of the sermons can be obtained by writing to: Reformed Witness Hour, Box 1230, Grand Rapids 1, Michigan.

Rev. J. Kortering has declined the call to Loveland.

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**Calls:**

Rev. H. Veldman has accepted the call to Hope Church.

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*Twenty*
Wedding bells

rang for James Dr. Vries and Shirley Christians (Randolph) on March 23.

Our Schools

Our children commemorated the season of the Resurrection in song and speech:

On April 11 the pupils of Hope School presented a program in First Church, developing the theme, “The Way to Glory.”

The Junior High Choir and the Small Choir of Adams St. School, as well as the Radio Choir of the Reformed Witness Hour participated in a program in First Church on April 21; all three groups are directed by Mr. Roland Petersen.

A brief Easter program was given by the school children at the April 14 meeting of the Adams St. School Mothers Club.

These new infant members were reported to us:

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Peter Faber (First)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. James Dykstra (First)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Holstege (Hudsonville)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Don Van Overloop (Hudsonville)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Cnossen (Hudsonville)

News Nuggets:

The League of Mr. and Mrs. Societies met in Southeast Church on April 19. Rev. John Heys ably developed the topic suggested to him “The Responsibility of the Christian toward his Government and in Civic Affairs.” An interesting discussion followed.

The Young People’s Banquet for those in the Grand Rapids area will be held May 14 in First Church.

From Jamaica a “thank you” was received from Revs. Frame and Thompson, and Evangelist Dixon, for the gift of clothing sent them by our churches.

Rev. G. Van Baren planned to spend April 21, 28 and May 5 preaching in Lynden. The first of these three Sundays Randolph’s pulpit was supplied by Seminarian Robert Decker.

An enjoyable evening was spent by the congregation of First Church on April 4, when it celebrated Rev. Hanko’s 15th anniversary as its pastor.

The Consistory of Randolph Church sponsored a lecture by Rev. G. Van Baren on the subject “Signs of the Times.”

Rev. B. Woudenberg is the author of the latest pamphlet printed by the Reformed Action Society, entitled “Election and the Atonement.”

“More than Conquerors” will be the theme of the Young People’s Convention to be held in Edgerton, Minnesota, August 20, 21, and 22.

The Western Ladies’ League meeting was held in Doon Church on April 28. Rev. H. Hanko was the speaker, and his topic was “A Mother’s Witness.”

On April 19 those in the Hull, Doon and Edgerton area were privileged to hear Mr. Henry Meulenberg of First Church describe his experiences and show slides of the trip to Jamaica which he made with Mr. Zwak of Hudsonville. The meeting was held in Rock Rapids.
YOUNG PEOPLE'S BANQUET

MAY 14 AT 6:15 P. M.

FIRST PROTESTANT REFORMED CHURCH

REV. R. C. HARBACH — SPEAKER