



# BEACON LIGHTS

*for*

**PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH**

December 1966

*Joy, Horror, Apathy*

*Is The War in Vietnam a Just War?*

*A Christian in the Nursing Field*



# BEACON LIGHTS

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## JOY, HORROR, APATHY

Young people, another year has drawn to a close. Closed forever is the Book of 1966 and soon it will become part of the hoary past and be for the most part forgotten. Another year, however, is ready to open itself. Does this passing from one year into another fill you with joy, with horror, or with apathy?

If you are filled with joy, you, perhaps, accomplished something this past year. Joy and accomplishment are twins, and they walk hand-in-hand. What did you accomplish? Some of you "made it through" another year of school. For some "making it through" is sheer joy, and it is accomplishment. Others, however, made it through with honest effort, diligent study, and rigorous discipline. But how about the joy outside of school? How many of you find joy in obeying your parents? How many of you find real joy in going to Young People's Society? How many of you find real joy in attending God's House on Sunday? Where are your joys, then? Are they out in the fun-crazy world with its high emotion and shallow morals? Are your joys in things? In cars, movies, television? Where do you find real joy? One answer: God's Holy Word. Jesus Christ, God's Word made flesh spoke the answer:

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Or maybe you have reached this point in time in which you are filled with unspeakable horror. Yes, the horror one feels when he has lost something very dear to him. Human beings are strange that way. As soon as they lose grasp of something, they want it back. For example, a young man quits his best girlfriend, then, soon he wants her back. Or, as soon as you leave home for good, you want to go back. A year has come and gone, and, now, you want it back. But you can't have it back.

It's all finished, wrapped up, closed. It's history now. Another year, however, lies ahead. If you do not want to feel remorse this same time next year, plan your life to make it meaningful, worthwhile, and blessed. You find our answer in the Book of Books. The most spiritually productive, meaningful, and blessed life is rewarded to those who in faith study diligently the Word of God. Not only will your life be worthwhile, but you will also be better equipped to deal with the wicked world in which we live. Armed with the sword of the spirit which is the word of God, you will vanquish the most formidable opponent.

Do some of you reach this point in time apathetic? Do you have an "I-really-don't-care" attitude toward the passage of precious time? Are you lukewarm? Many today like this approach to life because they feel that it is objective, transcendent, and comfortable. In the modern day idiom they are labeled "cool." Or they do not let things "bug" them. The truth is, however, that these people are on the ocean of life in a rudderless, mastless, helmless ship of fools. God's Word speaks out sharply against anyone that is apathetic, lukewarm, and lazy. Through the mouth of the Seer of Patmos, he spoke: "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:15 and 16). Do not be "cool" fools, but be, rather, warm, fervent, zealous, and wise followers of Jesus Christ.

A year has passed, and another is fast approaching. Let us leave the one and enter the other with the right perspective. Where do we get that perspective? We get it by faith through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Christ has come, and he has gone, but his Spirit is still with us. Operating in our hearts he turns us to His Word. His Word governs, directs, guides, and sustains us on our way. It causes us to say: "But we will bless the Lord from this time forth and for evermore. Praise the Lord." (Ps. 115:18)

D.H.

# *Is The War in Vietnam a Just War?*

TIM PIPE

This question, which involves our position in Vietnam and the many peripheral questions have been main topics of discussion over the past several years. Because this situation has so closely affected all of our lives it does not lack in public opinion. For example, those who can remember the Korean and the Second World War, fear an escalation of the Vietnam action to this point, and we are all, undoubtedly, acquainted with persons who are faced with military service in Vietnam. News broadcasts echo the reports of demonstrations, draft card burnings, Congressional hearings, and the like. We all have opinions, one way or another, regarding this matter. I do not assume to be an expert on this subject, but I would like to think that what is set down here might in some small way give the reader a little more light on the subject. The subject being as complex and involved as it is does not lend itself to one absolute solution. To come to any opinion at all concerning a matter of this sort we can only assume that the supposedly reliable sources are relating the truth and base our opinions accordingly. I say supposedly reliable because we who are not as closely connected to the military and political goings-on can only assume that because of their position the news reporters and politicians record reliable information. Using these sources for my information, I would like to approach the subject from two viewpoints, that of legality and that of morality. These viewpoints, at first, seem to be one in the same, but we will approach the legality issue through the pacts and documents of past history, asking ourselves, does the U.S. have a legal right to be in Vietnam? The morality viewpoint can be approached by asking the question, whether the U.S. present-day actions are justifiable in view of their purpose and what is the purpose?

I would like to begin this discussion with a brief history of the conflict in Vietnam, viewing the events since World War II in perspective. The struggle in South Vietnam stems from disruption of two world wars.

World War I and World War II disrupted a structure of power which had stood for one hundred years. Taking advantage of the resulting turmoil, the Communist nations have attempted to extend their control into other areas of the world. The Marshall Plan and NATO succeeded partially in containing Communist advances in Europe. Beginning with the Truman Administration, the U.S. government has become increasingly aware of the fact that Southeast Asia is vital to the security of the U.S. To some, this may seem to be an unwarranted statement, but I will attempt to explain it later. In 1954, Undersecretary Smith stated that, according to Article 2(4) of the U.N. Charter, the U.S. would "refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force," and also, "would view any renewal of the aggression in violation of the aforesaid agreement." More directly connected with Vietnam is the fact that soon after the Korean War, France decided to withdraw from Southeast Asia. In accordance with their withdrawal there was a division of the territory included the division of Vietnam at the 17th Parallel. This was in agreement with the Geneva accords of 1954 and was recognized by the United Nations. At this point, U.S. military personnel and equipment were introduced into South Vietnam as a replacement for the French personnel and equipment. The following facts (statements by Secretary Rusk at Congressional hearings) as I have said before, will be accepted as truth for the mere fact that I have nothing better to go on. After the division of territory, North Vietnam expected that because of South Vietnam's weak political and social conditions it would be only a matter of short time before South Vietnam would fall into their control. But contrary to expectations South Vietnam made considerable progress. Hanoi's reaction to this was to place a secret political-military organization in South Vietnam for the purpose of propaganda and the assassination of local officials. In 1960, North Vietnam made it publicly clear that it was attempting to

envelop South Vietnam into its own political organization. At about the same time the National Liberation Front was established. This was a Communist creation intended to voice the opinion of the whole of Vietnam. Hanoi intended that this organization be viewed by the rest of the world as the voice of a truly communistic South Vietnam. This organization has not concealed its role in stating, in 1961, that it would "act overtly to lead the revolution in South Vietnam." Late in 1961, the U.S. forces in Vietnam began for the first time to take an active part in the conflict. These actions were intended to decrease communist aggression. Since that time there has been a continual escalation of U.S. strength in accordance with continued aggression.

To begin the actual discussion, I will list some of the contradictions of the war and their reasons. Following this I will present the official refutations to these contradictions.

Many people feel that the United States does not have a legal right to be in Vietnam, that we have such vast military power and like to use it. The United States is acting as the policeman of the universe. Also, in these actions, many people feel that there is no logical reason for the United States to be in Vietnam.

Another reason is that the war in Vietnam is based on a series of U.S. miscalculations. The U.S. is comparing the conflict in Vietnam to the Second World War, where small countries were being faced with active aggression, while the actual fact here is that the conflict is civil in nature and Vietnam is essentially one country. Also, we sometimes base our actions on the fact that Southeast Asia is a testing ground for communist theory, but actually revolutions are born out of misery and discontent and are not controlled by a central head. A fact brought up along these lines is that of one hundred and forty-nine serious internal insurgencies in the past eight years the Communists have been involved in only fifty-eight of them.

According to John C. Bennet, president of Union Theological Seminary, a just war necessitates just means. Our actions in Vietnam are in direct violation of this point. The accidental bombings of villages in South Vietnam, the poisoning of rice crops, and

the torturing of prisoners are morally intolerable.

We have continually rejected direct negotiations with the Vietcong. The U.S. calls for unconditional negotiations but combines it with affirmations about the outcome, that the other side could never accept. As a result there have been no negotiations.

Finally, because the American public seems to be lacking in understanding of the conflict, the military actions are dubious. The government has obscured the reasons for their actions either because they themselves don't understand it or otherwise the real reason might involve complications which would not be acceptable to the American public.

Much of the following information has been taken from "The Department of State Bulletin" recorded when Secretary Rusk was before the Senate Committee of Foreign Relations. In answer to the legality issue, Rusk cites a few reasons. According to international law, we are authorized by the well-established right of collective self-defense against armed attack, to aid South Vietnam against the armed attack of North Vietnam. Even though South Vietnam is not a member, the self-defense point is not limited to U.N. members and so the U.S. is not stymied on this point. Although Vietnam is a temporarily divided state, international agreements and laws require that the demarcation line be respected by both zones. The Southeast Asia Treaty Organization was established for the support of the nations of Southeast Asia. In this agreement the U.S. joined with Great Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Pakistan, and the Philippines "to guarantee the security not only of the member nations, but also to come to the aid of certain protocol states and territories if they so requested." Article IV, paragraph 1 of SEATO states that "each Party recognizes that aggression by means of armed attack . . . would endanger its own peace and safety, and agrees that it will in that event act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes." This treaty has guided the U.S. in their Vietnam actions.

The fact of the origin of the conflict is not entirely clear to me but the fact that the Communists have taken advantage of the situation and are attempting to channel the revolution along their own lines is im-

portant. President Eisenhower once said, "Strategically, South Vietnam's capture by the communists would bring their power several hundred miles into a hitherto free region. The remaining countries in Southeast Asia would be menaced by a great flanking movement. The freedom of twelve million people would be lost immediately and that of one hundred million others in adjacent land would be seriously endangered. The loss of South Vietnam would set in motion a crumbling process that could, as it progresses, have grave consequences for us and for freedom." The U.S. is not attempting to impose a political or social structure but is trying to allow Vietnam to be itself.

The morally intolerable instances which were mentioned before, are, as General Taylor says, normal courses of war and are to be expected.

As I mentioned before, even the opposition admits to President Johnson's efforts for peace but they feel that the U.S. is hindering these efforts by speaking of conditions which the Vietcong would not accept. The U.S. government has listed fourteen points (on public record) along the lines of negotiations, not in form of conditions but in the direction of withdrawal. Hanoi insists that negotiations must follow four points which they have established. The third point is of concern to us and has caused a stalemate in negotiations. It says that "The internal affairs of South Vietnam must be settled by the South Vietnamese people themselves in accordance with the program of the National Liberation Front." The NLF does not voice the opinions of South Vietnam. It was a creation of North Vietnam. No prominent persons belong to it and it has been reported that Vietnamese students are wholly against it. For these reasons the U.S. and North Vietnam can not negotiate while this point is insisted upon by Hanoi.

In response to the feeling that the U.S. government has been secretive in their dealings in Vietnam, I can only say that the nature of war demands a certain amount of secrecy but also the past Congressional hearings have given the U.S. citizens a greater understanding of the conflict. Up to a certain point we can learn much by doing some conscientious studying on this matter.

This brings us to the main point of my article, "Is the War In Vietnam a Just War?" "Just" according to the dictionary means comfortable to law, impartial, fair, and honest in dealings with others. As you can see, this definition allows for many personal slants to the meaning, but for now we will use the formerly mentioned criteria of legality and morality. Once again we must assume the creditability of our sources. Taking this into account, I think that I have shown that by pacts, treaties, and documents the U.S. has a legal right to be in Vietnam. In regard to the moral viewpoint, I stated that the military actions in Vietnam follow the normal courses of war. If my assumptions are true, I think that I can say that the war in Vietnam is justifiable.

I hope that I have not elevated our subject out of proportion, realizing that our real battle is not earthly, but we can not follow our government blindly. Our government is representative of the people and we must be concerned with this representation. No matter what conclusion that each individual reaches it must be in the form of criticism, positive or negative. This criticism must not reach the bounds of active opposition. Romans 13:1 and 2. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." Let this be the rule in our reactions towards Vietnam and any governmental undertaking.

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## A CHRISTIAN IN THE NURSING FIELD

What really is the nursing profession, and where can one of God's chosen people find a place in it? Is there really a place for us, who are Protestant Reformed youth? I believe the answer is yes. In this answer there must be a condition, however. Each one

must consider nursing within himself and come to a conclusion as an individual concerning his or her place in Nursing and degree of involvement therein.

Nursing is the practice of aiding physicians to maintain or restore normal physio-

logical or body functions, such as the ability to walk or breath correctly. If you break your leg you will be unable to walk. The situations with which nurses deal become ever more complicated and extend to the person who has had open heart surgery or a kidney transplant. The graveness of the situation should in no way affect the basic attitudes of one who practices nursing.

The goals of a nurse should be to aid the patient in resuming his normal life, with as little pain and inconvenience as possible. Contrary to many ideas, a nurse is not concerned with only the patient as a physical body as the usual contention would indicate that people aren't really people in a hospital but only bed numbers or disease entities: such as that Gall Bladder in bed 2. On the contrary student nurses today and conscientious registered nurses are required and encouraged to give what we call Total Patient Care. In essence this means caring for a person's needs, physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

The physical care is that with which you are most familiar because this is obvious in the hospital situation or at least in part. In training for the career of nursing, students are taught to observe for any change in the physical being of their patients which might indicate abnormal function such as signs of swelling or abnormal-colored secretions from the body. Pain is the most common sign of trouble and another of the main aims in nursing is to alleviate pain and suffering.

Suffering, however, can be much more severe in other areas than in the physical. We have medications which relieve pain and even some to help dull the mental and emotional anxieties of patients but these latter problems will recur unless the cause is discovered and eliminated if possible. Through your understanding, true interest and willingness to listen you as a nurse can serve as an outlet for people's emotions; for often simply telling someone your problems makes them less alarming and easier to cope with. In this way the person himself becomes fully aware of the problem as a whole. Suggesting possible solutions may also be the nurse's role.

The one remaining area is that of spiritual support. This is a touchy subject in any situation but especially in the hospital, for it is not my place as a student nurse or

would it be yours to convert your patients to the Protestant Reformed Church. I think perhaps there is a visible and invisible way of giving people, particularly sick people, spiritual support. The invisible support is not entirely invisible but is indicated by every action you do. The manner in which you perform your work and the attitude toward your patients becomes evident very soon. If you go about your tasks, seemingly unimportant to some, and perform these with cheerfulness and a conviction that this is the work God has chosen for you, your attitude will be communicated to the people you serve. I have heard many patients say, "I can always tell if a nurse is a Christian; by her actions and manner in her work; she smiles and it's genuine and she really cares about you as a person."

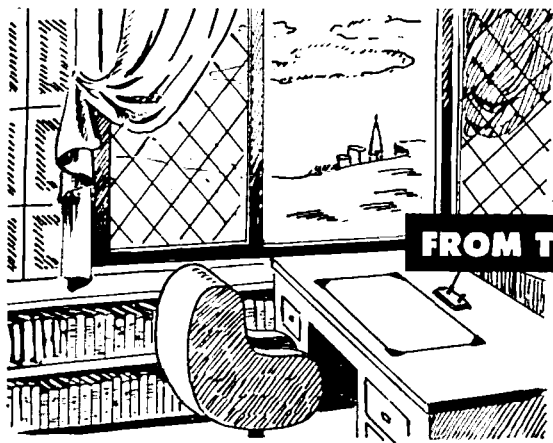
The visible support is really verbal. When someone is spiritually disturbed, he too must be encouraged to talk about his problem. If he knows that you are concerned about him, he will be more likely to confide in you. Once your patient has brought to you the subject of his faith you can simply tell him what you believe and why. Perhaps you might say, "I can only tell you what I believe with all my heart to be the truth; that of myself I am nothing, a sinner who is destined to be lost but by the grace of God He sent His son to die for all of my sins and bring me to salvation." A simple and concise statement and explanation of Calvin's five points could serve as a summary of your beliefs should they desire to know them.

Often the problem is doubting of one's faith and you as a nurse can state the reason for *your* faith and in this way try to assure others.

One thing should be stressed; that you as Christian nurse will formulate your basic ideas as a student and prior to entering training you must assume the correct attitude. The nursing profession in connection with the medical profession is really only a servant of God. We can do nothing lest it be God's will. No matter what ends are used, if it be God's will that a person die we can do nothing.

If you feel that you can best serve God by devoting your life to helping people then feel assured that you may do this in the nursing profession. May God be with you young people as you choose your life's work.

DIANE HAUCK



## FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. LUBBERS

### THE ARITHMETIC OF MATTHEW 18:16

*"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."*

Jesus is very much concerned about the little ones of his flock. Not one of them must ever be offended by us. Such little ones are not simply little children who have not yet come to the years of discretion; babes at their mother's breasts, but they are those who repent from their sins, and walk humbly with God. And God does not desire that any of these should perish. Our heavenly Father cares for them, and His angels always behold the face of God. And these angels stand in the service of these little ones.

However, sometimes the little ones of God fall into sin. That, too, may be your experience. And, again, you may experience sometime that some brother will actually sin against you. What must you do then? There are two extremes which can be followed in such a case. On the one hand you may then shrug the shoulder and condescendingly say: Oh, I consider the source. Think nothing of it. On the other hand you might feel deeply hurt by it and use undue and unbrotherly severity toward him who sins against you. Now the golden mean between these two is not a worldly middle-in-the-road position. How could that be a cure for the ill? Christ says that we must confess our sins, we must repent from the same. That is true, young people, in general; however, this is particularly true when the brother has sinned against you. Then you must at all costs be like the shepherd

who goes and seeks the wandering sheep, and rejoice as did the shepherd in Jesus' parable when he finds his sheep. This shepherd takes this sheep upon his shoulder and carries him back to the fold. Thus there is rejoicing in heaven when one sinner, who has gone astray, returns to the fold. The angels which do always behold the face of God rejoice.

In case our brother has sinned against us, we must go and see him alone. He must convict him of *sin* against God. But go to him we must. And if he hear us we have gained a brother to God. He who is instrumental in having one sinner repent, saves a soul from death and covers a multitude of sins.

Sometimes we do not succeed in gaining a brother by visiting him. Then we must go again. Only this time we must take witnesses with us. It is at this point that we must pay close attention to Jesus' arithmetic. No, one does not need to know "modern math" to understand it. We must know the simple fact that the word of two or three witnesses shall stand, and that upon such a number of witnesses every word may be established. Yes, we must give good heed to the arithmetic here. This is necessary because this is a fundamental law with God. Even Jesus needed to have a witness to attest to the things which he preached. Says he in John 8:16, 17, 18, "And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone,



but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me." Now if Jesus who is a sinless man, and who could not lie, must have a witness, how much more must we who are poor sinners, and who are inclined to all evil, even after we have received the grace of regeneration, have witnesses.

Watch that arithmetic, young people!

For Jesus says here in effect that no one of us is a competent witness except we have one to witness of us. Then we too are a witness, but only then. It is rather interesting that Jesus makes some simple addition of arithmetic. He used it also; he knew the law of numbers. He knew that one and one makes two, and that one and two makes three. Did you notice that he says in Matthew 18:16 that we must take *one or two* witnesses with us that in the mouth of *two or three* witnesses every word may be established. If I take one with me, then, I eventually have two witnesses, and if I take two witnesses with me, then, I eventually get three witnesses. Simple arithmetic, isn't it? Yet, it is divine justice.

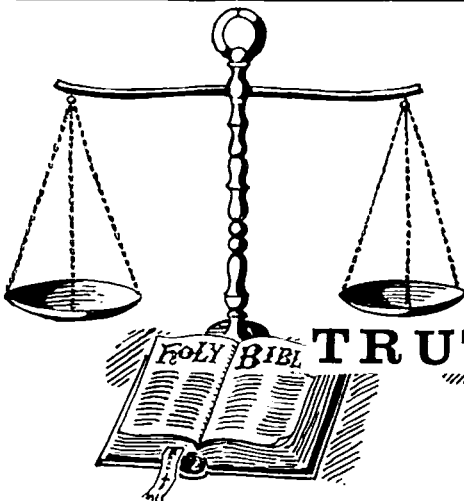
Now let's start all over again. God does

not allow one man to stand in witness against any brother. The testimony of one man may be simply self-serving. Two may also lie, and so may three. But not so easily. Besides, let us remember the commandment of God, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

But the arithmetic of Matthew 18:16 is important, young people. It is important in the civil courts of our land. It is equally important in the church of Jesus Christ. Learn your arithmetic well, covenant youth, and employ it in the church. It is not only meant to be used by misers ingathering their shekels, or in the measure and beat of music, or in the numbering of the stars of the heavens, or even in numbering our days. It is meant to be used in measuring the holy place of God. And in the holy place of God the arithmetic of Jesus fits as he spoke in Matthew 18:16.

Will you take a second look at this arithmetic?

Let's go over it again. We are often yet in the kindergarten in these matters. One and one makes two, and one and two makes three! Thus, we arrive at two or three witnesses, in whose mouth every word shall be established.



## TRUTH vs. ERROR

by REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

### 19. THOUGHTS ON THE DOCTRINE OF ELECTION

#### 15. Its Proclamation (cont'd)

In the last installment we saw that the Bible is the Book of Election from cover to cover. We saw that both the Old and New

Testaments are full of election, and that election is the very heart of the gospel. In this connection, we saw that many in the preaching of the gospel, never get at the

heart of that matter, since they do not see the relation of the truth of election to the truth of the gospel. This is evident in the beginning many make in their thinking. They begin with the crucifixion or the incarnation, rather than with God's eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. We noted, too, that the grace of God is not genuinely honored apart from election. For grace and every aspect of it flow from the fountain of election (Eph. 1). As soon as grace is separated from election we have divine favor conditioned by the activities and contingencies of man. Then election is eliminated from the picture, and grace is no more grace.

Without election, what is often taken to be "grace" is not grace. Some men, because they reject the teaching that salvation is entirely dependent upon the will of man, think they exalt grace when they advance the following. 1. The natural man is depraved, spiritually sick, half dead and almost incorrigibly stubborn. 2. But God by His Spirit convicts men of sin, of righteousness and judgment, and enlightens them with the Light of Christ, so that they need not walk in darkness, but have the light of life. 3. Yet they must respond to these influences of the Spirit and co-operate with His operations. For the reason men are lost is that they refuse such working of the Spirit. Saving grace is experienced as the result of acquiescence to the purpose of God. At bottom, this brings us down to human effort, not grace at all.

How often, when it is pointed out that predestination is so deeply imbedded in Scripture, you meet not with a denial of this fact but with an appeal to the "foreknowledge" of God. This is supposed to mean that God foreseeing who would repent of their sins and believe in Christ as Saviour chose them to salvation. This is Roman Catholic doctrine, the papal idea of human merit. Grace is not free, election is not sovereign, but bound by the "decision" of man. This is the humanistic teaching that in God's prevision there is something good to be seen in man. But that which God foresees in man is nothing good. No man could be chosen for a good God sees in him, simply because there is no good in him to be seen. Besides, foreknowledge in Scripture is founded on the purpose of God (Rom. 8:28, 29). God foreknows only what He has

foreordained. There is nothing else to foreknow. God cannot foreknow without foreordaining. His foreknowledge takes in only what He has decreed shall come to pass. Foreknowledge is therefore based upon the eternal counsel of God, that is, the order of Scripture has it, first, His counsel, then foreknowledge (Acts 2:23). Nor can any one come up with Scripture which speaks of the foreknowledge of man's repentance, faith, or any good in him. Foreknowledge is always of *persons*, never of works or qualities. Scripture says, "*whom* He did foreknow," not *what* He did foreknow. But even so, at all this length, we have not yet come to the real meaning of foreknowledge, which is love, in the sense of Jeremiah 31:3. That the word *know* in this connection means from all eternity a divine love is proved plainly by a comparison of II Tim. 2:19 with Matt. 7:23. The Lord is omniscient; He knows all things and everybody. But He doesn't love everybody.

Equally as often, you will hear the appeal to "whosoever will may come." True, but how does the *dead* sinner, a "whosoever won't" by nature, become a "whosoever will"? Where does he get the willingness to respond to such a gracious call? The natural man is an unwilling being. He will not come to the Lord (John 5:40), nor can he (6:44), until he is made willing to come (Psalm 110:3). Then, in that way, all the elect surely shall come to Christ (John 6:37), and this grace is sufficient (II Cor. 12:9) without any help from man. Grace makes the member of Christ what he is, not his co-operation or "decision" (I Cor. 15:10).

Take the children of Israel at the Red Sea. They were in a desperate plight. The sea was against them. So was the land; they were both at its end and at wit's end. The world-dominating nation of the time was against them. There was no place to go, no place to hide. What, under such circumstances, would be "good news" to them? that God had made *provision* for their salvation? made *possible* their salvation? Hardly! They needed more than *that* to have *good* news. They needed the announcement and promise, which was anon given them (Ex. 14:13, 14), that God had made *certain* their salvation! Grace not only provides and proclaims salvation: it also produces it. It does so in such a way that the Dagon of free will falls flat on its face, that the de-

liverance may be of God alone. Crammed up against the Red Sea as they were, Israel saw in those insurmountable waters the drowning of all human helps and hopes. They learned in that never-to-be-forgotten experience that grace is "to him that worketh not," for it is God who worketh to will and to do for His good pleasure (Rom. 4:5; Phil. 2:13).

There can be no place for "the praise of the glory of His grace" if sovereign, unconditional election be not preached. For then too much is made of man. He is upheld as having before God some good or some ability in him. This despite the fact that the Arminians maintain that they do uphold the total depravity of man. They do indeed, even rather widely, profess the doctrine. Yet they contradict it with their constant harping on man's ability to do good. In their theological text books there may be found a rather lengthy chapter where total depravity is avowed and proved from Scripture. But then the very next chapter may be on the Free Moral Agency of Man, where total depravity is denied in the insistence that man is free to will both right and wrong. To speak, then, of "total depravity" is to use theological terminology, which, like the vocabulary of a parrot, is not understood; nor is it believed in its gravest implications. The natural man is no more free unto good than a worm is to fly.

One blessed effect of the preaching of the doctrine of election is that it teaches us to "have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3), but to abase the pride of man. Where one denies or neglects the doctrine of election, there is one who to some degree rests on the power of man. That one who thinks one may be saved without election surely must believe there is something of man in the effecting of salvation. Such a person must believe that he does contribute something to his salvation, in spite of the strongest denials to the contrary. He who supposes he has in the power of his will but the smallest contribution to make to his salvation is a Mr. Carnal Security. To that extent he trusts in himself and is not yet really humbled before God. Then the thing formed says to the Former, "I made myself to differ."

Modern-day mass evangelism boasts of its crusades for souls, and of its converts on an average of over three thousand souls a cam-

paign meeting. These converts are supposed to be converted to Christ and Christianity, and that by a "decision" made to accept Christ as Saviour. Now if a "convert" will honestly examine himself, searching for the marks of God's elect, he may find his conversion a counterfeit, since it is based on nothing more than a "deciding for Christ." If he cannot find his conversion resting on the work of grace we call regeneration, but rather supposes that his regeneration stems from his conversion, then no matter how strongly he denies it, he has some confidence in the flesh. If he feels he had the right to become a son of God because he "accepted Christ" and believed on His name (a misunderstanding of John 1:12, 13), and not first because he was predestinated to the adoption of sons (Eph. 1:5), and then was born not of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God, he still attributes something of man to the matter of his salvation. If that is the way he was saved, his conversion came by enticing words of man's wisdom, and his faith stands in the wisdom of men, not in the power of God. Then he has merely a natural faith, sufficient to trust only in a human object, and lacks the supernatural gift of saving faith to trust in the supernatural Christ. Such a "convert," slanted away from the truth of election as he was under the ministry of "decisionism" and "only-believism," has not only been robbed of the heart of the gospel, but has from the outset been prejudiced against the truth of salvation by grace only. He doesn't want a salvation, including his faith and his believing, which is a matter of Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. He wants a "yes, but" salvation — "Yes, but I put my trust in Him." As to the truth of "*what* hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (I Cor. 4:7), he has not yet "arrived"!

The true convert to Christ wants his faith to be "the faith of God's elect" (Tit. 1:1). He wants evidence in himself that he is wheat separated from the chaff. Can he expect the fruitful and blessed results of such flesh-withering and heart-searching truth if election as far as he is concerned is suppressed? In days to come it will be evident that much which modern mass evangelism regards as gold, silver and precious stones is nothing but wood, hay and stubble. Salvation is not something separate from the knowledge of the truth

(I Tim. 2:4) . How will a knowledge of the truth be had where this essential of it is withheld?

We have seen that this doctrine of election covers the whole of Scripture as the cedars of Lebanon cover the wooded mountain with an enormous forest. To fail to see,

or refuse to see, the truth of election is then to fail to see the forest for the trees. To take up Scripture without this truth is merely hauling the saw-dust, not logging the trees.

(To be concluded, D.V.)

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## CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

"East Christian High's first dance has come and gone." These were the opening words of an article written by the editor in the October 20, 1966, issue of ECH's school paper, *Courtviews*. The article was concerned with student opinion of a square dance held at ECH about two weeks earlier. The results of this poll were rather disturbing: only one person out of 74 surveyed opposed the dance. When asked whether they felt rock 'n roll dancing was wrong, most students said it was not and that they would like to see such a dance held at ECH. In his concluding remarks, the editor said that these responses showed that another square dance would be "wholeheartedly welcome" and that he himself concurred with this opinion. He concluded by saying that the results could only point to facts. And indeed they do. The fact is that most young people see nothing wrong with attending square or rock 'n roll dances. They can go right along with the world and its entertainment and take for granted that this is all right.

As a student at East Christian High, I was quite disturbed by these results, so I wrote an article and asked to have it published in the school paper. In the article I asked a few pointed questions and suggested possible answers, among which were: "Does not the very fact that a survey was taken indicate that all is not well? Not everyone agrees on this question, or at least some have some misgivings. Could it be that the basic approach is faulty? Why was the dance introduced? Could it be that we are trying to get as close to the world as possible? Call this dance culture, entertainment, anything you want, I say it is conforming to the world and that is wrong." This was the essence of my article.

Students who are not on the *Courtviews* staff have always been encouraged and urged to contribute to the paper. The students have done this. Last year, two people who disagreed with the sentiments and comments expressed in a "rate-your-school" poll were given a half page of space to speak their minds. Indeed, even though editors come and go, it has always been the policy of the school to allow a reasonable article some space.

But my article was refused by the editor on the grounds that it did not represent enough student opinion to warrant its publication, and that the whole question would end up by being a theological debate. But after all, it makes no difference how much of the student body is behind me. It is MY opinion, not theirs. All previous articles of this kind have been signed by one person, not by 10% of the student body. I talked to the school principal, to no avail. My article would not be published.

Why am I telling you readers about this isolated incident? Because it is typical of what is called church nowadays and of the spirit of the times. People can be so broad-minded and tolerant when it comes to liberalism or deviation from the truth. People, and the church, too, can talk so glibly about progress, but when somebody tries to draw the line of the antithesis and support the Church's position of distinctiveness, he is told that there is no place for this and that he is narrow-minded. This is also when freedom of the press becomes a myth. It is a sign of the times, and we as young people should always be on our guard against this pseudo-piety and be ready when it comes to defending our truth!

MARK HOEKSEMA

## THE INCARNATION

Again our hearts are filled with joy  
As, in a special way  
We celebrate our Saviour's birth,  
Well known as "Christmas Day."

Our thoughts are drawn to Bethlehem  
The place of Jesus birth.  
The Son of God, incarnate  
To dwell upon the earth.

He left His home in glory  
In flesh here to abide.  
Obedient to His Father  
God's will He satisfied.

For man had deeply fallen  
From his perfection state.  
No longer could he serve Him right  
As God him did create.

For God is just and holy  
He's righteous, He is light.  
He can have no communion  
With sin that's dark as night.

Sin cannot go unpunished  
For God is truly just.  
He's righteous and He's holy  
So to punish sin He must.

But, God had a chosen people  
Elect 'ere time began,  
From eternity He loved them  
So, salvation was His plan.

He promised our first parents  
That from their seed would rise  
A Saviour, a Redeemer,  
Who truly justifies.

The prophets too fortold it  
That Christ would come some day.  
That He must suffer much, and die  
To take our sins away.

Expectant parents used to hope  
Their babe would be a boy.  
For he might be the promised Christ.  
The thought filled them with joy!

And then, four hundred years went by  
Without a single word.  
It looked like David's line ran dead.  
It seemed nothing was heard.

But, God is always faithful;  
His covenant shall endure.  
He never fails His loved ones.  
His promises are sure.

For an angel came to Mary  
And told her of God's plan.  
She asked, "How shall this be  
For I know not a man?"

Conception by the Holy Ghost,  
A miracle takes place!  
Then, virgin birth, God's Son in flesh.  
A wonder of God's grace!

The shepherds heard about it  
As they watched their flocks that night,  
From an angel, then a chorus.  
Oh, what a wondrous sight!

It seemed the heavens opened  
As their song rang through the air,  
"Glory to God in the highest,"  
It echoed everywhere!

They hastened to the manger  
Where baby Jesus lay.  
'Twas there the shepherds saw him  
Upon a bed of hay.

In swaddling clothes they found Him  
'Twas such a lowly birth!  
Humility surrounds Him.  
God's own dear Son on earth.

There was the virgin Mary  
Who was so richly blessed  
To be the Christ child's mother.  
And this she too confessed.

It seemed there was none other  
In David's royal line  
To be the mother of our Lord,  
Our Saviour so divine.

Oh, the depth of love and mercy!  
Grace, redemption so complete.  
How we marvel in amazement  
And fall prostrate at His feet!

We shall never understand it  
We shall never cease to tell  
The wonder of "The Incarnation"  
God with us, Immanuel.

By MRS. BETTY EKEMA  
Redlands, California

# Epistle of JAMES

REV. HERMAN VELDMAN

### III. Verses 8-11.

#### A. *What is the royal law?*

1. There is a law of God for every creature, a Divine norm or rule, boundary line within which every creature must confine itself. This applies, e.g., to the birds, the fishes, plants. . . . Besides, this law for each particular creature is in harmony with the nature and being of that particular creature. Explain.
2. So we can also speak of the law of God as a rule or principle which determines my existence from a moral-rational point of view, as a moral being. God's law must be obeyed. We have no choice in this matter, as if it were left to us to decide whether to obey or not. James writes that he who respects persons violates the law. One could hardly be called a violator if the choice to obey or disobey were his.
3. Specifically, the law, also including the ten commandments, refers here to the entire will of God, expressed briefly in the ten commandments, but also as revealed throughout the Word of God.
4. What is the royal law? "Royal" means "kingly." Some think that it means the commandments of the King, God. However, are not all the laws of God in this sense royal? James here is speaking of a specific commandment. The word "royal" can also mean: preeminent. We accept this latter interpretation.
5. This royal law is expressed in verse 8. Jesus Himself summarizes the law thus. — see Matt. 22:37-40. Why is the royal law confined here to the love of the neighbor? Is the second table of the law more important than the first: thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all

heart, etc.? Or is it because James here is speaking of our human relationships with one another?

#### B. *The transgression of the law of God.*

1. Notice what we read in verse 8. This also indicates the connection between this and the preceding. Must we not love our neighbors as ourselves? Also therefore the rich? So, James begins his rebuttal of this in verse 8. He means to say: "You claim to fulfil the royal law of God? Ye do well." Of course, James means to say that they do well, provided that they really fulfil this royal law.
2. But, if you fail in one point you are guilty of all. They failed in one point: they respected persons. And if we fail in one point, we are guilty of all.
  - a. Why is this? Failing in one point we are guilty of all, i.e., keep none of the commandments of the Lord. Why? This is set forth in verse 11. The Same One Who said, Do not commit adultery, also said, Do not kill. Hence, God's law is one. There is one God of His law, and therefore one basic precept which controls all the commandments. And this one single and basic precept is LOVE!
  - b. O, we may keep all the commandments, in an outward sense. Explain. But, really, we keep none. Because if we lack this love of God and of the neighbor, we really keep none of God's laws as we should.
  - c. Why does James mention the commandments he does in verse 11? Because he is speaking of our relationships with other men. And the reason why he quotes the sixth com-

mandment in verse 11 is because respect of persons means exactly the violation of this sixth commandment. Then we despise the poor, and we really hate them. Incidentally, what an indictment against the theory of "Common Grace"! This theory teaches that the sinner cannot keep the first table of the law, the love of God, but he can keep, in a certain measure, the second table. He is able, without regeneration, to lead a good outward life in things civil. But James teaches

something here that is quite different. We either keep the law of God completely or we do not keep the law of the Lord at all.

- d. And if this be true, then we do not keep the royal law either. If we despise the poor and respect the rich, then we certainly do not love the poor. But neither do we love the rich. And the reason why we do not love them is simply because we are not prompted by the love of God.

(To be continued)

# NEWS

## from, for, and about our churches

GEORGIA HENDRICKS

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Steven Holstege. (Hudsonville)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. Richard Dykstra. (Hudsonville)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. H. Mulder. (First)

A child was born to Mr. and Mrs. E. Dotson. (Loveland)

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership papers of Mr. Harry Rutgers were transferred from our South Holland church to our First church.

Dismissal papers were sent to Mrs. James Hoogendoorn (nee Mantel) of our Doon church upon her request.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Darrel Huisken were transferred from our Southeast church to our church in Hudsonville.

The membership papers of Rev. and Mrs. H. Veldman were transferred from our Hope church to our church in Hudsonville.

Mark Hoeksema, William Pipe, Robert Slopsema, and Lavonne Vander Wal (southeast) made public profession of their faith on Nov. 13.

### GENERAL

The Hull Young People's Society sponsored a Reformation Day Program. Rev. Heys spoke, and Edgerton and Doon gave special numbers.

The High School Circle of our Hudsonville church sponsored a lecture. They had Prof. H. Hanko speak on "Christian History."

The League of Men's Societies met Nov. 7 in the Southeast church. Rev. R. Harbach spoke on "The Significance of the Different Races in the World."

The Eastern League of Ladies' Societies met on Oct. 13 in the Southeast church. Rev. M. Schipper spoke on "Praying for Authority."

### BIRTHDAYS

Mr. A. Hoeksema (First) celebrated his 85th birthday on Nov. 2.

Mrs. R. DeVries (First) celebrated her 90th birthday on Nov. 7.

On Oct. 24 Mrs. H. Mulder (First) celebrated her 82nd birthday.

### BIRTHS

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. D. Hauck. (First)

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. John Mantel.

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. George Kamps Jr. (Hudsonville)

Our Oak Lawn church has received the membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. F. Latsch and family.

Mr. Dick Vriesenga (Southeast) was granted a dismissal upon his request.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Jon Huisken were transferred from our Southeast church to our Hope church.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Franklin P. Block and daughter were transferred from our South Holland church to our Southeast church.

Dismissal papers were sent to Mrs. E. Langerak (nec Lois Schipper) (Southeast) upon her request.

The membership papers of Mr. Joe Greiss (Loveland) were sent to him upon his request.

### SICK

Sandra Garveling (Hudsonville) submitted to an appendectomy and had a good recovery.

Bert Maring (Hudsonville) is now home, doing as well as expected.

Mr. S. Aardema has returned home and is doing well.

Mr. John Van Uffelen (Redlands) continues to improve, although he still has some difficulties and is quite weak.

Mrs. J. Vander Wal (Redlands) has been very clear in her speaking, but does appear to be somewhat weaker.

Mr. B. Windmuller (Holland) entered Blodgett Hospital for surgery to stimulate circulation in his injured foot.

Miss E. Korting (Holland) continues to recuperate from heart damage and is limited to a minimum.

Mrs. H. Schipper (Holland) is continuing to improve.

Mr. Steve Holstege and Mr. John Kuiper (Hudsonville) have both returned home from the hospital after their surgery.

Mrs. Mary Heemstra (Southeast) returned to her home and is making good progress.

Todd James, son of Mr. and Mrs. James Pastoor (Southeast) has undergone a hernia operation.

### CALLS

Rev. Lanting has received a call from our Edgerton church.

Rev. Heys of our South Holland church received the call from our Randolph church.

Our Hull church has called Rev. D. J. Engelsma of our Loveland church.

### WEDDING BELLS

On Nov. 4 Mr. Kenneth Haak and Miss Dolores Ruth Schoonveld were united in marriage at the Bethel Reformed Church of Chicago, Illinois.

On Oct. 7 Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Brink were united in marriage.

### SERVICEMEN

Jaylen Stellinga (Doon) been home on leave for a week after which he expects to be sent to Viet Nam.

Address of Jerry Vanden Top (Doon):  
Pvt. Jerry Vander Top N.G. 26819941  
Co. A. 2nd B.N. 2nd B.d.S. U.S.A. T.C.  
4th PLT.

Fort Lewis, Washington

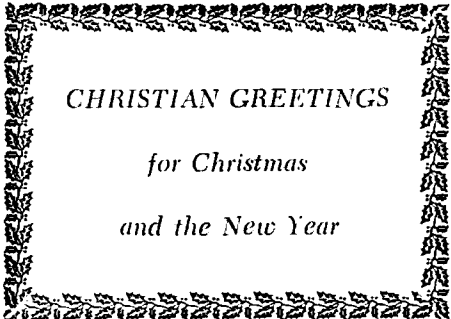
Address of Ben Huizinga (Hudsonville):  
Ben E. Huizinga  
ER16 703 647

Co. A. 4th Bat. 2nd Brd.

Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri 65473

Robert Ekema (Redlands) returned home from Viet Nam and then had four weeks at home.

Aaron Schwarz (Loveland) returned home from Viet Nam and now goes to California.



### CHRISTIAN GREETINGS

*for Christmas*

*and the New Year*