BEACON LIGHTS
for PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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"Don't Ask What Your Country Can Do for You, Ask What You Can Do for Your Country."

ROBERT D. DECKER

God of the Gaps

JOHN BUTLER
BEACON LIGHTS
FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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In This Issue

GOD OF THE GAPS ........................................... 1
John Butler

EDITORIAL — "Don't Ask What Your Country Can Do for You; Ask What You Can Do for Your Country" ... 2
Robert D. Dekker

PRIDE GOETH ............................................... 4
Charles H. Westra

FROM DORT TO TODAY (10) 8
A Time of Decline (1619-1834)
Rev. Herman Hanko

TRUTH vs ERROR ........................................ 10
Graham, Fundamentalism and Free Will
Rev. Robert C. Harbach

HELPs TO BIBLE STUDY (Genesis 23) 13
Abraham Purchases a Burying Place for His Dead
Rev. G. Lubbers

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY 15
The Blessing of God
Rev. G. Van Baren

NEWS ...................................................... 17
Lois E. Kregel
Feature Article

GOD OF THE GAPS

JOHN BUI TER

If the strangeness of the title of this article has increased your interest in it, let me begin with the statement that this is not a study of some strange, newly discovered cult. This is not some group called the Caps, whose deity we are studying.

The title refers to those areas, those gaps in science, which man cannot explain or has not discovered and the fact that as modern inventions and discoveries fill these gaps God is diminished. In this article an attempt will be made to analyze this situation, to see the dangers of such a diminishing, and to offer some guidelines to prevent this.

Man has always tried to formulate some sort of explanation for what he observes in the world about him. Men of old have developed elaborate mythologies to explain much of the phenomenon of the world in which we live. Even as scientist today refuse to see God in the operation of His creation, so these men of old corrupted what they saw in the creation according to the vain imaginations of their hearts. These modern day scientist accuse us, the Church, of being as these ancient people in holding to outmoded mythological explanations of the world about us instead of seeking knowledge in the "scientific method." As modern man more and more discovers the logical structure of the creation, sees the beautiful unity inherent in it, he wants to push the gods and God out of the picture. The way in which God governs His creation gives way to the all important laws of science.

As we approach these same areas in our studies, especially in the area of science courses, we also are in danger of looking so closely at the many laws of science that we lose sight of the fact that these laws are statements of the ways in which God controls and governs His creation. God is only called upon to fill the gaps that the scientific laws fail to explain. This is not only true in the area of science, with the modern math curriculum today more emphasis is placed on the structure of number systems and the mathematical laws. As these laws occupy a greater place in our studies we have an increased danger that the laws become the object of our studies, the understanding of these laws the goals of our science and mathematics education.

In this process we fail to see and emphasize that all these laws are ultimately God's laws. These are not finally natural laws, chemical laws, physical laws, biological laws, mathematical laws, etc. All these laws are the laws which God placed in operation in the creation.

Our approach to this problem must be found in our unique approach to the whole area of education. The object of studies in the fields of science and mathematics is the same as that in all subject matter. We are studying God's revelation, as He reveals Himself in His creation, guided by His revelation in His Word and His revelation through the Spirit as He speaks to us in that Word. As we increase in knowledge of the things of this creation we should increase in our knowledge of God, His Godhead and His power.

Does this mean that our studies in these subjects have no practical benefit? That as modern inventions and discoveries give us greater insight into the operation of the creation we are not concerned with the usefulness of this knowledge in our lives? Certainly, this is not the case. This should be another objective of our education. As we gain greater insight and understanding of the world about us we have a greater potential as stewards of these gifts of God. We today have a greater potential of using this world in the service of God or in the service of sin than our forefathers. As the inventions and discoveries increase, as they are very rapidly today, we furnish ourselves with greater potential for good works but also for sin. This too is a result of the
study of science. As we learn more we also must become stewards over greater things.

Does all the above mean that we should change the whole set of laws that have been developed in the fields of science and mathematics? Is something to be gained by changing the many names which have been applied to these discoveries and inventions to names such as God's law for this and God's law for that? Should we no longer talk of Bernoulli's Law, the kinetic theory of gases, the Pythagorean Theorem, the associative property of addition? Will the problem of making God a God of only the gaps in our knowledge be solved in this way. Substituting new names for all these discoveries will not solve any problems. The defense against this danger is the proper objectives in the study of these discoveries and modern inventions.

Our emphasis must always be that we are studying the work of God's hand and that in this work He reveals Himself. That the goal of this study is a greater understanding of the Creator must be emphasized. He has made us so that we are able to see God revealed in His handiwork. By His Grace we are capable of using these gifts to His honor and glory. We must see God in all areas of our scientific study. God should not be called upon to explain only those gaps which we cannot explain with our discoveries. Let us not make Him a God of the Gaps.

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Editorial . . .

"DON'T ASK WHAT YOUR COUNTRY CAN DO FOR YOU; ASK WHAT YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR COUNTRY"

The words of this quotation are familiar to all of us. They were spoken with a "Bostonian twang" in January of the year 1961 and are found in the inaugural address of the late President of the United States, John F. Kennedy. Whatever this has to do with a BEACON LIGHTS editorial is undoubtedly the question in your minds. The editorial has nothing to do with our late President.

But let us begin at the beginning of the story so that we can understand what prompted the undersigned to entitle this month's editorial with J.F.K.'s famous words. Our story begins on a balmy spring day in April. The editor had just been dismissed from his classes with Rev. H. Hoeksema in the Seminary. Classes were dismissed early so the student decided to walk to Calvin College (two short blocks east of Fuller Ave. Church) in order to browse around for a short time in the College Bookstore.

These plans were thwarted when he happened upon one of the Prot. Ref. Pastors also out for a stroll. The minister had something weighing heavily on his mind and wished to know the editor's opinion of the matter.

It seems that some of our young people are afflicted with apathy in re: the affairs of
the church and in particular the Young People's Society. Now apathy is a very serious disease. It is, in fact, if left unhindered, deadly. The word apathy comes from a Greek word which literally means "not suffering." Hence its derived English meaning is "want of feeling" or "indifference" toward something. Applied to the affairs of the Church or Young People's society to be apathetic means to be indifferent toward them. In other words we are talking about spiritual apathy and spiritual apathy is indeed a most serious disease.

The minister's question was what can we as ministers, society leaders, and others in a position to lead the young people do to combat this deadly disease? Then came to mind the famous quotation of J. F. K. only with one word changed. Thus altered we get: "Don't ask what your society can do for you; ask what you can do for your society." The problem is not what the society is or is not doing, but what you its member are or are not doing. Oh, Yes, it is true we can do nothing by ourselves for God, we cannot even begin to serve Him. But as regenerate, sanctified children of God, operating from the principle of the new life in Christ we can and do. As such the Lord admonishes and exhorts us in His Word to walk in His ways, to put off the unfruitful works of darkness, to be holy, etc. And the unmistakable fact remains that no society is more alive than any of its individual members. The society as a whole is afflicted with apathy only to the degree that the individuals who make up that society, are apathetic. Need more be written; the implications are plain are they not? If your society is sick, maybe it's because you are!

What are some of the symptoms of apathy? Perhaps we can best observe the symptoms by examining three individuals who are afflicted with the disease. Perhaps they are familiar to you; their names are: John Van Hasty, George Van Donothing, and Molly Van Doesnotspeakup. John Van Hasty appears to be very healthy and active. It is sometimes rather difficult to detect John's apathy, but it has been definitely found. John, one month ago, was given an assignment to compose a reading for the society "after-recess" program. He readily complied. At last week's meeting of "Young Peoples" John gave a short, poorly done reading which benefited the society little.

Many again went home dissatisfied and disgusted. Van Hasty, you see, had given no time — though he had had a whole month — to the preparation of his paper. He was apathetic and therefore the entire society suffered.

George Van Donothing's case is very similar. In a way George's type of apathy isn't quite as bad as John's. George at least makes no attempt to cover it up. When George was asked to take part in a panel discussion, he simply said, for no good reason: "No thanks, I'd rather not."

The third case-study involves Molly Van Doesnotspeakup. Her case is very simple. She faithfully attends every meeting (even when the high school has a basketball game!). She converses with her friends during the few minutes preceding society. From the time of opening prayer, however, to closing prayer she says NOTHING. Her only reaction to the discussion is an occasional benign smile accompanied by an almost indiscernible nod of the head. Her only contribution is her presence.

Though the above cited examples are three distinct cases of the disease, they do have one thing in common. They are severe critics of their Young People's Society. One hears such things as: "The minister does all the talking" (this is Molly's favorite remark after society); or "Its always that certain few who get to do everything" (George's comment); or "Sure have lousy programs in society — wish we could do something interesting once" (John's gripe).

Is your society boring, uninteresting, or listless? Perhaps it's because of you. Do you fit into any of the above examples? Again let it be repeated; the society as a whole is afflicted with apathy only to the degree that its individual members are.

Let's be honest, confess our faults and seek God's grace in order that we may live as those who are thankful to God for the victory given us through our Lord Jesus Christ. Then we shall heed the admonition of God's Word found in 1 Cor. 15:58: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always (italics mine, R.D.) abounding in the work of the Lord, foreseeing as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

The ones who by grace heed that admonition do not and never will have that horrible sickness, apathy.
Pride Goeth

The slow rain had been drizzling down for three days. The gray sky and the decrepit old buildings snuggled together, each matching the other shade for shade of the same weary color. A young sailor in a wet summer uniform sluffed along the sidewalk, stopping now and then in a deserted doorway. But they offered little, and with a tired restlessness he moved on.

"Only the second day of a week-end leave and after last night I'm too broke to pay for a room or buy a raincoat. Nobody goes back to the ship halfway through a leave, so I'll just walk. Maybe something will show up. Somehow, when I keep moving it doesn't seem quite as cold. There's a rescue mission in the last block, but that's for drunks . . ."

The sidewalk was littered with the usual debris that gathers in neglected downtown areas, and after being wafted by capricious winds from doorway to gutter to sidewalk, is pounded by the restless feet of the derelicts of society who haunt these areas. To a head bowed with shame and remorse, these bits of litter pass by in a monotonous, never-ending symbol of departed usefulness: a candy wrapper, a torn tract, a flattened wad of gum, a broken pencil. A month-old newspaper. All past usefulness. All dismal. All dead.

"This headache isn't the worst thing — it's this . . . this . . . feeling way down that makes things so miserable." Even in his own mind he suppressed the word "guilt" although he knew it to be the most accurate description of his feelings.

For a minute, Sid Van Bloom imagined himself as a prodigal son and toyed with the idea of calling his folks by long distance phone. But somehow it never jelled. The thought of his father brought to mind the "farewell sermon" as he had dubbed the anticipated "man to man" talk he had had with his father the night before he left for the navy. "Son, you are going to see things and meet people that today you'd say simply don't exist. People of the world live differently, Sid, and I want you to be careful. Stay away from the beer gardens and girls who smoke and don't forget you're supposed to be a Christian."

The "sermon" had been short, unorganized and poorly received by the audience of one. "Aw lay off it, will you, Dad? You brought me up right. I've gone through catechism, I sang in the choir, I've gone to Youth Fellowship meetings since I was fourteen. Just don't sweat it, huh? I know things are going to be different, but I'll take care of myself."

He walked past a gray stone church and wondered how he could ever face his fellow church members again. He who had sung so piously in the choir was now nursing a hangover in a skid row area. On his first leave home, he had substituted for an absent Sunday School teacher and had basked in the wide-eyed hero worship of the youngsters who enjoyed the novelty of a Sailor-Sunday-School-Teacher. How could he face those youngsters again? The memory of those trusting up-turned faces scared like a firebrand into his reeling mind.

The rain freshened and snapped short the reverie. Sid found himself in a neighborhood made up of crumbling foundations, bits of building materials and tall stately elm trees. Obviously a highway was to be built through this old neighborhood and although the houses had been removed, the trees remained like tall, proud giants, quite unconcerned by the petty hurly-burly of the several generations who scurried about under their branches — working, crying, struggling, and dying. All important but futile and temporal. The trees nodded easily in the light night breeze, as if disdainful of all they surveyed.

At another time Sid would have enjoyed
sitting against one of these elms and would have savored the illusion of loneliness created by a long, almost sinister branches as they wafted themselves over the wreckage below. But this time the loneliness was more than illusionary; it was real. And it intensified by the memory of a nineteen year old fool who had sneered at his father’s naiveté but farewell admonitions.

“When the other guys want to do something that you know is wrong don’t be afraid to tell them no,” his father had said. Sid remembered nodding in bored acquiescence.

But once on board ship it hadn’t been that easy. Rushing to be off the ship for leave, but unfamiliar with the town, and eager to be one of the crowd, he had allowed himself to be intrigued with the promises of the more seasoned crew members. “We’ll take you out and show you stuff you never saw in Sunday School,” one had bragged. “Yeah man, tonight’s the night we introduce Dutch to the big city.” Bright lights, hot music, plush nite spots, and pretty girls. The promised panorama had raced before his mind, sped on by curiosity and anticipation. Now it dragged past, indefinite and fuzzy in the mind of a lonely, heavy-hearted sailor who was sitting in the rain under a dripping elm tree in a destroyed neighborhood. The bright lights had glared, the music blared, the drinks produced nausea, and the pretty girls were fiction. Everything was fake, tinsel, cheap, and transient. Like his “friends” who had promised the night of fun. Where were they?

Sid rubbed his hands over his eyes as if to clear his mind. He couldn’t remember the events of the evening. Which had he lost first, his friends or his money? He suspected they had disappeared simultaneously.

Friends gone, money gone, self-respect gone, wet, cold, lonely, dejected — like being in a deep crevice with no way out, and the walls keep pressing closer and closer until the will to live is gone while the actuality of life remains momentarily.

“The river — that’s the answer — I can be there in ten minutes, and in eleven minutes I’ll be nothing but 97 cents worth of miscellaneous chemicals bobbing into oblivion with no remorse, no memories, no grinding feeling of shame.”

The price he was about to pay for his relief made the freedom bitter-sweet and he found himself hurrying towards the river in a panic like one rushing to complete a task in which he has little confidence yet feels compelled to perform. “Gotta hurry — only nine minutes left.”

The rescue mission he had noticed earlier appeared across the street. A flickering neon sign through the misty rain asked those who passed by “Are You Ready?” A collection of cast-off kitchen chairs, forced into an uneasy uniformity by a coat of yellow enamel dominated the interior and were occupied by two dozen skid row habitues. A large Bible lay open in the window, flanked on either side by posters announcing a coming revival. A bent man wearing an out-of-style suit coat over a heavy knit sweater stood at the front door passing out tracts with a toothy smile.

“Even got the assistant Barker at the gate” thought Sid, reflecting Citadel City’s general opinion that rescue missions and carnivals both make good entertainment, but in the comparison, the missions come in second. “Step right up folks, Salvation is just a prayer away.” Cynicism and imagination are dangerous when combined, but this time the combination served to convince Sid that it might be worth a minute or two to “Watch the show.” “Once I’m dead, I’m dead, I’m dead a long time. Ain’t that right?” he asked a bus patron who waited nearby but moved away quickly when Sid appeared to want conversation.

His eyes seemed to lose their focus momentarily, and Sid sat down on the step of a bank in order to get things lined up again.

“That head Barker over yonder must be at least a hundred pounds overweight,” he told his audience which consisted of a parking meter and a telephone booth. “Never smoke, never drink, no siree, but eat like hogs. That’s a fundamentalist for ya.” His audience remained quiet, so the speaker continued, “But that’s no worry of mine ’cause in five minutes... kaput, alles kaput.”

His exposition was cut short by the hopeless attempts of the mission superintendent (who apparently had a tin ear) in leading the motley group of men in singing. Each man chose his own pitch and tempo and eager to impress the mission management with his zeal, (it’s raining outside) tried to pull the others along. The monotonies shouted the rest.

BEACON LIGHTS

Five
“Typical,” sneered Sid, “dinky shallow doctrine yet as happy as kids about the whole thing. But what a mess they’re making of that song. Why don’t they use the piano, it’s sitting right there! The least Ole Fatty could do would be to give them the pitch. Probably just too plain stupid.

“Just once, just once, I’d like to tell a bunch of nuts like that what they really are.” He consulted his watch, but couldn’t focus on the dial. “Must have about four minutes left, but the bridge is only a block away. Better hurry!”

“Stop this hollerin’ and screaming,” Sid heard himself yell as he plowed through the door of the mission. “You guys sound like a bunch of sick dogs hollerin’ at the moon. If you’re gonna sing good songs, then sing ’em right!”

“Who made you a preacher, swabby,” a voice challenged from the back of the room, “the booze?”

“Shut up! Now listen you bunch of winoes, and you too, Chubby,” he said turning to the leader.

“The name is Art, Brother Art.”

“Okay, chubby Brother Art, I’ve got just three more minutes to live and if it’s the last thing I do, I’m gonna teach you guys how to sing that song you were just in the process of killing. Now listen! ‘Mine Eyes Have Seen The Glory’ ain’t such a hot song as songs go, but it’ll do for your first singing lesson. Now, I’m going to play the first line of that song, and when I nod my head like this,” and he demonstrated emphatically, you all start singing, and loud. If I see anybody not singing it’ll go hard on him.”

He snatched a book from a scared little man in the front row and spun towards the piano.

What was this crazy situation he got himself into? The fog had cleared away a bit, but he remembered his actions clearly. Sitting at the piano was at the same time familiar and strange. As a youngster he had agonized his way through three years of scales and arpeggios but hadn’t touched a piano since his enlistment. About a third of the ivories were missing and several dropped too far down to play. It reminded Sid of a piano in the basement recreation room of a friend of his. The youth group had met there for refreshments after a skating party and he had accompanied an impromptu quartet. The thought of the uninhibited singing and playing that night made the present tense situation a study in contrast, not similarities. Yet the warm glow of playing for the singing that night refused to leave his mind.

He braced the hymnbook between two others and slammed out the first line of the song, then in response to his nod the room erupted with a surprisingly coordinated sound as the twenty-some delicts tried their best to humor one who had added spice to an otherwise dull meeting.

It was easier going by the time they came to the chorus, and the pent-up agonies which had been building up during the evening found release in the feverish working of his fingers as they scrambled to find their own way up and down the keyboard.

“Hallelujah” yelled a man near the back when the song had ended. “We ain’t sung like that for a month. Play the second verse, Sailor Boy!”

Carried along in the enthusiasm he had strangely created, Sid played the song through again, and was surprised to find himself humming along.

But bitterness leaves hard, and when the mission superintendent suggested another number, Sid whirled at him, “You shut up, fat boy, this is my show. Your clue to come back on stage comes when I jump off that bridge in exactly one minute.”

“Suicide?”

“Yeah, so what!”

“So nothing, but we haven’t been able to get a pianist to come down here for weeks and the men would sure appreciate another song or two. What have you got to lose, this close to the end?”

Sid studied the man for several long seconds. He had taken off the bulky tweed sports jacket he had been wearing, and Sid saw that he was of a stocky build, plenty husky and muscular, yet not overweight. His hands were calloused and belonged to someone who knew common labor. His eyes were narrowing as he waited for an answer.

“Oh, all right, one more, but make it a good one.”

“Number 68.”

Sid fanned the pages to the requested number and then slammed the book shut. “That’s trash. I ain’t gonna play it.”

“What’s wrong with ‘Where Is My Wandering Boy Tonight’, Mr. Sailor Boy with the guilty conscience?” asked Art.
"It's nothing but emotionalism; that's what's wrong with it," snapped Sid with the conviction that the mere accusation would drown any possible opposition. But it didn't.

"So emotionalism is what's wrong with it, my wandering Sailor Boy; and Who, pray tell, made your emotions, and why?"

Sid was over his head. The fog in his mind and the unexpected defense of something he had been taught to despise combined to leave him without an answer.

"I'll tell you why you got emotions; it's so that we show what's inside us, specially over against God. It's emotions that make us feel guilty-like, and talk about jumping off bridges."

Sid cringed. The memory of what he had planned came back as if out of another world, but it came back strong and bitter.

"It's emotions that make us mad about lousy singing, and go barging into a meeting like you did a few minutes ago. So don't sell emotions short, fella. God used 'em to bring you in here tonight. And not just to give you a place out of the rain either, but to give you something to do in His kingdom, which always makes a guy feel better."

Sid had turned towards the leader, and with one hand on the rear edge of the bench, continued to stare at the painted floor. He wanted to answer, but couldn't. It was easier to say nothing than to admit that there could be more truth in what he was being told by this husky preacher than in his own actions. By this time Art had walked to him and had placed his hand on Sid's shoulder.

"Okay, I'll play it," he said quietly.

"Please don't. It's a lousy song, but tonight it filled a very good purpose."

Sid didn't remember much about the remainder of the service except that he looked forward to the occasional song which punctuated the mission superintendent's speech. Each time he stopped forward to the piano he felt a sense of purpose he had never experienced before. The little mission needed help that night, and he knew he had been led to furnish the help. And yet he couldn't help but wonder who had received the most help, the men or he himself. In his own mind the answer was obvious.

"I don't see how I could have gone so far off beam," Sid told Art after the meeting as they sat around an oilcloth covered table and drank strong black coffee. "I have good parents, who brought me up with a strong sense of right and wrong. I've gone to church all my life. I guess I'm just not as strong as I thought I was."

"That's just the trouble, we all think we have a certain amount of resistance to sin; and it seems as if we do, as long as there's no temptation around. But just as soon as things get a little rough our imaginary strength lets us fall flat on our faces. Right?"

"Right. But I came storming in here, messing things up, and although I can't remember anything of our lesson, I began to feel better when I realized that I could be of some use here, and I began to take a real interest in the singing."

"I don't want to sound preachy, Sid, but take it from this part-time brick layer and part-time preacher, there's spiritual therapy in helping others. End of sermon. Now scam upstairs. Brother George has some dry clothes and a bed set aside for you. Says he'll do anything legal to keep a piano player from catching pneumonia."

The staff of Beacon Lights wishes to remember Miss Louise Looyenga, a fellow member of the staff, in the death of her mother,

MRS. LOUIS LOOYENGA

Our prayer is that the Lord may comfort her in her bereavement and strengthen her in the faith that all things work together to the good of them that love the Lord.

Beacon Lights Staff

BEACON LIGHTS

Seven
FROM DORT TO TODAY

the development of the reformed faith

(10)

REV. HERMAN HANKO

A TIME OF DECLINE (1619-1834)

We discussed in the last two articles the sad condition into which the Reformed Churches had fallen in the period between the Synod of Dort and the Seccession of 1834. We discussed some of the major causes of this spiritual decline, notably the influence that the State had in the affairs of the Church.

Although this is an interesting, profitable, but also difficult subject, we will not enter into a discussion of the Scriptural view of the relation between Church and State. I would only like to call the attention of the reader to the fact that the State in the Netherlands could support its interference in ecclesiastical matters by appealing to Article XXXVI of the Belgic Confession. It is not the point of these articles to dispute the position of Article XXXVI; especially where the article maintains that the calling of the State is to "promote the true religion." In fact, it is quite possible that from a principle point of view this article ought to stand unchanged. It is only our point to show that when the State itself becomes corrupt and still has influence in the affairs of the Church, the Church of Christ naturally suffers for it.

However this may be, we turn our attention now to some of the doctrinal discussions that engaged the Church during this period.

We do not intend to go into these discussions in detail; nor is it our purpose to discuss all of them— even briefly. We are only interested in giving some idea of how far the Church had drifted away from the truth and how deeply it had sunk into apostasy.

Nor do we want to leave the impression that there were no more defenders of the truth to be found during this period. This is far from the case. Although there were many false teachers and although every conceivable kind of heresy was being taught in the Church, there were always very strong and faithful defenders of the truth, men who tried to uphold the creeds, leaders (both ministers and professors) who pressed for discipline, who resisted the State, who wrote and preached against the evil about them. And very often they even had to suffer for their position. But mostly their hands were tied so that they could not accomplish their objectives. They were silenced while the heretics were encouraged. Their books in defense of the truth were put under the ban of the State, while the books of the heretics were given State approval.

And even though the people in the Church drifted into false security and dead orthodoxy; even though the Church became very worldly; there were many who saw these evils and who tried to stem the tide. They preached against these evils, wrote against them and did everything they could to arouse the people to greater faithfulness.

But the general condition of the Church was bad.

What were some of the major doctrinal controversies of this period?

There was first of all a controversy about
the error of dispensationalism. The views of dispensationalism were first advanced by a certain Johannes Cocceius who was a professor of Hebrew in the University of Franeker (which university was a "hot-bed" of heresy throughout this period) and later professor of theology in the University of Leyden. He was in many ways a gifted theologian who wrote his own dogmatics and made some sound contributions to the development of the truth. But he advanced views that were contrary to the creeds in that he taught a kind of a dispensationalism that separated the Old Testament and the New, that made distinction between the Old covenant and the New, between Israel and the Gentiles, and that led to a false pre-millennialism. In conformity with these views, he and his followers also attacked the Sabbath and insisted that the Lord had not intended that one day of the week be a special day of worship for the New Dispensational Church.

The various Classes and Particular Synods involved made attempts to discipline Cocceius and his followers (for he soon gained many disciples), but they were stymied in their efforts by the heavy hand of the State which constantly urged tolerance. The result was that gradually the issue died down without ever being settled. But there remained in the Church many who maintained these views; and this is true up until the present.

Secondly, we already noticed that a certain cold and deadly outward profession of the truth seized the Church at this time. Dead orthodoxy was a reality. The result of this was that all kinds of worldliness crept into the Church. Immorality, materialism, godless living was not at all uncommon. In defense of this worldliness certain men appeared who adopted antinomian positions. They taught that the child of God really had no moral obligation before God to keep the law, for he was justified only on the basis of Christ's atonement and not on the basis of any works. Therefore a man had the right "to sin in order that grace might abound." Often this position resulted in outright libertinism of the kind that troubled Calvin in Geneva. They deliberately sought out the pleasures of sin and tried to justify this godless conduct with theological arguments.

As a reaction to this there arose in the country various pietistic groups who emphasized subjective religious experience. In fact, these pietistic movements were one of the dominant influences of the period. There is considerable literature written on these movements, and the interested reader can find this literature in any good library.

It is sufficient for our purpose to give a brief sketch of these movements and their basic teachings.

Although there were many such groups, they all had in common their emphasis on the necessity of inward spiritual experience. They spoke of the need for the child of God to come to the positive assurance of his salvation. But this assurance could only be based on some dramatic and clearly definable experience in which the believer heard the voice of God speaking directly to him. Only then could he justify his place in the Church and make a profession of the fact that he was a Christian with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Some of these groups did not go to far from the truth, although they were deeply mystical. They maintained for the most part the doctrines of Scripture and the creeds, although their emphasis was not so much on doctrine and objective truth as on subjective experience. Notable among these was William Brakel, a theologian of this time who wrote an entire dogmatics that is still extensively used today.

But soon this mysticism led to a more dangerous experientialism. Peter Poiret, for example, a French refugee was a leader of such movements. He and his followers taught that Scripture was not the only means of revelation; God also spoke through an inner light (something on the order of the Quakers). In fact this inner light was a primary means of revelation. Scripture was secondary because it was cloudy and ambiguous filled with dark statements. Only the revelation which one received by inner light was clear and dependable. In fact, by this inner light even the heathen could be saved who never heard the gospel or saw a Bible. So, actual experience became the norm for the truth and for the life of the Christian. And this norm stood above the Word of God. All the experience of the Christian was divorced from the Word of God, was no longer dependent on the preaching of the Gospel, and was itself the rule of doctrine and walk.

(Continued on page 14)
GRAHAM, FUNDAMENTALISM AND FREE WILL

In our previous exposés of Billy Graham we pointed out that the best that can be obtained from him in the way of a doctrinal statement is a one-point, single article creed which lays claim to the deity of Christ. On the basis of his lone-article creed, Graham assay to have fellowship with anyone who will accept it and rally to his cause.

Now the ancient heretics known as the Marcionites held the deity of Christ, but denied His humanity. Apollinaris, another heretic, granted the deity of Christ, but denied His complete humanity — He had no human mind or spirit. Nestorius, an even worse heretic, also taught the deity of Christ, but then thought of Him, so his teaching was interpreted, as two persons, Cyril who opposed the heretical Nestorius, strongly declared the deity of Christ, but conceived of His humanity as absorbed into the divine. Eutyches, a still wilder heretic, followed the line of Cyril and fathered the strange view that the human and divine natures at the incarnation were blended, forming a third which was neither human nor divine. The Monophysites posited the deity of Christ, but denied His human will. The Sabellians, ancient unitarians, acknowledged the deity of Christ, but denied any personal distinctions in the Godhead, the same sole person being, at once, or at different times, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Surely a little knowledge of history reveals that it is worse than inadequate to require as a basis of Christian fellowship merely “the deity of Christ.” For the man who says he accepts such a nebulous article of faith may be any one of a half dozen or more brands of heretics, and not a Christian at all. We would like to learn that Graham preaches, as he was taught by his mother from the Westminster Shorter Catechism, that “the only Redeemer of God’s elect is the Lord Jesus Christ, who being the eternal Son of God, became man, and so was, and continues to be, God and man in two distinct natures, and one person for ever.”

The newspapers had reported Graham as saying that “verbal inspiration of Scripture is only a theory, and not a matter of great importance for Christian faith.” Did he really say this? Or was it erroneous reporting? If he never said it, has he ever publicly repudiated the incorrect news report? Has he slighted those churches which have agonized for the truth and sacrificed all their earthly possessions for the sake of maintaining the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures as having wasted their efforts on a matter of no great importance for the Christian faith? Or has he taken a stand with the churches faithfully defending this indispensable position? This is a knot easily untied. Graham is not on the side of verbal, plenary inspiration.

Graham claims that although he is not a Fundamentalist, neither is he a Modernist. This sounds rather like Brunner and Barth who vehemently repudiate Fundamentalism, Romanism and Modernism. Yet the latter
make it clear, without any misunderstanding, that they are adherents of the radical school of biblical criticism, which does not accept certain books of the Bible as an historical source, and regards other parts of Scripture as legendary. This thin casuistry merely dresses Modernism in dissimulated garb. Most laudable is the unequivocal way in which Dr. J. Gresham Machen expressed himself relative to the Fundamentalist-Modernist controversy. "The term fundamentalism is distasteful to the present writer and to many persons who hold views similar to his. It seems to suggest that we are adherents of some strange new sect, whereas in point of fact we are conscious simply of maintaining the historic Christian faith and of moving in the great central current of Christian life." Yet Machen felt that he had something in common with Fundamentalists which he did not with Modernists. "Do you suppose, gentlemen, that I do not detect faults in many popular defenders of supernatural Christianity? Do you suppose that I do not regret my being called, by a term that I greatly dislike, a 'Fundamentalist'? Most certainly I do. But in the presence of a common foe, I have little time to be attacking my brethren who stand with me in defense of the Word of God. I must continue to support an unpopular cause." He made his stand even more commendably patent when he said: "Nevertheless, thoroughly consistent Christianity, to my mind, is found only in the Reformed or Calvinistic Faith; and consistent Christianity, I think, is the Christianity easiest to defend. Hence I never call myself a 'Fundamentalist.' There is, indeed, no inherent objection to the term; and if the disjunction is between 'Fundamentalism' and 'Modernism,' then I am willing to call myself a Fundamentalist of the most pronounced type. But after all, what I prefer to call myself is not a "Fundamentalist" but a 'Calvinist' — that is, an adherent of the Reformed Faith. As such I regard myself as standing in the great central current of the church's life." Has Graham ever been so clear-cut, so heartwarming as to exactly where he stands? We prefer Gresham to Graham.

The latter, we pointed out, asserted, "I have not bargained, parleyed or compromised my concept of the Christian faith." There are two words in this statement which deserve underscoring — "my concept." The remark is no answer to the thousands of Christian people who have their doubts as to where Billy stands doctrinally. It is rather an insult to their intelligence and to their genuine concern for the cause of God and truth. For Jacob Harmensen or "Pastor" Russell would not hesitate to make the same utterance. If Graham is no compromiser of the historical, orthodox, Protestant and Reformation position, then why has he sat on the same platform with such liberals as E. Stanley Jones, John S. Bonnell and Gerald Kennedy? Why has he praised the Pope, puffed Pike and preached in cooperation with Romish priests?

From Graham's own statements, as found in the books he has written, he reveals that doctrinally, theologically and practically he is an Arminian. Now Arminianism is not a kind of unique expression of the truth, nor does it contain the truth. It is a system of error shot through with the lie. It is the Arminian who attempts to conceal the fact that he holds to a tissue of lies. Last March a Methodist (Arminian) minister wrote that when he is asked, "Are you Calvinistic or Arminian?", he answers, "Where Calvinism is true to the Word, I am Calvinistic, and where Arminianism is true to the Word, I am Arminian. But if they depart from the Word, I depart from them. What truth they taught is only truth when it is true to the Word of God." This is sly, presumptuous, question-begging. In Calvinism, not one point has ever been proved to be untrue to the Word. What would have to be regarded as an untruth could not be Calvinism. On the other hand, Arminianism in no point is true to the Word of God. The five points of Arminianism are departures from the Word. Calvinism alone is true to the Word. Arminianism is faithful to its own standard, humanism.

With reference to the doctrine of original sin Graham avers that "we still imitate him" (Peace With God, p. 48), i.e., old Adam in his primordial error. This sounds much like, not the Christian, but the Pelagian idea that our original sin proceeds only from imitation (Belgic Confession, XV), rather than from the inheriting of a vicious, vile and abominable nature from disobedient Adam.

On the freedom of the will, Graham teaches that man has a "gift of free choice" (ibid., p. 49). We believe, as Scripture teaches, that man had a free will, a will
whereby he was able to choose the good and love God, but also choose the evil and serve the devil. Not that his will was neutral, but that it was good, yet mutable, with power to turn from God to sin. But now after the fall and the total depravity of man's nature resulting therefrom, man no longer has such a free will. The only freedom he may be said to have is freedom to act according to his nature, and since his nature is inclined to all evil and incapable of any good, he is free only to choose evil and sin. Graham denies this biblical conception of freedom. What does he mean by freedom of will? It "is meaningless if there is only one possible path to follow" (p. 44). This is actually an absurd claim. Man's freedom is meaningless if he only has one possible path to follow? Not at all! Man could throw himself over the precipice, breaking on the rocks below every one of the two hundred bones of his body. Spiritually he did this. But once man is on that path to destruction, can he turn himself to some other "possible path to follow"? Can he leap back up to the top of the precipice? Does he have the choice of mounting up those insuperable walls, or to remain where he is, broken and helpless? Man was free to deprive himself of his excellent gifts (knowledge, righteousness and holiness) by willfully spilling them out like water on the ground. But is he free to gather what he has spilled or splashed on the ground? Now that man since the fall of Adam has put himself on the broad way to destruction, there is plainly one and only one possible path to follow, and that is the way of death. For this reason, no man will ever be saved by any dependence on the will of man. Salvation is "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that hath mercy." God must snatch the sinner out of the midst of his fall into the pit, or he will continue his accelerating descent until he lands in hell.

But Graham, like Erasmus, is enamored with the Pelagian conception of man's will. "We have a chance to choose between the Devil's clever promises and God's sure Word" (p. 48). The slaves of sin, in the snare of the devil, and taken captive by him at his will, can choose God and His sure Word? The butler and the baker in prison had the chance to choose between the dungeon and the free air of Egypt? They had no choice but to rot in their cells until Pharaoh chose to remove them! "Can the Ethiopian change his skin? or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do (choose) good, that are accustomed to do (choose) evil" (Jer. 13:23). The depraved sinner is aptly depicted in the sight of God in the figure of Lazarus dead and buried. Did he have a chance to choose between the death of sin, in which he was, and the life of righteousness? Men dead through trespasses and sins are no longer posse non peccare, able not to sin, as was the case with Adam in his rectitude. Men are since Adam's fall born non posse non peccare, not able not to sin, i.e., they are able to do nothing but sin. For "every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually" (Gen. 6:5).

"The same two paths," Graham insists, "that God set before Adam still lie before us" (p. 49), i.e., we have "freedom to choose or reject, freedom to obey God's commands or to go contrary to them . . ." (p. 44). We are still free to choose . . . (p. 49). Never is there a moment when you cannot deliberately choose to go with one or the other" (i.e., with the Trinity of God or the trinity of evil, p. 61). Here is positive proof that Graham is a thoroughgoing Arminian, and one who is therefore far from the Calvinistic position. Rank Arminianism has it that the will of man is such that he "is able to will and to choose, or not to will and not to choose . . . good . . . This is an innovation and an error," the error "that the unregenerate is not really nor utterly dead in sin, nor destitute of all powers unto spiritual good . . ." and the error "that it therefore remains in man's power to be regenerated or not. For this is nothing less than the denial of all the efficiency of God's grace . . . and the subjecting of the working of the Almighty God to the will of man . . ." (Canons of Dort, III, IV, R. 3, 4, 8). In these quotations you may be sure Arminianism is honestly represented, and Billy Graham is squarely in line with that representation.

As proof that man has this neutral, sovereignly free will, a will in complete equilibrium, Graham appeals to Heb. 11:24-27, and teaches that Moses was free to choose to become an Egyptian or remain an Israelite, free to choose affliction with the people of God or to choose the pleasures of sin, free to choose the reproach of Christ.
or to choose the treasures in Egypt, free to forsake Egypt or to forsake the true God. Now it is true that man "by the fall did not cease to be a creature endowed with understanding and will," nor is there anything that "takes way their (men's) will and its properties" (Canon III, IV, 16). But it is also true that the will is fallen, broken, averse to God and all good, inclined to all evil and incapable of any good. Graham, however, regards the will as in no need of recovering from its fall. It needs no restoration in the Last Adam to be able to turn to Him. It is in enough working order as it is in the first Adam. In itself it never has been corrupted, only hindered. Then there is no need for the "regenerating Spirit" to "infuse new qualities into the will, which though heretofore dead, He quickens." But the human will, fallen, unrenewed, is, according to Scripture, "evil, disobedient and refractory" until "He renders it good, obedient and pliable . . ." (ibid., Art. 11). When the will is restored in the Last Adam then, like a good tree, it may bring forth the fruits of good actions" (ibid.). In this light we should view Moses the man of God. As such, he had before him life and death, with the divine admonition, not to choose between life and death, but to choose life! He had before him the reproach of Christ and the treasures of Egypt, with the divine exhortation, not to choose between Christ and Egypt, but to choose Christ! This he did, not because he had the power to "obey God's commands or to go contrary to them," but because by the grace of God he was enabled to believe with the heart and love the Saviour (ibid., 13).

The Word of God states that "salvation is of the Lord," that He begins it and continues it unto the day of Jesus Christ, that then it depends, not as Graham puts it, on would-be autonomous man, but on Him "who works in man both to will and to do, and who produces both the will to believe and the act of believing also" (ibid., III, IV, 14). Graham teaches that the unregenerate is not really or utterly dead in sin, nor destitute of all powers unto spiritual good, but that he can yet hunger and thirst after righteousness and life (ibid., R. 4). For Graham it is not in the final analysis the power of God's omnipotence which infallibly bends man's will to faith and conversion, but the inherent power of man's own will nodding in God's favor. But the Adamic will is corrupt, inclined and determined to that which is evil only, yet freely serves the law of sin. Our renewal is only "that His divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3). Calvinism has the rating: Infinity; Grahamism: Zero!

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**HELPs FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE**

**Book of GENESIS**

**Genesis 23**

**REV. G. LUBBERS**

**ABRAHAM PURCHASES A BURYING-PLACE FOR HIS DEAD. Gen. 23:1-20**

1. Sarah's Sacred Epithet. She was:
   a. A princess of God. Her name had been intentionally and meaningfully changed. She was no common woman. She, too, shares in the promise with Abraham. Gen. 17:15. She had served the counsel of God in much hope and faith. A poor sinner was she, yet a great woman of God. Gen. 17:16.
   b. She had been rejuvenated to bear a son. Only one son. She who was barren will be mother in faith of the great family of God in the Father's house with its many mansions. The impossible had happened to her. A picture of second birth. The dead made alive!! Gen. 17:17; Rom. 4:19b; Heb. 11:11.
   c. She is "the mother of us all". Gal. 4:20. She is the spiritual mother of
all the redeemed which shall be in the New Jerusalem, that better country of promise.

d. She is a model wife. The world has her "models". The church can copy this Sarah who is no Hollywood celebrity. She called her husband lord. Hers was the incorruptible apparel of a meek and quiet spirit which in the sight of God is of great price. I Peter 3:1-6.


a. The days of her pilgrimage were 137 years. Isaac is about 37 years of age at this time. Abraham 137. He will continue another 38 years.

b. She died without receiving the promise. She too had dwelled in tents with her eye on the celestial city. What a dismal life and yet what glorious battle. All the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared. She dies at Hebron. See map.

c. She knows that she will be buried in hope, the hope of the blessed resurrection! Hers is the victory; death swallowed up to victory. I Cor. 15:54. She is included in the "These all died in faith". Heb. 11:13.

3. Abraham Purchased a Burying-Place. Vss. 3-16.

a. His time of mourning is over. The strong man had found that God's strength was supplied in his weakness. He must have mourned as those who live in the hope of the resurrection. He saw Easter morning! He saw it from afar. John 8:56. He smiled through his tears as he looked upon his beloved dead. Here, too, he is the father of all believers in hope. Heb. 11:13-15.

b. He will now bury his dead. No he will not cremate Sarah's body. He is no heathen who simply believes in the immortality of the soul. He sows in hope. I Cor. 15:35-58. He knows that his pilgrimage. his labors intertwined with those of his beloved spouse were not in vain!

c. Thus he purchases a burying-place. A stranger, he needs just this. He needs a resting-place (cemetery) till the glorious morning. He buys from the sons of Heth. It is the cave of Machpelah. The gateway to heaven in Christ!

4. Machpelah's Cave a Memorial.

a. Here Abraham writes his EBEN-HAEZER. It is an expression of Abraham's faith in the heavenly nature of the promise. He purchases a grave, the gate-way to the heavenly city, which is prepared for him and all the redeemed, spiritual children.


c. It is a grave indeed; in it corruption is seen. Yet, it is a grave sanctified by the grace of Christ's resurrection who has broken the bars of death. God is not ashamed of this grave. He claims its occupants. He is called their God. Matt. 22:32; Heb. 11:16; Ex. 3:6, 15; 16:4, 5; Deut. 1:8; Heb. 11:16.

ATTENTION, YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES:

Let's remember to send in all patrons, names of Delegates and alternates, and all other information requested by the Host Society for our 1964 Convention.

FROM DORT TO TODAY

(Continued from page 9)

Soon these views led to all kinds of excesses; for, naturally, a man could do anything he pleased and justify his conduct by appealing to an inner light which he had received.

But these views led also to some doctrinal deviations because they are surely closely connected with questions of the truth.

For one thing, the proponents of these views began to teach that a child of God could (and in fact, ought to) attain perfection in this life. He was able to attain to a life altogether free from sin. This, in turn, led to the view that the Church here on earth ought to be a pure Church composed only of perfect saints who lived by their "inner light" and were guided directly by God's voice spoken to them apart from Scripture. The trouble was that this "inner light" said so many different things to so many different people.
Jeremiah 14:22 — “Are there any among the vanities of the Gentiles that can cause rain? or can the heavens give showers? art not thou he, O Lord our God: therefore we will wait upon thee: for thou hast made all these things.”

THE BLESSING OF GOD

The summer lies before us. Planting is done. Now there is the growth until finally the fruit of the field is ready for the harvest. There is that which is very beautiful in the summer. How clearly is it seen that where there is life, there also is seen development and growth. And during the summer, as we behold all of creation about us, are reminded again how much the child of God is dependent upon his God for all things.

Young people, what do you need? What do you seek? Where do you look for that which you believe you need?

Jeremiah reminds of the Gentiles who sought for rain. Rain they needed for their farms. Their communities were so very dependent upon that rain. Without rain there would be no crops — and consequently starvation and death. Now, of course, these Gentiles wanted more than rain. They too wanted homes, clothing, prosperity. When Jeremiah mentions only rain in this passage, he does so in a way that obviously refers to more than rain. Rain was the basic necessity for the Gentiles upon which depended their entire wellbeing. In seeking rain, they sought also the physical advantages which would accrue because of that rain.

The Gentiles wanted rain for themselves. Their concern was wholly material and earthly. Whatever rain they received, therefore, served further to condemn them before the just law of God.

You, young people, also need rain. If you live on a farm, you are aware of the great need of rain. Without it, there would be no sense in planting the corn. Farmers, more than anyone else, are conscious of the skies and approaching clouds. But, when I say that you also are in need of rain, I would refer to all of your needs. You need many things. Young people themselves will be quick in reminding one another of their needs: new cars, closets filled with clothing, the best of jobs, etc. But I do not speak now of all these things. You, and each of us, are in need of certain basic things on the earth. Jesus, in teaching us how to pray, declares, “Give us this day our daily bread.” We have need of daily bread: food to eat, clothing to wear, shelter — for today. We must not have our hearts set upon abundance. We ought to be content with little. Of these basic needs the prophet speaks when he mentions rain.

But from where must these things be
received? The Gentiles in the days of the prophet looked to their vanities: Baal, Dagon, Molech, and others. Often they turned to creation itself and viewed it as gods: the sun, moon, or stars. The Gentiles expected of these to receive their needs. They had, then, their rain-dances before their idols; they offered their sacrifices, even human sacrifices, to please their gods. But these were all vanity, that is, a vapor or breath which might appear substantial, but is nothing. A vapor can not be touched or used. A very picturesque description of the heathen idols which are nothing.

Today we would laugh at these Gentiles who would place such trust in idols. What stupid creatures those were! Ah, we would not be so foolish. But, are we not also inclined to place our trust in vanities? There is today the vanity of science. What can science not do! It can bring comfort and pleasure through inventions as the radio and television, the auto, time-saving devices. It can relieve much of the suffering and dread of sickness. It has invented means of preventing serious illnesses which were once fatal. It can reduce the ill effect of diseases not yet fully conquered. It can provide for our physical needs by inventing new ways to supply food and increase its amount; it can even attempt to bring the needed rain to raise these crops by seeding the clouds to bring down the showers. Young people, what value do you place upon this vanity called science? To what degree do you look to it to provide what you think you need?

Or, as young people, are you rather confident in your own strength? Do you boast in your "muscle," or wisdom, or learning? Do you believe that with what you have, you ought to be able to make for yourself a comfortable place on the earth? But this too is vanity.

Jeremiah sees Him Who alone is not vanity. Jehovah made all things. And He Who made them, also upholds them all by His almighty power. God directs these according to His sovereign purpose, and to the glory of His own name. This He accomplishes by working together all things for the good of His people through Jesus Christ.

Shall not this infinite God supply us with that which we need? He has promised us all blessings for Christ's sake. We did not earn His favor. We merited not His promise. But for Jesus' sake, all things are ours.

It is then not surprising that the child of God turns to that only Source of all blessing. This God causes rain and gives showers.

Therefore also young people wait upon Him. This does not mean that they can be lazy. One might be tempted to say that since God supplies what we need, therefore we can sit back and do nothing. Why not simply wait for God to supply us in our need? But this is neither the teaching of Scripture nor the attitude of the faithful Christian.

To wait upon God is first a recognition of His sovereignty. So often do we confess that God is the Sovereign God. Can there be a more beautiful truth? He is the eternal Ruler over all. Nothing is outside of His government or control. Consequently, we wait upon Him — conscious of the fact that He is able to accomplish what He has promised.

To wait upon Him means also that we believe that He does all things well. Eternal wisdom is in God so that He works all things in the best possible way to the highest end: His own glory. That same wisdom also works for our good. We wait upon Him because we believe that this is true. We look to Him to do for us that which is best.

Therefore, waiting upon Him implies spiritual content. So often we can be dissatisfied with our portion on the earth. We have not enough possessions; "it" does not rain when we might desire; we become sick when we would desire health. But one who is waiting upon God is one also who is spiritually satisfied. Whether God supplies us with much or with little; whether with war or peace; whether with health or sickness — we learn therein to be content. Has not our God made all things? Does He not uphold all things? Will He not then provide for us that which is right? We need not depend upon or look unto earthly vanities. Our great God supplies.

We confront another summer. Many things can happen, many things which might not be pleasing for our flesh either. But need we fear? Should unrest fill our hearts? Must we doubt His promise? Look at the sky; behold the clouds moving overhead. Soon a drop of rain falls; then another, and another. God sends that rain, each drop to its appointed place. He promised to bless us in all things for Jesus' sake — and He is able to provide that which He has promised.

Sixteen

BEACON LIGHTS
Radio News:
We reported in the last issue of BEACON LIGHTS that the Revs. Elliott and Frame, pastors of the churches in Jamaica, have received a tape recorder sent to them by members of our Prot. Ref. Churches in America. In this issue we pass along to our readers a few excerpts of letters written by the two pastors to the Program Committee of the Reformed Witness Hour.

Rev. Frame writes: “I received the tapes that you sent me with sermons by Rev. Hanko. We enjoy them very much. We have got to learn the tune of the Psalms that was sung, such as Psalms 24 and 40. We wish we could receive some more. The brethren of the churches here in Jamaica are delighted very much in the recorder, to hear the sermons and the hymns on the tape. Wishing you the Lord’s blessing from day to day. Yours in His service, Rev. J. E. Frame.”

Rev. Elliott writes: “Thanks for 2 sermons of Rev. C. Hanko. Some of our churches are 129 miles away, so I am travelling to them with these sermons that they can hear Rev. C. Hanko sermons, also to see the tape recorder and hear it play. I shall be glad that you always send tapes to me. Thank God, our Prot. Ref. Churches in Jamaica are moving on fine in the strength of our Lord. Yours in the Master’s service, Rev. Clinton James Elliott.”

Concerning our Servicemen:
Ken Haak, of Oaklawn, was inducted into the army on April 23 for two years. He was an organist for the church and his services will be sorely missed. Here is his address:
Leon Kamps and Louis Schut (Hudsonville) are both back from the service.
We have two changes of address, the first from Randolph Church, the second from First Church:
Pvt. Ronald Huizenga, U.S. 55752531, Btry D 3rd Msl Bn 7th Arty
APO 330, New York, N.Y.
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ezinga
Turgeson Trailer Park — Lot No. 4, Highway 247 S, Warner Robbins, Georgia

For the next census of our churches:
A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Gary Lubbers (Hudsonville)
A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Westra (Southeast)
A daughter, born to Rev. and Mrs. David Engelsma (Loveland)
A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Robert De Young (Hudsonville)
A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. R. Noorman (Southeast)
A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Van Overloop (Hudsonville)
A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. D. Lottermann (Southwest)

Congratulations
to Mrs. E. Van Eenemaan (First) who was 80 years old on April 27; to Mrs. Fred Faber (First) who was 92 on March 19; and to Mr. Cornelius Woudwyk (Hudsonville) who celebrated his 91st birthday on May 1.

Membership changes:
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Haak transferred their membership from Oaklawn to South Holland; Southeast welcomed Mrs. John Velthouse from the Walker Chr. Ref. Church; Mr. Harold Langeland transferred to Kalamazoo from Southwest.

Called Home:
Mrs. L. Looyenga (First) at the age of 64 years.

Calls:
Rev. B. Woudenberch has declined the call extended to him by First Church to be Home Missionary in our churches.

Wedding bells
rang for Nola Leichtliter and Rolland Griess (Loveland) on April 24.
Here and there:

Confession of faith was made in Loveland recently by the following young people: Ivan Griess, Linda Griess, Melvin Griess, and Marilyn Schwarz.

Protestant Reformed young people in the Grand Rapids area were looking forward to the Spring Banquet on May 12 at First Church. Rev. Gerald VandenBerg was to be the speaker, and planned to take six young people from his congregation with him to the banquet.

June 5 is the date set for Hope Protestant Reformed School’s Commencement exercises in Unity Chr. High School in Hudsonville; Rev. R. C. Harbach is the speaker.

Hope School Band and Kindergarten program will be held in Hope Church on May 22.

Southeast’s Young People’s Society sponsored a home talent program in the church on April 21. Proceeds were for their carpeting fund.

The Radio Choir of the Reformed Witness Hour plans to present a program in First Church on May 31.

Rev. M. Schipper is making an excellent recovery from the surgery which he had on April 17.

"The Relation Between Church and State" was the topic of a lecture delivered by Rev. C. H. Hanko in Oaklawn on April 30.

Hull Protestant Reformed Church sent a gift of thirty-six Psalters to the churches in Jamaica; no doubt this gift was appreciated by the people there who are trying to learn the songs which have so long been dear to us. Twenty-four of the Psalters went to Rev. Elliott in Islington, and twelve to Rev. Frame in Lucea.

The Young People’s Society of First Church is sponsoring a clothing drive for Jamaica on May 19, 20, and 21 at Adams St. School, and on May 21 at Hope School. This clothing is to be sent to a different part of the island than that to which the previous gift of clothing was sent.

Rev. J. Kortering spoke on “Esther” at the Western Ladies’ League Meeting, which was held in Edgerton on April 10.

Doon’s bulletin contained a “thank you” from the board of the Free Christian School of Edgerton for its gift of money.

May 22 is “Spring Cleaning Day” at Oaklawn Church; the Young People’s Society is helping with this work.

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Announcing

THE 24th ANNUAL PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUNG PEOPLE’S CONVENTION

PLACE: Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids

THEME: "Be Ye Holy"

TIME: August 25, 26, and 27

SPEAKERS: Rev. H. Hoeksema

            Rev. H. Hanko

            Rev. D. Engelsma

Eighteen