

# BEACON LIGHTS

PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH

May 1967

*The High Cost of Petting!*

*The Trinity*

*With Whom One Runs*

*Open Forum*



# BEACON LIGHTS

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# The High Cost of Petting!

"To pet or not to pet, that is the problem." "What is the fate of the unplanned date?" In conversations with young people in our churches we have sensed a desire for some plain talk on this serious subject. While searching for information in another field, we came across this article by Rev. Dwight H. Small, pastor of the Warren Park Presbyterian Church, Cicero, Ill., which is taken from his book *DESIGN FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE* to be published early next year by Revell. The excellency of the article both in content and style, prompts us to pass it on to our own young people. ED.

A member of the Federation Board has requested that this article be reprinted because it is as pertinent for the youth of our churches today as it was eight years ago.

D. HUISKEN

What do you know about the high cost of petting? Petting is more than a pleasurable pastime, more than an exhilarating expression of affection. It is more than a physical act, too, for it affects every dimension of personality. Petting, like all sexual experiences, penetrates to the very depths of a person's being, and for that reason it can lead to sublime heights of joy as a function within marriage, or drag one down to depths of impurity and misery when practiced outside the commitment of marriage. Petting is a process of physical and emotional involvement, sexually exciting and stimulating. It is physical contact for *pleasure as an end in itself*, two persons enjoying themselves by means of each other, and with no permanent and responsible relationship to which they are committed. It is exploitation of another's body for selfish sexual gratification. We are to love *persons* and use *things*, but one who pets uses a person for the love of a thing. Petting is playing at love in such a way as tends to make the more genuine expressions seem dull and unsatisfying. It is an attempt to find in sex what sex cannot give.

## PETTING VERSUS LOVE

Young people first encounter the appeal of petting in an hour of highly-charged romantic emotion when it is most difficult to evaluate let alone resist. Being alone together in an automobile is conducive to romantic attachment, but this is not a privilege. Rather, it is a responsibility which severely challenges one's personal integrity

and self-discipline. How easy it is to rationalize petting as a necessary support for a romantic relationship! This is not love but merely an overpowering emotional attachment with a sexual involvement.

Petting is not sexual satisfaction, but stimulation only. As such, it brings about tension and disappointment. Something unique and precious to one's personal dignity is given to another with full expectation that something just as precious and lasting will result. But one sadly discovers that he has given himself for a momentary pleasure. There remains but a feeling of frustration, disappointment, loss of self-respect, and guilt. Something less than personal love and mutual care has been fulfilled. The deepest yearnings of personality have been sidetracked by the more intense and immediate pleasure of the moment.

As stimulation, petting demands an ever-increasing intensity. The point of containment is moved farther and farther, the demands becoming more difficult to resist as the progression goes on. Knowing what is beyond makes it hard to be satisfied with less. It is virtually impossible to return to an earlier, less-intense stage; to do so, multiplies frustration. Even to decide to do so in an hour when there is neither emotional intoxication nor sexual arousal is quite different from maintaining that decision under such pressure.

## WILL PETTING LEAD TO A BREAK-UP?

For reassurance of a rather empty relationship, and to "prop up" their disappoint-

ment in the failure of close physical contact to bring about a true sense of intimate sharing, a couple may be led to pet with even greater frequency and intensity. But, the tension created by such habituated petting is often sufficient to break up the friendship altogether! Keyed up under the emotional strain, a couple will tend to quarrel over inconsequentials, and to get on each other's nerves. Dislike for the frustration and emotional conflict is directed as resentment *against the other person*, as though he were the cause of the disappointment. Loss of self-respect also transfers itself to loss of respect for the other one. A crisis invariably arises, usually ending in a break-up.

A girl who pets to be popular is popular only because she pets. She is not sought after for her personal qualities nor liked for herself, but only because she is a more or less convenient means to an end. Petting frequently becomes a consolation prize for one's deficiencies in personal attraction, or a way of holding a date when other ways fail. But only bitter heartache is ahead for the girl who depends for her dating popularity upon sex and her willingness to indulge a fellow's desire to pet. And how shallow is her thinking if she regards petting as the necessary price for an evening out, a reciprocation for the money a fellow has spent upon her!

### THE PRICE YOU PAY

Promiscuous petting can only cheapen what God intends as holy and beautiful in its place. It may come to stand for all there is in the sexual relationship of marriage, removing the proper expectations. To make such intimacy a shopworn thing before marriage is to take the edge away, and to leave a sense that more was lost than gained. One will have forfeited the joy of having saved something very precious for its proper time.

A couple habituated to petting no longer anticipates dates with enjoyment as before. Thinking only of what they will do when they are alone, they are bored with the other activities of the evening, preoccupied with the petting which alone seems important. An evening supposedly devoted to wholesome fun is turned into one of tension, boredom, and inner conflict. Each senses that sex life has become a problem

affecting the normal pursuits of life. The very tone of the relationship deteriorates for they can only enjoy their least common denominator — their bodies. Every date becomes merely another occasion for the old routine.

### THE FATE OF AN UNPLANNED DATE

Petting often occurs as the result of an unplanned date, when two become bored with nothing to do. Petting is the easiest and most pleasurable way to relieve boredom. It requires no intelligence, and is no challenge to personality. But what starts as an innocent game soon becomes a compulsive habit when passions are aroused.

Jesus said that lust begins with looking. But one can look with his eyes or with his imagination. Petting gives the imagination an opportunity to look and lust through the sense of touch. *Thus, petting has the same moral quality of an act of sexual intercourse!* Petting is sufficient to violate another's bodily sanctity and personal integrity. One who pets must not only answer for the stimulation of lust in one's own life, but for the unknown degree of lust, self-contempt, guilt and spiritual defeat brought about in the partner to the petting.

### HOLINESS AND HAPPINESS

Chastity rests upon an acknowledgment of the sanctity of sex. For the Christian, the body is a sacred trust and sex a gift of God. Chastity is sexual life ordered according to God's purposes, not man's desires. When sex expresses love given by God to partners in married oneness, it is chaste; when sex is an end in itself, indulged outside of marriage, it is not chaste. The perversion of God's purpose — more so than the act itself — is what makes all sexual intimacy outside of marriage unchaste and immoral. Thus chastity is far more than self-control; it is the earnest serving of a positive, divine purpose. A chaste person is not concerned with how far he can go with safety and self-respect, but rather, how completely he can serve the purpose of God.

So, sex is a sacred power to be directed by God. Christian young people should pray as did Jeremy Taylor: "Let my body be servant of my spirit, and both body and spirit servants of Jesus." When this is honestly prayed, petting will not find a place in a young person's life.

# The Trinity

THEA ZWAK



Who constructed the doctrine of the Trinity? When was it constructed? Why was it constructed? What is contained in the Trinity? How can God have three beings and yet be one God? These are a few of the questions which are asked about the Trinity.

The authors of the Trinity are called the Cappadocian Fathers. Among these men and most important are Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Athanasius, and Augustine. Why was the Trinity composed? It was composed because of the rise of great heresy in the Church. One of these heresies which is well established today is Arianism, which believes: 1) Christ is God, yet he was created and had a beginning. 2) Acknowledged he is one with the Father, but is united to Him like the rest of the faithful, although in a special manner. These fathers used many terms not found in the Bible. They used these terms in order to set forth as accurately as possible what had been revealed. One of the amazing things is that during the Reformation when everything was *ad fontes* the Trinity stayed.

The Trinity consists of three persons united into one, whose sole council is one. As one, the three persons will one thing but as the three persons fulfill their own part as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Each of the three persons in the Trinity are very essential. We must keep all three, or else we have nothing.

God the Father is the ruler of all. He is the cause, origin, and beginning of all things. He is the one who created heaven and earth out of nothing — Ps. 33:6. To him we turn and lean on and set our life unto. For as we know he is our Creator. It is no wonder we cannot help but look up to his greatness and wonderfulness for without his will we would still be dust, for God does not need us to live — we need him!

Christ the Son is the word, wisdom, and image of the father. He is a Godly person who is our Savior and Redeemer by his blood. He was neither made nor created, for if he was he would become a creature. He is from eternity as is said by the prophet Micah: "His goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." By the apostle, "He hath neither beginning of days nor end of life." Christ is called God, the Word, the Son and Jesus Christ. Moses said "God created the world." John said, "All things were made by that Word, which is called God." — John 1:1-5. He is the only way to salvation and deliverance of sin. The Son is also our chief prophet and teacher because he hath revealed to us the secret counsel and will of God for our redemption. He is our only high priest because he has made one sacrifice for all the elect and that sacrifice was his holy body and also because he made continual intercession with the Father for us. He is also our eternal king because he governs us by His Word and Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the eternal power and might and proceeds from the Father and the Son and is neither made nor created. He is given to a Christian so the Christian may have true faith, be comforted. He abides with the Christian forever. He is our sanctifier by his dwelling in our hearts. Also makes it possible for a Christian to partake of Christ and His benefits.

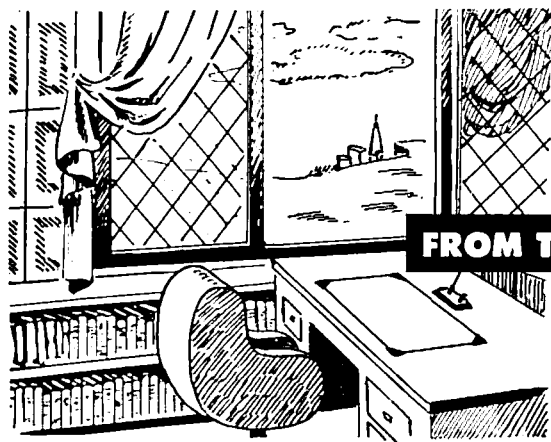
The unity of the three persons of the God head is found in the Old Testament, Gen. 1:26 and 27, Gen. 3:22, and the words "God created." All deal with creation of earth and man. The New Testament show the three persons of the Godhead clearly. Jesus miracles He said, "Thy sins are forgiven thee." For we know only God can forgive sins. The baptism of Jesus, 1) the voice out of heaven, Father; 2) Jesus in the water, Son; 3) The dove descending from Heaven, Holy Spirit. Also in the Old Testament in Deut. 6:4 states that God is one and against no one.

The Christian ground on believing the doctrine of the Trinity is the clear teaching of the Word of God. It is the operation

of the Persons in the Godhead of which the Christian becomes aware through spiritual experience.

Is there anyone who can understand the Trinity perfectly and completely? I don't think there is, for the Cappadocian Fathers could not even define in the terms they used. There is still reassurance for we do not need to understand each definition and term perfectly to have salvation or to receive the gifts of salvation from this understanding.

"I cannot think of the one, but I am immediately surrounded with the splendor of the three; nor can I clearly discover the three, but I am suddenly carried back to the one" (Gregory Nazianzen).



## FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. VAN BAREN

**I PETER 4:4-5** — "Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you; who shall give account to Him that is ready to judge the quick and the dead."

### WITH WHOM ONE RUNS

In a race there are a number of participants who seek the same goal. They run over a set course towards one definite end.

The wicked of this age have their race. They have a goal — and a course over which to run to attain that goal. That goal is not the glory of God — as He requires. Rather, man seeks himself in all that he does. His goal is his own happiness, that is, a happiness as man himself will define this. What man does daily will be directed towards that goal. He will run a specific course towards that end.

Scripture, however, does not speak favor-

ably concerning man's goal nor the course he follows. In I Peter the apostle speaks of their "excess of riot." "Excess" refers to that which fills to the brim — and then overflows. "Riot" might better be translated: "rotteness." The way of the wicked is a way of overflowing rotteness. Did you ever stand at the terminus of a sewer? Out of the pipe flows all manner of corruptions. It would seem that there is no possibility of stopping the flow. It is a continually flowing rotteness. That is a picture of the course of natural man.

To discern that such is true is not dif-

ficult. One must just behold the amusements of man. In the movie whether on television or in the theatre, man is entertained by that which will play the transgressions of God's law: murder, adultery, robbery, covetousness, mockery of God and His Names, etc. Or man seeks the comforts of the earth: eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die. Possibly he desires power; or the honor of men. There is simply no apparent end of this overflowing corruption of man.

And these wicked men want you to run with them. They are not content merely in wallowing in their corruptions. These want you to join them. Evil men prompt you to seek what they seek; to enjoy what they enjoy.

This you can not and may not do. Children of the light do not run with children of darkness.

But then you are the butt of their mockery and scorn. Natural man will mince no words in expressing what he thinks of you. This scorn will show itself at work as well as at play. Man speaks evil of you. This speaking is often followed by action too. You will be imprisoned and even put to death if you run not with natural man. This has frequently happened in the history of the church. It will happen again, especially in the last days.

Why should any be concerned when we refuse to run with them? Fact is, first, that wicked man can not understand; and what he can not understand, he hates. He considers it strange that you can not run with him. Of course, that suggests that man considers you "odd." It appears unusual that there should be a little flock in the world that does not run with the world in all its corruptions. But also, man is convinced that to run in a way other than that in which he runs, is not normal. Man says that it is not normal to seek the kingdom of heaven. It is not normal to have one's heart set on other than earthly treasure. Man can not comprehend that wonder of new birth and conversion by which we are changed from this overflowing rottenness to holiness and purity.

But it is also true that when you run not with the world, you are hated because you stand as a living testimony against them. When you rebuke those who take God's name in vain, you are hated for it. When

you reprehend man for his vile lusts, he will speak evilly against you for it. When you refuse to join him in his godless organizations, and tell him why you may not join, he seeks to hurt you for it.

Yet even though you speak not a word, your action testifies against the wicked. Natural man readily observes that you do not use the same corrupt communications; that you do not find pleasure in the same evil entertainment; that your heart is not set on the same earthly things. And often it is true that the wicked can not bear to be near such an one and will seek to destroy him.

The presence of the child of God in the world is also a constant reminder of the judgment of God to come. How does not man want to blind himself to the fact that at the end of his course there is the sure judgment of God! He pretends that the grave is the end; that there is no punishment of the sinner in hell. But the presence of the Christian who believes and teaches otherwise, is a constant reminder to the wicked. Therefore they would speak evilly of you.

But run not with them. We are pilgrims and strangers on the earth. A place of glory is prepared for us in the heavens for Jesus' sake. Therefore we run not with them.

Their day of judgment soon comes. Peter speaks of One Who is ready to judge. God stands overagainst them to condemn them. His readiness to judge suggests that the judgment is at hand. So also Scripture declares in other places. Judgment is at hand. It is the last hour. And though almost two thousand years have passed by since these words were written, God's Word is not mistaken. It is the last hour on the time-clock of God. The next great event is the return of Christ on the clouds of heaven. Nothing will prevent that; rather,



all things work together that He may quickly come and judge.

The judgment will be a righteous judgment. The wicked will be required to give an account. All their opposition to the church, all their persecution of the saints, as well as all their sinful deeds will be exposed in that last judgment. They will be required to give full account. No excuses will be allowed. Not one sin shall they be able to hide. They can not escape. Their judgment will be sure and swift. These wicked shall be cast into eternal damnation because of their sin.

This ought to be of comfort to you. So often in this day one might begin to think that the wicked simply "get away with"

their corruptions. The Psalmist at first thought that too. In the 73rd Psalm he explains how that the wicked have more than the heart could desire: their eyes stick out with fatness. At the same time the righteous suffer and are afflicted all the day long. But all things that now take place work toward that point when Christ returns in judgment. Their end is destruction. Be not envious, then, of the wicked. Run not with them. Nor be intimidated by their mockery and scorn. The end of the righteous is joy and peace in Christ in heaven. The end of the wicked is eternal death. Knowing this, pilgrims can run that narrow way without fear of what man may do unto them.

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## OPEN FORUM

Dear Mark,

I felt your article in the Open Forum entitled "A New Topic" was very well written. It spoke of the Singspiration held at Southeast Church on February 12. I would have liked to have been there, but the Lord has a place picked out for me already, and where He calls me, I must go. I myself was drafted, so therefore I believe the Lord has called me to be away from home and church life.

I feel there is nothing wrong with our singspirations; of course, I don't know what songs were picked to be sung, or what the special numbers were. But the last question you asked could have something to do with it; it was stated in this way: "Or could it be that there is just no interest in a singspiration?" I believe today that people are interested more in the modern way of life, that is, riding around in cars and going to see other friends after church rather than going to our programs that we really don't hear that often. I enjoy going to these and other programs very much, simply because we don't have that many of them. But then if you would ask certain young people why they don't come, they would say they are busy. You would ask, busy with what? They would say with school work or with other friends. They really have enough time during the week for school work, so there is no need to do it on Sunday evenings. Maybe it's that they don't care to sing from

the Psalter — but why not? There are many more beautiful songs of David and the Scriptures in general than in any other songbook around. And too, since we use the Psalter in our worship services, why not sing some of the different songs in it? I truly believe that the Psalms of David, which a large percent of these songs came from, are just beautiful. If we are Protestant Reformed people we should love to sing the praises of the Lord our God.

I believe that these singspirations are mostly for the young people, but I believe they don't care about these programs because they are busy with dates, homework, or other things. But if it's a date, why not go to an evening of singing fellowship together? I feel that would really be good. But if it's homework, well, there is really no room for homework on the Sabbath, is there? That is, for a child of God? The only homework I could see for one to do on the Sabbath is the study of God's Word. Maybe some are babysitting, but there is nothing that can be done about that.

I feel these singspirations are very worthwhile, because we as Protestant Reformed young and old should love to sing the praises of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Yours in Christ,

Sp/4 ROGER A. KAMPHUIS  
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## SINGSPIRATIONS

There is a definite lack of interest in our singspirations and this has been proved by our last efforts. We cannot criticize the work that the committee puts forth in their preparation, but could we ask for just a little more?

Most of our singspirations lack a strong theme with Bible verses or readings to back it up. To just sing psalter number after psalter number, without any connection placed between, each is quite dull.

A more enthusiastic director might be placed on the list of "wants." The directors which we have had in the past do their best, but we need new ones to generate more enthusiasm.

Hymns, if chosen appropriately, are beautiful. Young people enjoy singing hymns as well as Psalter numbers. The few that we do sing are appreciated and more of them would be fine. If we select the correct hymns, they would be accepted and enjoyed.

Now, let's turn from the committee and look at ourselves. Where you at the last singspiration? No matter how hard the committee works, we cannot have a successful singspiration without everyone's cooperation.

SUSAN NOORDYKE

## SINGSPIRATIONS: WHERE WERE YOU!

In answer to the question "what is wrong with our singspirations?"

The natural tendency is to blame someone else. Some of the people will blame the committee for not advertising it enough. Some will say the special numbers are no good or why can't we get some good ones. Well, where is all the talent? It was even said that the leaders could be better, which I don't think is true.

The committee works hard in organizing a singspiration. They do not just set the date and decide what church it will be in. There are many things involved. They have to get a leader to lead the people, which is not easy. They also have to get people to participate in special numbers. This might happen, for example, the committee thinks everything is settled when suddenly the special number cannot be performed. Then things get rough.

Don't look around and blame it on someone else! Why can't you come? Of course, there will be times when it is impossible to come.

These singspirations are not only for the young people, they are for everyone. Everyone can benefit by attending. A singspiration is only what you make it and only you can make it a success.

Let's make our next singspiration a big success by all being there.

BARB MEYER

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# Make plans to attend What: The 1967 Convention

Where: Hull, Iowa

When: August 17-21

Theme for the Convention: SOLI DEO GLORIA

SPEAKERS FOR THE CONVENTION ARE:

Rev. G. Vanden Berg — THE IDEA

Sem. D. Kuiper — THE BASIS

Rev. R. Decker — THE EXPRESSION



# CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

## PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION (VII)

### VI. The Curriculum

When a carpenter builds a house he uses tools. When the carpenter, who is a Christian, builds a house, he uses the same tools as the non-Christian. The method whereby he builds the house varies little except as the particular likes and dislikes of the builder may determine the variations.

Because this is true in the carpenter's trade this argumentation is often used to characterize the process of instruction in the Protestant Reformed Christian School. This characterization is also true of the curriculum or course of study which determines the pattern of instruction in the school. Many think that the only difference between the Christian School and the Public School or State school is that the Christian School is a school in which the Bible may be read and is one of the source books for instruction. This is certainly a basic distinction but it is not an accurate characterization nor a complete acknowledgement of the instructional program of the Christian School in the Protestant Reformed Churches of America. Much more must be said if one is really to understand the importance of the curriculum in the Protestant Reformed Christian School.

The term curriculum is derived from the Latin *Currere* which means "to run." This term as translated from Latin can also be interpreted to mean a *course* or *career*; and literally means a *running*. The implication seems to be that there is a race to be run. The term curriculum, as it used in the educator's book of terms refers to the aggregate of courses of study given in a school. The term is used to refer to the regular or

particular subjects which are taught in a school.

The curriculum or the course of the study which is followed in the Protestant Reformed Christian School is from a formal point of view not very distinctive. If one were to compare the curriculum of the State school with that of our own Protestant Reformed Christian Schools he would find very little difference. The facts are there to bear out this statement. The fact of the matter is that the Christian School is required by the State to teach certain courses in the School and to this the School accedes.

What is the curriculum in the Protestant Reformed Christian School? From a formal point of view the courses which are taught are the language arts, which includes reading; mathematics; English which includes grammar, rhetoric, and literature; science; history; fine arts (music and art); and a series of courses in formal Bible instruction.

Ever since the time of Thomas Jefferson and Horace Mann the schools in America were changed from private schools to publicly controlled schools. Education or instruction in these schools was adapted so that the instruction would be practical and would fit the needs of every child because every child was entitled to a free education. The rationale for this lay in the fact that an educated citizenry was necessary if the nation were going to operate democratically and if the control of the government were to be placed in the hands of all the people and not remain in the hands of the "enlightened few," the aristocracy, those who were literate, and the land-owners.

Besides it is generally held that philo-

sophically the leaders in America were addicted to the theory of the Enlightenment and of rationalism which held that education was the method whereby the individual would be saved.

The Latin grammar school became a thing of the past. Utility became one of the determining factors in American education. The necessity for a knowledge of foreign languages and other more academic studies made way for the more practical fields of study.

Our own Christian schools are, to an extent, a by-product (at least with respect to curriculum), of this liberalizing movement in the American culture but they are also affected by the work of the Reformers of the 16th century. Martin Luther, particularly, and other of the Reformers stressed the need of education for all children. The Reformers were interested that all children be given training so that they might be literate. In this way they might be able to read the Bible in the vernacular, that is their own tongue.

In 1647 in America the Old-Decler Act was passed in Massachusetts Colony. Hereby the legislature made it necessary for each community to establish schools so that the children might learn to read and write. This was intended by the colonists, who were Bible believers, to make it possible for the children to read the Scriptures in their own language.

I do not wish to be a reactionary nor do I wish to cast doubts in the minds of the supporters of Protestant Reformed Christian Instruction concerning the value of our own system of instruction. You all know my attitudes about this, I am sure. I do wish to suggest hereby, however, that it is dangerous to be complacent and apathetic in the face of everything that is going on in America, particularly in the realm of education and particularly in the area of curriculum. It is in the area of curriculum which is of such vital importance that many of the most sweeping changes are being made.

I believe that it is highly important that we keep abreast of the changes; that we know what is happening; and that at the same time we evaluate what is happening in terms of the principles which we hold to be

of determining importance in the instructional situation.

To me the whole area of curriculum is a vital concern. This is an area where not only the administrator or principal of the school must be active but this area needs the devotion of every classroom teacher, every knowledgeable friend of the system, and every dedicated parent.

It is my intention to write in some length about each area of the curriculum and to elicit some principles of instruction which I believe have been determining factors in our instructional program and must continue to be determining factors. I believe that every one must know these things and must be interested in them.

I am not one who believes that the status quo is necessarily good. Just because things have always been done in a certain way in the school from an instructional point of view and curriculum-wise does that make it impossible for change and improvement to take place? I also am not so naive as to think that every new or different idea is good. One must evaluate and consider all the facets of these innovations as well as the things which have always been done to prevent the incorporation of error and to implement improvement.

I should like at this time to suggest somewhat prematurely that I am not happy that our schools are simply patterned curricular-wise after the pattern of the State school in our community. I believe that there are sound principles for the insertion perhaps of a study of at least one foreign language in the grade school. This is an area of study which has been sadly neglected in our schools.

May God give us grace to persevere in the study of these important things.

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NOTE: —

A serious error crept into my article of March, 1967, issue of the *Beacon Lights*. It distorts the meaning of the paragraph. In the last paragraph of page three the sentence which states, "Christian education is adjustment or redemptive," should state "Christian education is neither adjustive nor redemptive."

## BOOK REVIEW

### Lord of the Flies

by WILLIAM GOLDING. 192 pages, \$1.25 (Paperback)

William Golding describes the theme of the book: "The theme is an attempt to trace the defects of society back to the defects of human nature. The moral is that the shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system, however apparently logical and respectable."

A group of English boys is marooned on an uninhabited island without adult supervision and authority when their plane crashes. They immediately light a fire in the hope that they will be rescued. Soon, however, discontent and discord breaks out; some of the boys want to hunt wild pigs instead of tending the fire. The rift gradually grew, until all but two boys were crazy, insane hunters, victims of their own white-hot passions, the uncontrollable force of human wickedness. The anarchic, driving force of the "lord of the flies" — derived from the Greek *Beelzebub* — brought out the wildness and corruption of the human heart which led the hunters to kill two boys and attempt to kill the last "civilized" boy on the island, who was saved by the sudden appearance of a rescuing naval officer.

I believe that this fascinating and intricately woven symbolic web has a place in the Christian's reading, so far as the book goes.

However, it leaves much to be desired. Instead of reliance upon the individual and his ability to control himself, a Pelagian idea, there should be the theme of the organic development of sin. The book fails to take into account man's fall; and I question whether a book that contains nothing but evil and wickedness is good at all. To portray nothing but evil with no hope of Christ is quite typical of our present-day carnal and realistic philosophy. If the Christian reads this book, it is imperative that he views the corruption in the story from this perspective.

MARK HOEKSEMA

### SPECIAL THANKS

The Federation Board of the Prot. Ref. Young People's Societies and the staff of *Beacon Lights* wish to express our thanks and appreciation to Sharon Prince for her work done as member of the Public Relations staff.

### SPECIAL THANKS

The Federation Board of the Prot. Ref. Young People's Societies wish to express our thanks and appreciation to Don Jonker for the time and effort he has diligently put forth as Finance Manager of the *Beacon Lights*.

## HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE

### JAMES 4

by REV. DAVID ENGELSMA

(Continued from last month)

# Epistle of JAMES

#### 4. Verses 7-10.

##### a. Explanation:

The Holy Spirit now gives the corrective of the sorry condition of the churches described in verses 1-6. Those so sharply rebuked, understanding now the wickedness of their ways, might cry out whether there were any hope for them and any way in which they and the churches might be changed. James says there is a way out and admonishes them to take that way out. Basically, he admonishes them (and us) to repent. Verses 7-10 are a call unto repentance,

repentance considered as the act of fleeing sin in sorrow over the sin and seeking after God in love for God. They are to submit to God and to resist the Devil. The implication is that up until now, the Devil has been having his way with them both individually and as churches. As the confusion and warfare in the churches showed, it was the Devil himself who was busy in their midst ruining everything. And they did not have the strength to resist him because they were not in submission to God, that is, they were not humble but proud. The way of salvation for them is the way of drawing near to God. In communion with God is strength, safety and blessedness. They must “draw near” because they have been far away – in friendship with the world. Drawing near to God is an act of the whole man, body and soul, which begins in the heart. And this is the way in which one “draws near” to God: First, he sorrows over his sin (vs. 9). The pleasure he once had in sin is changed into sorrow over that sin. Secondly, he is moved by that sorrow to cleanse his heart. What this consists of, the address, “doubleminded” (literally, “double-souled”), shows. A “doublesouled” man is a man who tries to live two lives, one life in the kingdom of heaven and another life in the world. To cleanse the heart means that he renounces the world and seeks only to live the life of a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Thirdly, having cleansed his heart, he cleanses his hands. This refers to his changing of his outward behavior, his deeds and speech as rooted in his mind and will. Repentance begins in the heart but, if sincere, always includes a change in one’s outward behavior and walk. If these people repent, they will stop fighting. This entire spiritual activity is “humbling oneself before the Lord.” The proud sinner who repents humbles himself and he humbles himself deeply because he prostrates himself before the cross of Jesus Christ and confesses that he has no worth and no value except in that crucified Christ. When one does this, he can no longer murder, envy and fight with his brother.

b. Questions:

- 1) Is anyone *able* to do what James admonishes in these verses?
- 2) In what way does our drawing near to God precede His drawing near to us? (Some appeal to this text, vs. 8, as proof that man of himself can and must do something – draw near to God – before God can save him – draw near to man. Man’s will and work become conditions unto his salvation. This would be a good place to discuss the whole notion. Long ago, Calvin faced this false doctrine, in connection with James 4:8, and refuted it:
 

“But if any one concludes from this passage, that the first part of the work belongs to us, and that afterwards the grace of God follows, the Apostle meant no such thing; for though we ought to do this, yet it does not immediately follow that we can. And the Spirit of God, in exhorting us to our duty, derogates nothing from himself, or from his own power; but the very thing he bids us to do, he himself fulfills in us.” (Calvin, *Commentary on James*)
- 3) Is the spiritual activity of verses 7-10 something a child of God does once or constantly?
- 4) Is any peace possible among men who are not humble before the Lord?

## JAMES 5

by REV. J. KORTERING

### A. Warning to the wicked rich (Verses 1-6)

#### 1. James here addresses the *wicked* rich

- a. A man is not condemned because he is rich. There is no sin in riches itself.
  - (1) There are children of God who are rich. Christ allows for this when He said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." He added, "with men this is impossible but with God all things are possible."  
Find examples of rich men both in Bible times and in history who were children of God.
  - (2) They are however rare and exceptional.  
Scripture lays great stress on the poverty of the people of God in contrast to the worldly rich. Find examples.
- b. These rich are distinctly pointed out as wicked.
  - (1) Verse 3 tells us that their gold will witness against them.
  - (2) Verse 4 indicates that they accumulated their riches in an evil manner, they stole.
  - (3) Verse 5 – they used their possessions in an evil way.

#### 2. Consider what these wicked rich have done

- a. They have accumulated great wealth
  - (1) described in this text: riches (vs. 2) this includes all material things which may be described as cash (gold and silver) and investments (property, homes, etc.). The Jewish businessman was outstanding if he had a sizable bag of gold coins and beautiful clothes. Both are mentioned here.
  - (2) They even built up a nest egg for retirement (see verse 3, "Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days").
  - (3) Questions to consider here: How would you define poverty and wealth? Do you think an honest and zealous Christian would ever accumulate great wealth? Is it sinful to have beautiful clothing, investments, retirement programs, etc. if in acquiring these things we cannot pay for the needs of the church, the education of our children, our society dues, and things like that?
- b. They cheated their employees and thus gained wealth wrongfully
  - (1) Notice verse 4 tells us they had a harvest, a good crop
  - (2) Yet these rich did not pay the laborers good wages, they kept back part by fraud (see chapter 2:6)
  - (3) They condemned and killed the just, Verse 6
  - (4) Does this sound familiar in our day with labor strife?  
Does this text support the cause of organized labor?  
Consider that these poor workers did not rebel against their employers, they cried to God! (Vs. 4, 6) God is the judge not man. Consider how this principle must be applied to modern day labor movements.
  - (5) God condemns exploitation by employer, Deut. 24:14, 15, Lev. 19:17, Mal. 3:5.
  - (6) God demands the employee to submit to employer, I Peter 2:18-20
- c. They filled their lives with pleasure
  - (1) Verse 5 indicates they reveled in the sins of gluttony, drunkenness, and exorbitant spending

- (2) In this way they squandered and wasted the God-given gifts not using them to His glory, but only to self satisfaction and pleasure

3. Predicted judgment for these wicked rich

- a. James warns them already in verse 1, "Go to now, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you."

(1) Apparent here that they face the God of judgment. This is the only basis for the fear of judgment by the wicked. God is righteous, there will be no mercy on the judgment seat. Even the righteousness of God's people will be made manifest in the way of strictest justice.

(2) In the deepest sense this refers to the final judgment of the world at the return of Christ. (Lord of Sabaoth – of Hosts)

(a) There is a judgment upon the wicked rich throughout their whole life. Consider how this is true, give examples from history and people you know.

(b) The fulness of the wrath of God upon them is reserved till they are cast into outer darkness with weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- b. The reaction of the wicked to this judgment

(1) A loud voice of misery, "weep and howl."

(2) Conscious suffering, Luke 16:24-26.

(3) Questions: Why is there a hell for the wicked rich? Prove from Scripture that this is true. Is this a spiritual state or a physical place?

- c. The wicked lose their possessions

(1) Idea is that in this life they are "gods," but in the end they all perish.

(2) Concrete pictures in our text: food becomes rotten, garments become moth eaten, gold and silver rusty.

(3) What is the significance of this?

(a) This speaks clearly of the disillusion the wicked have of earthly things. They pass away and deteriorate.

(b) Especially in gold rusting, idea is expressed that there is no real gold, for real gold doesn't rust; they imagine it to be something pure which in reality it isn't.

(c) Thus in the end their main possessions and purpose of life will fall away; no wonder they weep and howl.

- d. Even these things testify against them in judgment.

(1) Their wrong use will occasion their being judged as guilty, being worthy of hell fire.

(2) Also the cries of those defrauded will testify against them.

(3) All our works enter into judgment, also the use of our money and material things. Apart from Christ this is a dreadful thought.

- e. These wicked will experience conscious torture in hell

(1) Verse 3, "the rust shall eat your flesh as it were fire." This means it serves as the basis for guilty decree and thus subject to God's fire of just wrath.

(2) They are described in verse 5 as having "nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter." As cattle fattened for the kill, so the wicked rich, glory in their riches, filling their hearts for sin, making themselves worthy of greater judgment. This proves no common grace-favor of God in earthly riches.

(3) Well may we consider how we acquire and use our money lest we be found guilty.

## B. The suffering believer exhorted to be patient (verses 7-11)

1. For what? The Coming of the Lord
  - a. The faithful church was suffering
    - (1) Under rich oppressors and all that this entailed.
    - (2) Natural reaction – try to escape from it.
  - b. James tells them, be patient!
    - (1) Receive this suffering as from the Lord.
    - (2) Bear it in the strength that God gives.
    - (3) Rejoice in it, knowing that the purpose that God has is good, viz. the strengthening of our faith.
    - (4) Persist in the faith and praise God.
  - c. The goal – the coming of the Lord
    - (1) This is our Christian hope. We long for this, God has promised this, and we are assured it draws nigh (vs. 8).
    - (2) The reason for this being the object of our patience.
      - (a) Not simply because this will be the day for the destruction of our enemy, though this is true.
      - (b) Nor in the simple fact that our sufferings will cease in this day, though this is true.
      - (c) Rather, this will be the day in which we will be able to praise God without distraction and with unmixed zeal and affection.
    - (3) Question: How can the hope of heaven become a selfish escape if not properly understood?
2. A Comparison: “like the husbandman” vs. 7.
  - a. A farmer must be patient
    - (1) His work: prepare soil, sows seed, cultivates, etc.
    - (2) He has no control over destructive forces: disease, drought or flood, amount of production.
    - (3) He works patiently, diligently he does all he can and is required to do as a good husbandman. He seeks the early rain (the rain in the fall which prepared the soil) and the latter rain (spring rains that nourished the seeds and tender plants). The outcome is entirely God’s and he must wait for that.
    - (4) This must be learned, for even farmers are not very patient in themselves, this too is of God.
  - b. So we must be patient waiting for the day of Christ
    - (1) We must not grow dissatisfied with what we have (whether that be possessions or place of work, or health).
    - (2) We must be steadfast in our calling in serving God and praising Him, trusting Him to finish His perfect work.
    - (3) Then we are happy in any circumstance (vs. 11).
3. Examples of impatience
  - a. Grumbling (vs. 9)
    - (1) This is a natural outgrowth when we undergo troubles. We become dissatisfied with what we have and envious of others (Matt. 7:1).



- (2) Timely warning, the “judge standeth before the door.”  
This makes clear that all our works and attitudes will enter into judgment.
- (3) Question: How can James say, “lest ye be condemned,” is there a possibility of this happening to God’s elect?

b. Swearing rashly and falsely (verse 12)

- (1) Nature of swearing: Many Jews had bad habit of having to substantiate everything they said with calling God or heaven or something of the earth to witness to the truth.
- (2) This was especially true to those who were poor or owned little of the earth’s wealth, their word didn’t seem to mean much for they had no position, so they swore a great deal.
- (3) This is basically true of all swearing: Man tries to add strength to his feeble word by calling God or the creatures of God to witness.
- (4) This is considered the worse sin, see L.D. 36, 37 Heid. Cat. Why is this true?

4. Examples of patience

a. The prophets (verse 10)

- (1) As a group, the prophets had a trying life; they had to bring the Word to a stiff-necked and gainsaying people. For this they were harassed and mocked and often became despondent in the task. See 1 Kings 19:4ff and Psalm 73.
- (2) Yet the very characteristic of a prophet was patience. As a mouthpiece of the longsuffering God, he was to bring the word faithfully, persisting in his word. This the prophets did under the qualifying grace of the Holy Spirit.

b. Job (verse 11)

- (1) In all the history of the people of God, Job outshines as the example of patience in affliction. Why?
- (2) Notice the point James makes, God over-ruled the devil in his dealing with Job. Satan intended to break Job’s faith through affliction, taking away his earthly possessions, bringing evil counsel through his friends. Yet God directed it all to a favorable end, Job was strengthened in his faith and received possessions and children besides. “Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.” Matt. 6:33.

C. How we are to deal with the sick and afflicted (verses 13-20)

1. Exhorted to pray for one another (verses 13-18)

- a. This must be connected with the preceding. The reason for sickness and affliction lies in their suffering for Christ’s sake. They are oppressed. This leads to all kinds of afflictions: poverty, disease, loneliness, a being chased about, etc. Yet, on the foreground here is spiritual disease, that of being discouraged, despondency, bitter grief, rebellion, compromise, etc. The Apostle James is obviously concerned about their spiritual health.

b. Exhorted to pray (verse 13)

- (1) Idea of prayer: communion with God, lifting up the soul above the present conditions, seeking guidance to walk in patience. It is expression of thanks for past favors and seeking future blessings. God is the only One that can give these. He gives them to us in Jesus Christ.

- (2) We are to pray individually: the child of God prays within his own heart. There is a real need to pray *alone*, not in the company of others. Give reasons.
  - (3) There is a need to seek the prayers of others: (verse 14-16)
    - (a) Call the elders: this is one aspect of their official work (see Mk. 6:13). Sometimes we are so spiritually weak, we cannot even pray. The anointing with oil was a common practice in treating the sick. Here it is used figuratively as a picture of seeking the oil of the Holy Spirit given to us through prayer. Note: part of the prayer is a confession of sin (verse 16) mutually seeking forgiveness through prayer.
    - (b) The healing power of effectual prayer: Before the throne of grace, doubts are covered by the promises of God, tears are comforted by the mercy of God, fears are quieted by the power of God, and weaknesses are overcome by the grace of God. Thus prayer is effectual and fervent, it brings spiritual healing. All this is rooted in the forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ. God uses this means to this end. Thus James exhorts us to make use of it.
  - (4) Elijah the example of fervent prayer: (verses 17 and 18 )
    - (a) This was part of the O. T. typology, signs and wonders that physically demonstrated spiritual truths (the power of God to save).
    - (b) Does not mean that we can expect such physical changes through prayer, here they must be applied to spiritual changes. What physically occurred in the O.T. through prayer, now truly takes place spiritually through prayer.
- c. Singing of Psalms (verse 13)
- (1) In contrast to the afflicted who are urged to pray, here James speaks a word to those who are "merry" or free from trouble.
  - (2) They are to "sing Psalms." That means, they are to express their joy, personally in their own lives and also in their contact with others. Singing is an expression of the joyful heart.
- d. Questions: How can we be selfish in our praying and singing? Is there any proof here for faith healing? Why do the Roman Catholic refer to this section as proof for "extreme unction"? How about "confess your faults one to another," is that proof for making confessions to the priest? What ways can young people heed the exhortation in these verses?
2. Help each other with spiritual advice (verses 19, 20)
    - a. These words emphasize the need to follow Matt. 18:15-20
      - (1) This is basic to our walking in love with one another.
      - (2) Only in this way can we confess our faults to one another (vs. 16)
      - (3) With such confession a sinner is converted from the error of his way.
    - b. The significance
      - (1) A soul is saved from death and a multitude of sins is hidden.
      - (2) This is in the way of the forgiveness of God in Jesus Christ.
      - (3) How can James say, "he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul." Can we convert a sinner?
    - c. In what ways do we fall short in heeding this counsel and how can we correct this?

# NEWS

## from, for, and about our churches

GEORGIA HENDRICKS

### NEW COMERS

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Merle Veenstra (Hope).

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Ron Miedema (Hudsonville).

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Charles Westra (Southeast).

### CALLS

Rev. J. Heys accepted the call to our Holland, Mich. congregation.

Our Hull Church has a trio of Revs. Harbach, Lubbers and Engelsma.

Rev. Engelsma has the call to South Holland.

### HERE AND THERE

Our school in Doon still needs a teacher to teach grades one through four.

The Ladies' League meeting was held April 14. The Edgerton Society was the host this spring.

The Men's League held their meeting in our Hope Church. Rev. Korting spoke to them on "The Importance of Maintaining the Three Forms of Unity and the Formula of Subscription."

In the second to the last public lecture at our First Church Rev. Van Baren spoke on "Irresistible Grace."

The South Holland Men's Society sponsored a lecture which was given by Rev. Decker on "Striving Together For the Faith of the Gospels."

Young People did you attend the Easter Mass meeting in Hudsonville? There were special music, refreshments, and Rev. H. Hanko spoke on "Proof of the Resurrection."

The installation of Rev. John Heys in our Holland Church took place on April 28.

### OUR SICK

Mrs. N. Yonker (Holland) had surgery for a dislocated shoulder.

Mr. Alvin Griess (Loveland) has undergone surgery for removal of a cataract.

Mrs. William Griess (Loveland) had been hospitalized with bronchial pneumonia.

### BIRTHDAYS

Mrs. I. Korhorn (Hope) celebrated her 82nd birthday on March 28. She and Mr.

John Miedema are the oldest members of the congregation.

### MEMBERSHIP

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kuiper and eight baptized children (Oak Lawn) have been transferred to our church in Loveland. They live at 147 E. 7th St. in Loveland.

Floella and Loren Griess (Loveland) have made public confession of their faith.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Gunnink (Edgerton) have been transferred to our First Church.

### SERVICEMEN

The ladies of our Doon Church again prepared boxes to be sent to their servicemen.

Mike Engelsma (Hope) is home on leave until May 5 when he is to report to California for eventual transfer to Vietnam.

Neal Buitter (Oak Lawn) has completed his training at Fort Campbell, Ky. and moved to Arizona where he will receive four and a half months of further training.

Bob Miedema left for induction into the army. He will be taking his basic training at Ft. Knox, Kentucky.

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