



BEACON LIGHTS

for

**PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH**

April 1966

Music?

Serve The Lord Diligently

*Protestant Reformed Christian
Education*



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FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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THAT LITTLE MEMBER

In this Passion season, the most joyous season of all, it is well for us to dwell on the true meaning and significance of the cross and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In a word the true meaning and significance is, Love. If they mean or signify anything but the sovereign particular eternal love of God for his chosen people through Christ, they are absolutely meaningless. Because God has shed His Love abroad in us, his chosen people, we are commanded to love God above all gratuitously and our neighbor as ourselves graciously. This is the theory, how about the practice?

Several areas of daily living in which this theory of love for our neighbor may be practiced could be stated, but the most inclusive is our conversation, our speech, our words with our fellowmen. Think back a minute, an hour, a day, and even a year. What, if anything, made you happy or sad? A kind word politely spoken, or a harsh word uttered in hate? Yes, words, speech, conversation, idle chatter enliven or sadden the countenance, spirit, and the emotions. All the knocks, bumps, and bruises in this life are not physical. In fact, most of the hurts come not as, "Oh, what he did," but, "Oh, what he said hurts me so, and I'll never forget it."

In the world we expect to receive hard, harsh cruel words, we even say rather nonchalantly. "That's what you get when you deal with the world," or, "You rub elbows with worldly people, you're bound to give and take a little dirt." It is sad that we have to take these verbal whiplashings from the world, but it is sadder still when Christians treat each other in the same way. It is pathetic when we Protestant Reformed Christians treat each other the way the ungodly treat us.

Not only do we cut each other down face to face, but we kill one another more subtly with bitter slander, gossip, and idle nonsensical chatter. Sometimes our speech can be as it were dripping with honey and shot with sugar, but when it is truly analyzed "it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison" (James 3:8).

Perhaps we have forgotten what God's Word and our Reformed Confessions say about the uncontrolled and ungoverned tongue! Before Christ was born one of His progenitors, Solomon, King of Israel, wrote these words:

Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul. (Proverbs 21:23)

An hypocrite with his mouth destroyeth his neighbor: but through knowledge shall the just be delivered. (Proverbs 11:9)

After Christ came to earth and while he was preaching throughout Palestine, the vile and wicked tongue caused him much suffering; for he said:

But I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.

For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words shalt thou be condemned.

Matthew 12:36, 37

After Christ was crucified, resurrected, ascended to the right hand of God the Father, the apostle James writes of the same naughty tongue:

If any man among you seem religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain. James 1:26.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

James 3:6

But the tongue can no man tame, it is an unruly evil full of deadly poison.

James 3:8

God's Word is beautifully, clearly, and distinctively interpreted and systematized in the Heidelberg Catechism. Our fathers devoted all of Lord's Day XLIII to the problem of the unguided and unrestrained speech. They wrote as follows:

112. Q. What is required in the ninth commandment?

A. That I bear false witness against no man; wrest no one's words; be no backbiter or slanderer; do not judge, or join in condemning, any man rashly or unheard; but that I avoid all sorts of lies and deceit as the proper works of the devil, unless I would bring down upon myself the heavy wrath of God; likewise, that in judicial and all other dealings I love the truth, speak it uprightly, and confess it; and that, as much as I am able, I defend and promote the honor and reputation of my neighbor.

What is the conclusion to the whole matter? In this Passion season of suffering in love, let us firmly resolve to speak to, with, and about our brothers in love, for Christ, our Redeemer, spoke to us in love, "I go to prepare a place for you"; he spoke with us in love, "Take, eat: this is my body which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (I Corinthians 11:22b and 23b): and, finally, Christ spoke about us in love, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

D.H.

FEATURE

MUSIC?

by CLARE KUIPER

Music, according to some, is considered man's fourth material want. First we have food, clothing, shelter, and then music. It seems there may be some truth to this statement. Everyone has the desire in him to hear music. What would man do without it? It seems to be a sense of relaxation for man. To some music means very little simply because people are afraid they won't understand it. But music can be enjoyed without possessing any special technical knowledge of it. One doesn't have to know how to play or sing to be musical. If one simply loves and appreciates hearing music, he may be more musical than many pianists or singers. Music is an art, and even if one hasn't studied music, his feeling and curiosity for it can be proper guides to enjoying music. Therefore we have three groups of Musicians: Composer, Performer, and Listener.

Notice the next time you listen to a beautiful choir how that the music intensifies the emotional significance of the words. Music expresses at different moments serenity or exuberance, regret or triumph, fury or delight. It has an expressive power behind its notes which gives to the listener the meaning and message of the piece or song. It is woven out of all sorts of beautiful sounds, therefore music becomes a language of sounds. Music gives a feeling

of beauty and arouses our emotions and therefore also becomes a sense of refuge from the troubles of life. Many works of music convey ideas and ideas do transform the life of a human being therefore changing his emotional life.

I hope that you, as readers, can recognize that I am speaking throughout this article of music which is an art. I don't believe that I could classify most of the stuff heard on our popular radio stations today as music. Is this long haired, jazzy stuff an art? Is it relaxing to listen to, and does it give us a feeling of beauty? And one more question — Can we glorify God by listening to this stuff? To all these questions I must answer emphatically, NO! What is more relaxing than listening to a beautiful choir, orchestra, organ, or other instrumental concert? What a great gift we have in our voices and instrumental talents wherein we can praise God. Don't you recall how David praised God for all the manifold blessings bestowed upon him in the Psalms? We could all take to heart the last verse of Psalm 21 "Be thou exalted, Lord, in thine own strength: so will we sing and praise thy power." Music is given to us to use in order to praise and glorify God. Do you and I use it to that end? Luther once wrote "Next to theology I give to music the highest place and honor. And

we see how David and all the saints have wrought their Godly thoughts into verse, rhyme and song.”

We could now take a look at music as it is related to our churches, whether in our church service or choirs. Are our church services sufficient in their music? Do we show great interest in music and singing, so that we attend faithfully church choir and rehearsals? And what about music in our schools, both Elementary and High Schools? Are our children encouraged in music and taught how and what kind of music to appreciate? I will, for the present, only touch on one of these phases, namely, Is music a necessity in a High School curriculum, particularly our own Protestant Reformed High School?

Certainly we are very concerned about our Protestant Reformed High School, and more particularly a curriculum to begin it on. And then we hear remarks as “Oh well, we can get along for the first few years without a Music Department or Choir.” Can we leave this out and still maintain a decent curriculum? I hardly think so. Pupils or Teen-Agers are at this time of their life in a complex, mental developing stage. Besides those who at this time of their life appreciate good music, we have “rock-and-roll fans, jazz devotees, the long hairs, and many stages of in-betweens.” These young people must now learn how to appreciate and pick out good music. There is no lack of evidence that they are interested in music and any curriculum should evolve from the needs and interests of the students it is designed to serve. When free from studies

and even while studying we find young people listening to music or singing. A soft musical background during study hours can be very relaxing and effective. The function of music is somewhat the same as of art or science—to extend to man a knowledge of himself and deepen his insight into the conditions of the environment in which God has placed him. Besides this, a student of music will learn that worthy results depend on what he himself puts into it plus his ability to participate actively with others in a group. Notice how we can apply this not only to music, but to sports and many other areas of life. Then too, once we have taught “individual responsibility plus group participation” can we enjoy music together, and the more people we work with, the greater is the joy of the results. Let us never underestimate music, but always remember that we must use our God-given talents to praise Him, and also by listening to others perform we can appreciate the beauty of this Great Art.

“There is something very wonderful in music. Words are wonderful enough; but music is even more wonderful. It speaks not to our thoughts as words do! It speaks straight to our hearts and spirits, to the very core and roots of our souls. Music soothes us, stirs us up: it puts noble feelings in us; it melts us to tears, we know not how:—it is a language by itself, just as perfect, in its way, as speech, as words: just as divine, just as blessed.

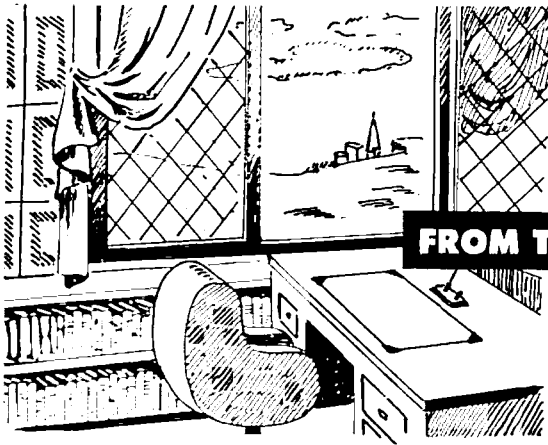
“Music has been called the speech of angels; I will go further, and call it the speech of God Himself.” — Charles Kingsley

THE AGENDA FOR THE 1966 CONVENTION

1. The Federation Board proposes that each delegation give its society's choice of Bible book to study for the 1967-68 society season, and also give the grounds for this choice.
2. The Federation Board proposes that assessments for the 1966-68 society season be set at \$10 per member, \$6 of which shall help defray convention expenses, \$2 of which shall be appropriated to the Scholarship Fund, and \$2 of which shall be given to *Beacon Lights*.
3. The following officers must be elected

for a two-year term:

- a. President
 - b. Secretary
 - c. Assistant Treasurer
 - d. Librarian
 - e. Advisor
4. The Federation Board recommends that the Redlands Young People's Society be accepted as a member in the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.
 5. The Federation Board proposes that instead of the entire minutes of the previous convention being read, a brief synopsis be given.



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. LUBBERS

SERVE THE LORD DILIGENTLY

"But take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law . . . to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."
Joshua 22:5

Where love is the incentive the way is not long. The commandment of the Lord is not grievous, heavy, burdensome. It is the light burden and the easy yoke of Christ. It is the new commandment which is the old commandment which we had from the beginning. It is the commandment of the Lord which is written upon the tables of our hearts; it is not written merely upon tables of stone! Such is the new covenant, which the Lord has made and not man!

Each Sunday morning you hear your minister read the law of God, the Decalogue. He reads the law which is recorded in Exodus 20, and which is quoted in Question 92 of the Heidelberg Catechism, does he not? He reads the Law as it is found in the "Third Part" of the Heidelberg Catechism. Yes, you have heard it often: How many things are necessary for thee to know, that, thou, enjoying this comfort, mayest live and die happily? And, although you are inclined to abbreviate this answer given in the Catechism, in full it reads: "Three; the first how great my sins and miseries are; the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance." Have you noticed it: Question 92 in the Heidelberg Catechism is found in the "third" of these three?

Each time a child is baptized in the con-

gregation you hear the minister read (not drone!) as follows: "The principle parts of the doctrine of holy baptism are these three:

"First. That we with our children are conceived and born in sin. . . .

"Secondly. Holy baptism witnesseth and sealeth unto us the washing away of our sins through Jesus Christ. . . .

"Thirdly. Whereas in all covenants, there are contained two parts: therefore are we by God through baptism admonished of, and oblidged unto a new obedience, namely, that we cleave to this one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; that we trust in him, and love him with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our mind, with all our strength; that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a new and holy life."

Did you notice? In both the Catechism and in the Form for Baptism the same "Three Things"?

Now I would have you notice something more. I would have you notice and lay it to the heart that the "thirdly" in the Baptism Form is taken almost literally out of the Bible. It is almost literally taken from Joshua 22:5. In this passage Joshua is addressing the two and a half tribes east of the Jordan river; that they live separated by this river and virtually outside of the land of Canaan proper, where the tabernacle and

temple stand, does not mean that they must forget about the tabernacle and the temple of the Lord. "On the other side of Jordan" does not mean no longer subject to the Lord and the new obedience to him. On the contrary they are now delivered too from the bondage of Egypt, and have also passed through the baptism of the Red Sea, and now dwell in the land. And here they are to show true "thankfulness to God"!

They are to take *diligent* heed to do the commandment of the law! The term in the Hebrew text for "diligent" means: might, very much. With all their strength they are to take heed. Even our English term *diligence* is a very beautiful term. It refers to persevering application of effort. We speak of a diligent servant. The Heidelberg Catechism does not say that we shall go regularly to the church of God to hear his word; no, the Catechism says that "I *diligently* frequent the church of God to hear his Word, use the sacraments, publicly call upon the name of the Lord, give alms to the poor. . . ." We are to serve the Lord *diligently*! Have you done so during the past year in your catechism lessons and instruction. You *diligently* took notes? You *diligently* go to church with the purpose to learn his Word? You *diligently* attended the Society meetings and prepared yourself with equal *diligence*?!

And all this we do *diligently* to take heed to the commandment and the law? We do this because we would walk in thankfulness for the Lord's great redemption? We walk in our "part" of the covenant, our response to God by virtue of the grace which we received from God as obsequated in Baptism?

All diligence is characterized by our "love" for the Lord our God. Then we shall also "walk" in all his ways, beginning to live not only according to some, but according to all of God's commandments. Then we shall cleave to the Lord, even as a little child cleaves to and embraces its mother who holds it in her arms!

Yes, this we then do with "all our heart" and "with all our souls." Yes, that is the great Commandment. All the law and the prophets are contained in it, depend upon it. This is the truth concerning our Christian walk in a capsule!

Vacation time is come upon us. You may make a trip, go to the cottage, play ball, even live a bit on the "other side" of the river as did the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh! However, remember that there is no vacation permissible, apart from taking *diligent heed* to do the commandment of the Lord. Yes, with all your heart and soul.



CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

With a few words I reiterate some of the things which appeared in my article of the February issue of the *Beacon Lights*. In this article I concern myself with the concept commonly referred to as the "Glory of God." This I am convinced is still a basic

concern, all protestations and false-allegations to the contrary, and should not be shelved with many of the other things held to be of inestimable worth just because they are considered by the "liberals" and false teachers antique and outmoded. Prot-

estant Reformed Christian Education must be theocentric and not man-centered and must not be considered antique and out-moded. It must operate according to the principle of the wisdom of God and not the wisdom of man. Protestant Reformed Christian education must emphasize the necessity for the antithetical relationship between the church and the world. That which is taught to be the truth is altogether different from that which the world can believe, wills to believe, and does believe. Protestant Reformed Christian education is not a "horse and buggy age philosophy" but is concerned with the age-long problem—the thorough furnishing of the man of God.

I. WHAT IT IS!

P.R.C. education is radically different from anything that is generated in the mind of man. That which is believed today by man, who is unregenerate and unbelieving, has always been taught by the great thinkers and teachers of the world. That which is taught today is nothing new. Solomon knew this when inspired by the spirit of God he said: ". . . there is no new thing under the sun." Eccl. 1:9b.

The Great Ideas, A Syntopicon, I, p. 377, clearly states this as a fact.

One opinion from which there is hardly a dissenting voice in the great books is that education should aim to make men good as men and as citizens. "If you ask what is the good of education, Plato (c. 400-300 B.C.) writes, "the answer is easy—that education makes good men, and that good men act nobly, and conquer their enemies in battle, because they are good." Men should enter upon learning, Bacon declares, in order "to give a true account of their gift of reason, to the benefit and use of men;" while William James stresses the need for "a perfectly-rounded development." Thus it would seem to be a common opinion in all ages that education should seek to develop the characteristic excellences of which men are capable and that its ultimate ends are human happiness and the welfare of society."

John Milton in writing *Of Education* said:

I call therefore a complete and generous education that which fits a man to perform justly, skillfully and magnanimously all the offices both private and public of peace and war.

It is a fact that what these men have said

characterizes much of the education that is given in the schools of our land. There can be little doubt that the ultimate objective or aim of education as it is generally practiced is *to make men good* by means of the educational systems that are established in the land.

With this we are in basic disagreement. We do not mean to say that schools should produce and do produce immoral people but that moral people from an ethically, spiritual point of view are produced as a result of the training they receive in the school is a denial of the fundamental tenets of Christianity and of Reformed principles. The blatant, humanistic hedonism that characterizes all of god-less, and man-centered education is abhorant and nauseating to the Christian. The Christian can have no part with this. He cannot be unequally yoked with unbelievers and he cannot be yoked with the philosophy that *education* makes men good and therefore good citizens.

P.R.C. education is fundamentally different from Christian education that submits itself to the premises and propositions as quoted from the articles of the National Union of Christian Schools.

Article 3. "Man is a fallen creature. Though depraved. . . ."

The composers of this article did not say that man is totally depraved. Why didn't they use the language of the Reformed Churches and say that man is totally depraved? They undoubtedly do not mean that man is *totally* depraved! They wrote in the remainder of the same article:

"Though depraved, man is nevertheless an image bearer of God and through restraining grace he is able to do civic good. Though lost in sin man can be saved through faith in Christ, and through restoring grace, in principle, is able to do spiritual good."

That man is saved *through faith* in Christ AND able to do civic good is the third point of the theory of common grace as held by the Christian Reformed Churches of America. That he is able to do civic good has nothing to do with the Reformed principle of Christian education. That children of the covenant must be educated is a fact; that they are by nature lost in sin is also a fact; that the grace of Christ our Savior causes him to walk in good works is a fact;

that depraved man, perverse man, is an image-bearer of God, (as he is by nature) and is able to do good is a denial of total depravity — one of the five points of Calvinism. He has become instead an image-bearer of the devil. He is by nature a child of his father, the devil (cf. John 8:44). If he does not seem to be as bad as the devil then his devilry is only disguised by a mask and becomes refined deviltry.

In these same articles of the N.U.C.S., article 5, we read:

The all embracing objective of the school is to promote the glory of our covenant God by seeking in humble dependence upon God to equip the pupil for his supreme task, namely to realize himself as God's image-bearer by seeking the same dependence upon God to reconstitute the sin perverted world by realizing God's Kingdom in all spheres and phases of life.

"Self-realization" and "reconstitution" of a sin perverted world are not the language of the Scriptures. This is not the language that should be part of the basic philosophy of education for the Reformed man. It is borrowed and perverts the basic thrust of Christian education and can therefore not be adopted into the philosophy of one who attempts to teach from a distinctly Reformed point of view — be that Protestant Reformed then.

The *Course of Study for Christian Schools*, Educational Commt. of N.U.C.S., Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1947, p. 30, has the following to say when discussing the Christian philosophy of education.

Christian education may be regarded as an undoing of what sin has done. In this sense it is a process by which the educand is being restored to the pristine perfection of man in the Garden before the advent of sin. It is a process in which one gives sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, release to the prisoner, and recovery to the sick. It is a way of bringing man to a condition in which he will be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Christian education so conceived presents a tremendous challenge. It is an education that can only come from God. It can go forward only through God with whom the teacher functions as co-worker. It has its end in God.

What a glorious profession.

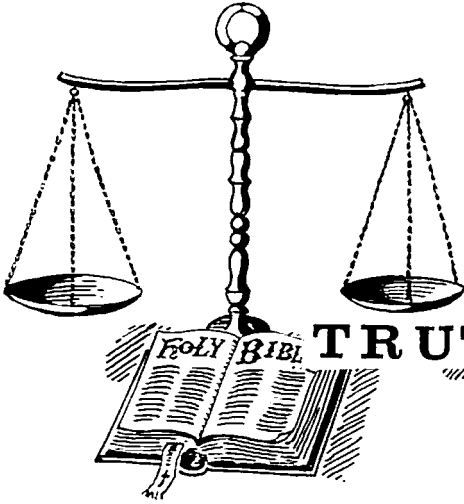
This is authentic modernism. Christian education never undoes what sin has done and cannot possibly be a "process" by which man is restored to the "pristine perfection" of man before the fall. Every Reformed child of God knows that education never has saved one soul from the imperfections of the Fall. It is well-nigh blasphemous to refer to education as a "process whereby the deaf are made to hear, the blind made to see, and recovery given to sick." This is a work which only one who is truly God can do. With this we can have no part.

We must agree with Dr. Cornelius Van Til, when he writes in a little book entitled *The Dilemma of Education*, p. 40, about the problem of the secular educator and the educator who does not abide strictly by the basic principles laid down in the Word of God.

The conclusion of the whole matter is this. There are two mutually exclusive principles for the interpretation of life. The Christian principle presupposes God who speaks authoritatively through the Bible, giving man basic principles for the interpretation of the whole of life. The non-Christian principle presupposes man who speaks authoritatively of himself. Psychologically, of course, the Christian must also begin with man. But he begins with man acknowledge as the creature of God. So it is still true that the Christian interprets all of life in terms of God and the non-Christian interprets all of life in terms of man.

It is also true that every man by nature wishes to interpret and does interpret all things in terms of man. He does not want to live perfectly out of the life of regeneration and renewal as he is by nature. There is a constant striving, as he is by nature to express a philosophy of life and education from the standpoint of human reason or experience rather than from the high, God-ordained standpoint of faith in the revealed Word of God. This is the struggle of the Christian educator.

Young People and Parents are requested to give your utmost attention to a survey which will be taken in April on "Your Interest and Concern of Beacon Lights."



TRUTH vs. ERROR

by REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

13. THOUGHTS ON THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION

11. Its Evidences, cont'd

When it is proclaimed in the Gospel that Christ Jesus died on the cross to save sinners, it is not the first logical step on the basis of that premise for me to lay it down that He died for me in particular. That would be to confuse the order of God's salvation. The burden of the Gospel is that God sent His Son into the world, and there He was manifested to take away the sins of His people. That is, He came into a world of woe to make a way of escape out of the midst of death for them that are lost. He died for ungodly ones, perfectly satisfying divine justice for the offence of all their sins. So He made atonement, and on that ground God can and does rightly justify the sinner through faith in His blood. That is the initial thrust of the Gospel, man's involvement in sin, misery and death. When I hear that basic premise of the Gospel, I am bound to believe it, and then believing it I am bound over to a life of obedience to the Gospel. Until I do that, believe and obey the Gospel, I am under no necessity to believe that Christ died for me in particular. When I have done so, it is then my right and privilege to enjoy that assurance.

Just so, it is my responsibility, as it is that of every man, to believe the doctrine of election upon hearing the preaching of the Gospel, for therein it is revealed. But my own personal election I cannot war-

rantably believe, nor is it my calling to believe it, except as God reveals its evidences in me. Certainly, twin evidences of election are faith in and obedience to the Gospel. Nor is any man in the right to doubt or to deny his election, or to assume that he is a reprobate, as long as he is not in a condition where it is impossible for the evidences of election to be produced in him. As long as he does not obey the Gospel, there is no evidence to him or to anyone else that he is elect. But there is no evidence that he is reprobate as long as it is possible for him to become obedient. Then although election is to be preached, if the Gospel is to be scripturally preached, it is not the immediate duty of men to concern themselves whether they are elect. It is first required of them that they believe they "are all under sin," that they are lost sinners. They must first know their misery. They must be conversant with faith, obedience and righteousness of life, before they enter upon the matter of their personal election. On this point both Ursinus and Paul were right.

We may certainly conclude that where Christ's ministers faithfully and regularly hold forth the Word of life, there God's elect will be found. (Acts 18:10; II Ti. 2:10). Because the Lord does have His elect scattered throughout His vineyard, He sustains His ministers by divine providence and directs them by His Word and Spirit.

He prevents them from going to areas where either there are no elect, or if there, that the time has not come for their calling and conversion (Ac. 16:6). For these reasons the Lord does not allow His ministers to enter certain areas (16:7). He has them pass by these areas to come to a place of His choice (16:18). The Lord is an unhindered sovereign in passing by some and lighting on others. To northern Asia Minor, Bithynia and Mysia the Word was not sent, but instead it was taken to Macedonia, Thessaly and Greece.

The Lord so directs His ministers that His elect hear the Gospel of their salvation. Sometimes the Lord calls a minister, as He did Philip, from his beloved and busy pastorate in a thriving Samaria to go down into a deserted region to take the Word of His grace to a good ground hearer. Sometimes He leads His servant out "where cross the crowded ways of life" in order to testify the Gospel of the grace of God to a rich young ruler who turns away from it at the moment, but who later repents and returns to the Lord (since he was beloved of his God, Mk. 10:21; Neh. 13:26). Another time He leads His servant to the home of an Italian with the same word of truth (Acts 10). Or the Lord may lead His witnesses to a prison where the jailer, to say nothing of the inmates, may have little or no opportunity to hear the Gospel. Even in such places the Lord has His elect (Acts 16:34; Phile. 10). This is what He meant when He said, "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice" (Jn. 10:16). They are quickened by the power of His Spirit (6:63), hear His voice through His servants (Ro. 10:14), and believe through grace (Acts 18:27).

The Lord does not send His servants to labor where He does not have a people. He never does and He never will. Where He does have a people, there He will send His servants to enlighten them and lead them into all the truth. For this reason, Christ's ministers endure all things for the elect's sakes that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus. The elect are to be found where the ministers of the Gospel labor and endure much. Does the reader live in such a place? Then where your two's and three's are gathered together

in Christ's name, there He is in your midst. Does the young "David" or "Timothy" reading these lines feel something of the glory of the ministry, and perhaps a slight drawing of the Lord in the direction of that highest calling? These are, admittedly, the dark days of the Antichrist, but they are also the days of golden opportunity, days when it is your duty to respond and yield to the heavenly calling the Lord makes through His servants.

The Lord sends the preacher where according to His counsel and His providence He has some of His elect. But he also makes the Word preached effective and the labors expended fruitful. Of the Thessalonian church Paul said, "Knowing brethren beloved, your election of God. For our Gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance" (1 Thes. 1:4, 5). Paul came to know the election of this church. He knew they were among God's chosen people. This ought to answer, in part, the oft-repeated question whether we shall know one another in heaven. If ministers know the election of the sheep in their flocks here in this life, surely they will know their sheep in heaven. There above we shall not have less knowledge, but more perfect knowledge, than we have here below. This implies, too, that if the ministers may know the election of their people, the people themselves may know it and rejoice in it. This knowledge did not come to Paul, nor does it come to the elect by direct revelation from heaven. The Lord does not let down in a sheet a gilt-edged, Morocco-bound copy of the Book of Life for our perusal. Nor does He reveal this knowledge by a vision in the sky, nor by the voice of angels, nor by an appearance of Christ Himself before us. If anyone claims this, "believe it not!" But Paul came to this knowledge through the fruits of election evident in the Thessalonian Christians. They were "chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, that (to the end that) we should be holy and without blame before Him." Paul saw the marks of a holy life in them and traced those mercy-drops back to the great fountain of election.

"For our Gospel came . . . unto you." Now the Gospel is not understood by every-

one who hears it. What is the Gospel? The answer to that question involves the soul's eternal safety. Not everything palmed off as "gospel" is Gospel. The prating of the "Great Society" is not the Gospel. The "social gospel" of civil rightists is not the Gospel. The memorandums of labor union leaders are not the Gospel. The spoutings of university sociologists are not the Gospel. The creed revisions of the modernist churches are not the Gospel. The alluring philosophy of the Arminian evangelist is not the Gospel. The Gospel, e.g., is clearly depicted in the Heidelberg Catechism. Briefly it is that the people of God belong to their faithful Saviour Jesus Christ from all eternity, and are brought to Him by the way of sin and misery through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, unto a sanctified life of thanksgiving. *Ncr* is the Gospel preached by everyone who claims to preach it. It is not preached by the World Council of Churches, nor by the National Council of Churches, nor by the American Baptist Convention, *as such*. It is not preached by such men as Drs. Eugene Carson Blake and Jas A. Pike. It is not preached by any of the representatives of the Jewish synagogue. It is not preached by the "clergy" of the Romish church. Nor is it preached by that religious humanist, Billy Graham. But we need not be deceived by the numerous counterfeit gospels in the world today. For the Gospel always remains the same. It never changes. Baptists change, and depart from the Philadelphia Confession, and woefully from the truth of election. Many of them have departed from the teaching of their fathers, Bunyan, Gill, Spurgeon and Pink. Presbyterians change, so badly that they change the Westminster Confessions by heretical additions, and by lowering the truth of Scripture not only to the realm of theory, but, agnostically, to sink it beyond the reach of all theory. (This is Nihilism: Truth is in the realm of oblivion, and one must annihilate himself to find it.) The so called "Reformed" churches change. Instead of the sound of the good, old, true Reformation Gospel coming from them, we hear denials of predestination, election and reprobation. We hear the echoes of Arminian "evangelism," that God loves everybody, that Christ died for all men, and that Christ made a "universal redemption" without the foundation of uni-

versal salvation. (An impossible, hopeless and comfortless figment!). But the Gospel abides immutable. It is beautifully and powerfully described just as it is found in Scripture in the Heidelberg Book of Comfort.

We must not only know what the Gospel is, but how it should be received, if we are to obtain any benefit from it. "For our Gospel came not unto you in word only." That is all many hearers receive, a word, but not the power thereof. It has, of itself, a natural appeal to the intellect and an attractive force of argument. This is the mere letter — which killeth. That is all many experimentally know of the Gospel. They attend church, pray, partake of the sacraments, pay tithes, etc., and believe that this should make them good enough for heaven. Where they believe there is a deficiency in their account, they call in the merits of Christ to make up the difference. So they put new wine (Christ's blood of atonement) into the old bottles of their self-righteousness. They attempt the sewing of new cloth (Christ's righteousness) on the filthy rags of their dead works. The Gospel has penetrated their minds, but in word only.

"But our Gospel came . . . unto you . . . in power and in the Holy Spirit." When it comes to us in power, its first effect is not that we "anon with joy receive it," nor that we do many things, and hear it gladly (Mk. 6:20), but rather that we believe the state of misery described therein is ours, namely, that we are enmity against God (Ro. 8:7), by nature the children of wrath (Eph. 2:3), under the curse of the law (Gal. 3:10) and were led captive by the devil at his will (II Ti. 2:26). When the Gospel comes to us in the power of the Holy Spirit, we have heard more than "a good sermon," which we may or may not have enjoyed. We do not think how we liked it. We think, How do I like myself, miserable, offending sinner that I am? What does God think of me? How much of His Word is evident in my conduct by a righteous life? Then we have a zeal not only for the truth of election, but also for the fruits of election!

(To be continued, D.V.)

REPORT FROM THE FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

Once again it is time for your Federation Board to its annual report of its activities.

One of our earliest activities was to compose a visitation schedule so that our Young People Societies could meet together in Christian fellowship. This schedule pertains mostly to the Societies in Michigan since it would be rather difficult for out-of-state societies to participate.

Instead of having a Reformation Day Mass Meeting this year we had a Christmas Mass Meeting. It was held December 17, 1965 in Hope Protestant Reformed Church. Rev. G. Van Baren spoke on the topic, "No Room in the Inn" (Luke 2:7b). After refreshments, carole singing was led by Clare Kuiper. We are sorry to report that there was a lack of young people at this Mass Meeting!

We have also made some new appointments to the *Beacon Lights* Staff this year, and they are as follows: Mark Hoeksema replacing Ed Langerak as Assistant Managing Editor; Gayle Dykstra replacing Carol

Bomers as Assistant Clerk; Georgia Hendricks replacing Karlene Oomkes as News Editor; Randy Meyer and Diane Hauck replaced Lois Schipper and Ed Langerak on the Public Relations Staff. It is our hope that the *Beacon Lights* will continue to give spiritual guidance and inspirational instruction to us as covenant children.

We now are in the process of planning the Spring Banquet. Prof. H. Hanko will speak on the interesting topic, "The New Morality." Let's make this year's Spring Banquet exceptional by having all the young people turnout for this occasion.

YOUR FEDERATION BOARD

The Federation Board of the Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies and the Beacon Lights Staff wish to express a sincere word of thanks to Miss Hilda Grace Meelker upon her resigning for her faithful and diligent labor as a contributing writer of Critique. We are sure that not only us, but all the readers of Beacon Lights appreciated the time and efforts which you put forth in your articles. Thank you.

HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE

by REV. J. KORTERING

Book of GENESIS

3. The Participants in this Descent
 - a. The general statement is made in Gen. 46:5-7, 26, 27.
 - b. The number was 70 souls: Jacob and his sons.
 - (1) Of the children of Leah: 6 sons, 23 grandsons, 2 great-grandsons, 1 daughter (Dinah unmarried) total 32.
 - (2) Of the children of Zilpah (Leah's maid): 2 sons, 11 grandsons, 2 great-grandsons, 1 daughter, total 16.
 - (3) Rachel's children: 2 sons, 10 grandsons, 2 great-grandsons (Numbers 26:40) total 14.
 - (4) Bilhah (Rachel's maid): 2 sons, 5 grandsons, total 7.
 - c. Significance of this number
 - (1) Other texts in Scripture give the same number: Ex. 1:5, Deut. 10:22.
 - (2) Stephen refers to the total being 75 (Acts 7:14). He added to the 70 the 3 grandsons and 2 great-grandsons of Joseph.
 - (3) This number does not include literally all the people that went into Egypt.
 - (a) Their wives are not listed, their servants are omitted. Only the sons are considered because of their unique place in the covenant, as covenant head of their families.

(b) Some grandsons are listed here that must have been born in Egypt. Moses in writing this, looks back and views their descent as the *potential* of the nation, each son and grandson as a family head.

d. The number has special significance.

(1) It is the total of 10×7 .

(2) The number 7 is the covenant number (3 representing the triune God plus 4 designating the sphere of man, north, south, east, and west, the 4 corners of the earth). God and His people are united in friendship. Ten is the number of fulness.

(3) Here, God's covenant people went down into Egypt to become God's nation, the theocracy.

4. Joseph meets Jacob

a. They met in Goshen. Joseph went out to meet his father.

b. Jacob's reaction, ready to die!

c. What would you say was the essence of this friendship?

B. Jacob Meets Pharaoh, Gen. 46:31-47:10

1. The preparation

a. Joseph's pre-meditation.

(1) As Joseph waited for his father, he realized what was about to take place, Israel would dwell in Egypt.

(2) He saw possible danger.

(a) It was necessary for Israel to *remain together* as shepherds, they should *not mix* with the Egyptians and lose their peculiar identity, they had to dwell in Egypt only *temporarily* and not become so attached that they would forget Canaan.

(b) In Canaan, already, they had begun to associate with the inhabitants of the land and for *this* reason, God brought them to Egypt. They were not

able to form the nation in Canaan for they had become too involved with the people there. They had to go to a strange country.

(c) Egypt was not a bit better than Canaan spiritually. Egypt was the center of carnality and evil power.

(d) Joseph began to ask, how will Israel dwell in Egypt and still remain God's peculiar people.

(3) Joseph under the direction of God concluded that Goshen (eastern Delta region) would be the best place to settle.

(a) The Egyptians hated shepherds and all animal husbandry. To the scientific, culturally elite, and educated Egyptian a shepherd was a social outcast, it was beneath their dignity to have anything to do with them. Goshen was naturally separated from the Egyptians and thus reduce contact, at the same time affording rich land for the agriculture of Israel.

(b) Goshen was divided from Egypt by the Nile River. This natural barrier would help to keep Israel from mixing to any great extent.

(c) This land was closest to Canaan, a testimony that Israel would live on the boarder of Egypt, expecting to soon return to Canaan.

(4) Questions in this connection.

(a) In what sense is the church separated from the world today?

(b) Is there some spiritual advantage in being active in agriculture today?

(c) Should we consider the scientific advancement in our jet-age as progress?

(To be continued, D.V.)

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

GEORGIA HENDRICKS

GENERAL

The Men's Society of First Church was the guest of Holland Men's Society meeting on March 14. Their Bible discussion began with Romans 8:1.

There was a big crowd at Prof. H. C. Hoeksema's speech, "The Creation Record: Literal or Not?" which was given on March 3, 1966 in the First Church.

The 1966 Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention, hosted by Southeast's young people, will be held August 19-22. The theme as found in 11 Peter 1:5-8 is "FAITH" - The Seed of Faith, The Growth of Faith, The Fruits of Faith.

Pvt. Harlow W. Kuiper has been in the hospital recently, but is again returned to his training.

The Reformation Rally speech of Rev. H. C. Hoeksema is now off the press. If you wish to have a copy, send your name and address to Rev. Schipper at 1543 Cambridge Ave., S. E., Grand Rapids, Mich. It may interest you to know that we have received requested for copies from as far south as Bethany, Oklahoma and as far north as Manistee, Mich.

BIRTHS

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Monsma. (First)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Carl Potjer. (First)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. David Ondersma. (First)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Grusczyński. (First)

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Tom Newhof Jr. (First)

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Terrance Elzinga. (Holland)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Pastoor. (First)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. R. Van Baren. (Southeast)

CALLS

Our church in Randolph, Wis. has called Rev. D. Engelsma of Loveland, Colo.

Rev. Kortering of Hull, Iowa has declined

a call extended to him from Isabel, South Dakota.

Rev. D. Engelsma has declined the call extended to him from Edgerton, Minn.

Rev. G. Lanting of our Holland church has also declined the call extended to him from Edgerton.

Rev. J. Kortering has declined the call extended to him from Hudsonville.

Rev. J. Heys of our South Holland Church has declined his call extended to him from church in Hudsonville.

BIRTHDAYS

Mr. Ed Van Eenenaam has celebrated his 82nd birthday. (First)

Mrs. John Decker has celebrated her 83rd birthday. (First)

Mrs. L. VandenBerg has celebrated her 87th birthday. (First)

Mrs. Yonker has celebrated her 89th birthday. (First)

MEMBERSHIP

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Bosman and two baptized children were transferred to our church in South Holland.

Dismissal papers were sent to Mrs. Marjorie Elders, nee Lubbers at her home upon her request.

Miss Georgia Hendriks from our Edgerton church was received as a baptized member in our First church.

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth M. Teitsma were received as members in full communion by the First Church. Mr. and Mrs. Teitsma came to us from the Eastern Ave. Christian Reformed Church.

A letter of dismissal was received from the Bethany Reformed Church of Grand Rapids for Mr. Leonard Somers. He is now a baptized member of our Southeast church.

DEATHS

Mr. Samuel Reitsma passed away on Feb. 14, 1966. (Southeast)

MARRIAGE

Wedding bells rang on March 11, 1966 for Egbert Holleman Jr. and Miss Corrol Scheeringa.

MR. JOHN ZANDATEA, JR.
49 GLENWOOD-LANSING RD.
GLENWOOD, ILLINOIS 60425

Make plans to attend the annual Protestant
Reformed Young People's Convention at
Southeast Protestant Reformed Church

AUGUST 19-22

Theme for this year's Convention: FAITH

Speakers for the Convention are:

Rev. G. Lanting — SEEDS OF FAITH

Rev. D. Engelsma — GROWTH OF FAITH

Rev. J. Kortering — FRUITS OF FAITH

An outing at Jack and Jill Camp with swimming,
boating, horseback riding is among the many
events planned.