BEACON LIGHTS

Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. — Phil. 4:6.

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Beacon Lights

For Protestant Reformed Youth

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Stewardship

Its Privileges and Responsibilities

By Miss Winnie Dykema — Grand Rapids, Mich.

In the Bible we often read of stewards. A steward is one who is responsible for goods placed in his care—to the owner—of what is placed in his care. Being a steward is a responsible position and a high calling even in the sphere of man to man, but when we consider being stewards of God's goods, we feel how weighty the matter of stewardship becomes. In 1 Peter 4:10 we read, "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." I like to think of this subject in line with 2 Cor. 8:5, this part; "But first gave themselves to the Lord and unto us by the will of God." I know that chapter speaks of the collection being made for the poor saints in Jerusalem by the saints at Macedonia, but there is no reason why we can't apply this as pertaining also to all the gifts God has given us. And truly who dare to say they have no gifts and talents. God has given to each of us gifts and talents, some of which all of us partake and some in particular.

When God gives us life as Christians He endows us with gifts in principle. By nature we are all dead in sin and what a wonderful privilege to have been made alive and called from darkness to light. What distinguishes us from those who still walk on in this way, not being able to even see the Kingdom of God afar off.

How we take these things for granted when we have been brought up from our youth in the way of the covenant. Sometimes it would seem we could appreciate it more had we suddenly changed from the completeness of darkness into the glorious light of life; but this should not be the way it is. Our privilege should cause us to

rejoice each day and we should also then feel the responsibility of developing and using what we have.

How I praise Thee precious Saviour
That Thy love laid hold on me,
Thou hast saved and cleansed and filled me
That I might Thy channel be.

Emptied that Thou shouldest fill me
A clean vessel in Thy hand
With no power but as Thou givest
Graciously with each command.

Witnessing Thy power to save me
Setting free from self and sin;
Thou who bought me, to possess me
In Thy fulness, Lord come in.

Channels only, blessed Master,
But with all Thy wondrous power,
Flowing thro' us, Thou canst use us
Every day and every hour.

What then is our first duty when it comes to developing what we have received. To put things in their proper place which is to put Christ and His Kingdom as first in everything. That is what the Macedonian Christians did and what we know we should do. The reasons why we make so little progress is because of our failure in just this. Then we so often hear ourselves and others say, "But of course we are only human," as if we ever even in eternity will ever be anything but human! Certainly not divine! Let us rather say, "We are still carnal in our manifestation and so little spiritual."

How then must we go about attaining to this higher goal? It is to put Christ's cause as the first thing in our thinking and doing—literally to build around it as the center of all our thoughts and activities. These early Christians set us an example. "First gave themselves." How all things would be changed if we would put first things first. Not off in a corner unloved and in the way. How many of us dare to deny that our Christian privileges and responsibilities often are a burden to us and we speak grudingly of Christian duty. Paul said "To me to live is Christ." "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and soul which are His."

Then let us give ourselves, not just part or something outside ourselves, but our all, our womanhood, our personality, our individuality, our reputation, our character, our mind, our tongue, our example, and our very life. All on the altar as a privilege. How

our light would shine forth if we truly applied this principle of stewardship in our lives.

What has God given us?

First—let us look at *time*. God gives us time. What do we do with it? The apostle says, "Redeeming the time because the days are evil." Now to redeem means to buy back from someone who has power and control over it. Now we know the prince of this world has things very much under his control and certainly if ever there was a time when we can say, "For the days are evil" it is the present. How almost completely the world with its tasks and toils occupies time. Not always in a specifically—what we call directly sinful way, but earthly. How hard it is to direct our time to things of the Spirit. Sure—each of us has his daily task. But do we use this time as our own or as being stewards? In our tasks do we look upon our secular work as being God's task for us? Or do we not take time to think, that every place we are put into to labor is God's calling for us. Not only a minister and missionary or perhaps a Christian school teacher, but each one must serve in our work as being in our God appointed task. And do this consciously.

Perhaps you say to me, "You surely do not know what goes on in the world. I can't take time to think about that." Oh no? Are you in the right place then? Does the task of the world so occupy you that God is crowded out? Think of a man like Nehemiah, who held a very important position at the palace of a heathen monarch and how many times we hear that man say "Remember me, O Lord." Does it bother you that your work crowds God out? It should. What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul? I often think of the man I once read about, who when asked the question, "What is your business?" said, "My business is to serve my King—I mend shoes to be able to keep at it." If we would view our work in that way we could also be thankful in seeing how the Lord provides and cast all our cares upon Him.

Then too, we would not be so crowded as to find all Christian work pushed off in a corner with "I'm too busy," but would be happy when called upon to accept the privilege of a small part in some special Christian work. What would we quit? Church work—so easily done, or the other? Remember! What profits?

Then what about our leisure? Is it wrong, for instance, to have hobbies or physical recreation? Surely not within its proper proportion. But Paul says, "Bodily exercise profiteth little (or for a little while) but godliness is profitable unto all things, having the

promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come."

There was a missionary who went to India and found quite a number of army officers and government employees who were ardent tennis fans. Being fond of the game, he found countless opportunities to play. But after a while they noticed he had stopped playing. One of them asked him, "Do you think it is wrong to play tennis?" "Not at all," was the reply, "but I found that tennis was absorbing such a large part of my time and claiming such an amount of my thoughts and attention that my Bible study and prayer time was suffering. I realized that my love for tennis could stand no halfway measures, so I determined to give up the game, not because I think anything is wrong in tennis, but because I realize something is wrong in me, that for the present, at least, makes it unwise for me to indulge in that hobby." When we are willing to let the Lord have such control in our lives we shall find that our lives are not impoverished, but on the contrary deeper and richer and stronger than it could possibly be under our own direction. Do our hobbies rob us of time which is not ours but God's?

Then too, let us use our leisure for some part of the free life of the church, especially also where we are expected to make study of God's word as for instance Society, Catechism or Sunday School. Ask anyone who for a time steps out of that type of leisure time-occupying work, how they easily neglect also the study of the Word. Too busy. Dare we tell that to Christ Who said, "It is My meat to do My Father's will" and Who after a most busy day spent the night in prayer? Does our business (being busy) lead us to prayer?

So much for time, God-given.

Now let us look at *talents*, over which we are His stewards.

"I have none." Did I hear you say that? You know that is untrue and if anyone else should say that to you, you would be insulted. Are you sure? I am sure God did not make any Christian without a talent.

When we read the parable of the talents, it sometimes appears to me that we in our minds almost like to excuse the man with the one talent for hiding it in a napkin, feeling as if, had he had five or two, he might have used them, but one—no we almost excuse him for hiding one. This is very wrong. After all, Christ does not ask of us what we have not received. "For if there be first a willing mind it is accepted according to that a man hath, not according to that he hath not." 2 Cor. 8:12.

Think of a small candle. How

much light it can throw in just the right place. If such a candle should say, "Because I am not a big three-way bulb in an indirect lighting floor lamp, I won't shine." Say for instance, a fuse blew! The first thing to be used would be the little candle to find the fuse box so the big lights might again be put to work. How important! Why not be a little candle shining ever so brightly. And then too, put many little candles together—what a cheerful, pretty light they shed.

Then on the other hand, how sure are you that your talents are as meager as you think. Talents unused and untried do not gain. What a privilege to have a place and opportunity to develop our talents. Perhaps you may be called upon in society to explain a portion and you feel so dissatisfied when it is all over and say, "Never again." Are you sure there was no result? Perhaps what you said struck someone just right, or else, your trying gave someone else the courage to also try to do their best. Anyway those who have the most to say are not always the best members of society. Perhaps such do not always appreciate others enough and fail to give encouragement to the leader. That may be your talent, to boost those who have the hard work to do. Do you ever give your president a boost? Just ask her whether she needs it. Believe me, I know as any other ever has, how low one can get (under the juniper tree) and how someone in a real quiet way can give you a word of encouragement and help—lift you out of the dumps. We can appreciate that as a real talent, if truly exercised. Now don't all say, "O. K. from now on I keep silent in discusion and will do my saying in quiet." Oh, no! Try to find out what talent or talents you have and develop them and it will surprise you how you gain.

You say, "I get so nervous when I even have to read a Scripture portion or read a poem for the program or sing." What of it? Do you think that is strange? Even very noted preachers when they began shook in their boots. I was reading of a very prominent preacher who was to take part in a service for the first time and his part was to read Romans 5. As the time approached he became so nervous he went into the hall outside and knelt down for strength to be able to read it. When he came back he read the chapter beginning "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God," etc., and later was told the reading so touched a man's heart that God used it to lead him to a definite point in his conversion.

Dwight L. Moody at one time had to preach in a large auditorium in London where even mem-

bers of the royal family were in attendance. He began to read from Luke 4 and when he came to that portion "And many lepers were in Israel at the time of Eliseus the prophet" he came to the name "Eliseus" and stumbled on it. Began the line again and stumbled —tried again with the same result. He put down the book and prayed "O Lord use this stammering tongue to Thy glory and purpose" and preached a most marvelous sermon which long was remembered because of its effect.

There was a man who was called to service, but who did not have all the background which might have been desired. After one sermon, a man came to him and said, "You made eleven grammatical errors tonight". "No doubt" he said, "I could wish to have had all the proper schooling to be able to speak faultlessly, but God has called me with the talents I have and I will use them". "Be always ready to give an answer to every man that asketh you of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear". I Peter 3:15.

Then there is the matter of leading in prayer. When asked do you refuse? Dare you refuse? Perhaps you surely say then, "I'm too nervous". Granted! Who here does not recall the trembling knees and quivering voice until you are sure it isn't even your own voice and perhaps you just said "Amen" when you weren't even at the end. Then you said, "Never again—that isn't praying". And truly, praying is always a difficult art and in public even more so. But does that excuse you from ever trying again? You are ashamed. Of whom? Others—or God? Those who cannot sympathize and pray along, are those who never do anything themselves. And James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of GOD who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, never doubting." Then a good way to overcome this feeling of fearing to hear your own voice in prayer, is to practice saying your private prayers aloud. Enter into the closet and pray and tell the Lord about it. He can and will give strength. And keep trying. Don't pass it up, because by being asked, the opportunity is presented to you to develop also in this art and glorify your Father in heaven.

In matters secular, when opportunities are presented to us to try for higher positions and duties, do we just pass it up with "No thank you"? If in our development of spiritual talents we were as eager and alert as in the natural, what a power we would show forth.

Therefore, all of us here tonight who are members or former members of Talitha can say, thanks to God for the privilege of member-

ship in a society where the opportunity was given us to develop also the talents, God-given, among others of our kind, who were or are just as timid as we. Many now are busy mothers in homes and also in teaching their children from God's Word, perhaps can recall some things learned here and associations made here are helping you on your way now, also in leading in prayer in the midst of your children. What an example!

Or didn't you get anything out of membership in Talitha? Did you put anything in? "He that soweth sparingly shall reap sparingly." Then many graduates from Talitha now are in Priscilla and I dare say reaping also from the fruits gathered here and using the talents developed here.

Giving my personal testimony, I am thankful for my associations in Talitha and regret that at times certain things would get me down, but feel that belonging and partaking of the free life in the church has added to my love of the Church.

Everyone should have some part in the society life in one form or another in the church. Never to place it, of course, above the official church attendance, etc., but I'm sure that good members in the societies are also some of the most faithful in attendance at divine worship and feel keenly also the communion of saints. Having also our social life centered in the activities of the church and appreciating the friendships made therein is something which we shall always cherish as pleasant memories and I'm sure will also bear fruit even into eternity.

Let our lives then show that we realize our stewardship with its privileges and responsibilities.

The above article was rendered by Miss Dykema at the second annual Alumni meeting of the Talitha Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids. Miss Dykema holds the honor of having been one of the charter members of this flourishing society which was organized in 1925.

For a number of years Miss Dykema held the honor of being president of the Talitha Society, and later served as its vice president. Besides holding these offices, Miss Dykema is considered today as having been one of its most faithful members.

Another of the distinct honors that is held by the writer of the feature article of this issue, is the fact that in the current season the Sunday School of our church celebrates the 25th year of her services. Beacon Lights wishes to congratulate Miss Dykema for her 25 years of faithful service to the Lord in bringing the lessons of the Word of God to the children of our church.

We Serve God -- Why?

By the Rev. C. Hanko — Oak Lawn, Illinois

It is a very personal but nevertheless pertinent question, why do we serve God? Young man sitting in your barracks, out in bivouac, or sleeping in your pup tent, lying prone in the mud or walking guard at some training post, or crouching in your foxhole on the battlefield while missiles of death screech and burst and blast over your head.

Young man or young lady, whoever you may be and wherever you may be, at home, at school, in your office or in your place of occupation.

Tell me, why do you serve God?

Do you serve God for nothing?

One Angle:

The Devil once found occasion to ask this question concerning a person of whom God had said, that there was none like him on the earth, a perfect and upright man, one who feared God and eskewed evil. To which the devil made repartee: Does Job fear God for nothing?

He insinuated that Job regarded it as a paying proposition to serve God, and that would hold for even less upright men than Job. Job lived a sheltered life of ease, he had riches and honor and most everything which a man could desire. And being steeped in luxury, why should he not serve God? If it pays to serve God who would not adopt that utilitarian principle? But who would be so foolish as to serve God for nothing? People in this world never do anything for nothing. Put forth Thy hand now and touch all that he has, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.

It was a wicked challenge. A slanderous accusation against the man Job, as if Job did actually serve God out of selfish motives. A blasphemous charge against God also; as if God's people were motivated by nothing else than selfish greed, lust, covetousness. His answer lies the question. The devil answers: No, God's people do not serve God for nothing.

Another Angle:

But how about you? When you find yourself confused by the havoc and turmoils of warfare, when your heart bleeds over the departure of one who is dear to you, who will be long absent and whose present safety is very uncertain, do you serve God for nothing? You who know what it is to be lonesome, heartsick with anxiety and fears, who took your Bible along with you with the intention of reading it and of serving God just as you did at home. Do you serve God for nothing?

Don't you hear rattlers? The hissing tongue dripping with hell's venom? What good does it do, what advantage is there in it, what is the sense of it, and what do you get out of it?

Why piously choke your emotions and passions, why isolate yourself from others and make yourself the scorn of everybody? Do you not have troubles enough as it is? Be a good sport, have a good time, go along with the crowd, enjoy yourself to the full. WHY serve God for nothing?

God curse you, devil! Get thee behind me. I do not serve God for earthly gain or profit, neither do I worship God out of the selfish motive that it pays.

My answer is, YES, I serve God for nothing.

And Still Another Angle.

For nothing? For nothing at all? Is there then no advantage whatever in serving Him? Is there no reward, no crown, no gain; is it all vain?

Then God would certainly have good reason to be ashamed of being called our God for after all, what then does He do for His people who trust in Him and serve Him? But no, He has prepared a city which has foundations, an inheritance incorruptible in the heavens. We know that all the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared to the glory which is waiting for us. And our light affliction which lasts but for a moment works an eternal weight of glory. We behold the things which are not seen, and we live in hope. Though we lose all in this present life we gain all in heaven. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. Serve God for gain? From that viewpoint, never.

The Sum of the Matter:

But is it possibly true after all that we serve God for gain of some kind or the other? Is THAT the kind of people that God has? Is that true service of love to God? Is that pleasing in God's sight?

If that be the case, all our religion and worship is vain and unworthy of God, it is sin of the worst sort in the sight of God. Yet we know that faith, true faith

is God's own work of grace in us. By grace we are saved, through faith, and that is not of us, but is a gift of God.

God rewards that faith with eternal life, but His reward is a reward of grace, on the merit of His own work in us and for us.

Love to Him, the God of all grace, banishes all selfishness, destroys all covetousness in us and causes us to love Him solely for His Name's sake.

He has taught us that to live apart from Him is death. It is good for us to see His face. God is our God Whom to know is eternal life, the fulness of all blessedness.

I'll serve Him because He is the living God. Yes, having Him, I'll serve Him for nothing.

Kept From The Hour Of Temptation

There is an hour of temptation coming upon the world.

An hour which will involve all mankind, for it is coming with the purpose of trying the inhabitants of the earth as in a refiner's fire.

When that dread hour comes all will be cast in the crucible; no one will escape. The dross will be separated from the gold, and the gold will be refined from every alloy. The wicked and the upright will be set apart, and the righteous will be prepared to appear without spot or blemish before the face of God.

An hour of fiery trial which is certainly coming, for the Lord of glory has sent a personal message to His Church as she dwells in the midst of this world, warning her of its coming. We have this message recorded in the third chapter of the book of Revelation, the tenth verse. It reads: Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon the world, to try them that dwell on the earth.

The particular hour to which Jesus has reference is, no doubt, an hour that will make its appearance toward the end of the history of this present time.

In other parts of Scripture we are told to expect the appearance of Antichrist, the man of sin, whose mark every man on earth must bear if he intends to ply his business or buy bread for his table and clothing for his back. In those days the apostacy in the Church will be great, hearts will wax cold,

and men will prove to be lovers of self more than lovers of God. The thoughts of many hearts will be revealed and the evil impulses that lie hidden under a cloak of piety and refinement will be exposed. Then the Church and the world will be clearly drawn, leaving no doubt who belongs to the party of the Lord and who does not. But the Church will undergo a persecution, the like of which this world has never known.

Yet, even though we are told to expect a very definite hour of tribulation toward the end of time, the omens of that hour are always evident in all the history of the Church. There is no time whatsoever in which the Church is entirely free from trial. In fact, no individual Christian escapes his hour of temptation at some significant and crucial moment in his life. Nor do we know how often we will be called to personally pass through such an hour. This is certain, that our young men in service are, without exception, passing through just such an hour now.

Let none of us fail to realize it when the hour of temptation strikes.

When Jesus sends this warning to His Church He also adds a note of comfort bearing the positive assurance of their absolute safety in this hour.

The very fact that it is referred to as an 'hour' shows that it lasts but a comparatively short time. An hour is never long in comparison with a day, a month or a year. By the same sign our present affliction never lasts very long, particularly not in comparison with that eternal glory that awaits us. After this short night there dawns an eternal day.

Besides that, an hour is always a period determined by God, both as to the time when it shall commence and when it shall end. What an inexpressible comfort it always proves to the Church to know that all things are governed by His providence, so that not a hair can fall from our heads without the will of the heavenly Father. No temptations can befall us except those sent to us by God, in God's own time, and in God's own manner. The fire never burns hotter than God causes it to burn, the devil never is stronger than God gives him power to be, and the temptation is never more severe than God intends it to be. Nor does it last a moment longer than the time allotted to it in the wisdom of God.

Looking at temptation from that aspect it is always a God-sent trial to purge us from our sin and to cause our faith to stand forth as purified by fire. Every battle makes us more dependent on God's grace, every victory the more fit to meet a mightier foe. The trial

of our faith teaches us patience, and patience causes the hope of eternal life to grow within us. That hope will not be disappointed, but will be fully realized when we enter into the glories of the life to come.

Jesus Himself guards and keeps His own from the hour of temptation. Which does not mean, as you realize at once, that the true believer will never see temptation nor trial. That would be contrary to all the plain teachings of Scripture, for it is one of the proofs that we are the sons of God that God deals with us as sons. For what father, so the author of Hebrews asks, does not chastise his son? So God chastises those whom He loves. The believer is certainly led by God into temptation, but he is not forsaken in the temptation. For Jesus Himself, the Lord of Glory, jealously guards and protects him in the midst of temptation, and delivers him out of it. "I" saith the Lord, "will keep thee from the hour of temptation which shall come upon the world." The world perishes, the elect are saved.

At thy right hand, though thousands die
No harm shall unto thee come nigh;
But thou secure, unharmed, shalt see
What wicked men's reward shall be.

Yet, the assurance that Christ will guard us in the midst of every temptation can only be ours if we remain faithful to His Word. He gives His promise only after He has said: "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience."

That Word is none other than the Word of God, which we have in the Scriptures. It always warns the believer of the cross he must bear and the battle he must fight, of the trials he must experience and the patience he must practice. That Word exhorts us to be patient, but also works patience in our hearts through the Spirit working in us. It is not only necessary to carry that Word with us wherever we go, but also to make use of it as our daily meat and drink unto life eternal.

Only by jealously guarding that Word, loving it, cherishing it, reading it, eating and drinking it, will we be kept from the hour of trial. Christ works His salvation in us and through us. He causes us to believe and gives us the power to believe, but we do the believing. He gives us grace and strength to fight the battle of faith against all the powers of darkness, but we do the fighting. We are kept by the power of God, it is true, but we are only kept by the power of God through faith, which means Christ works in us. And Christ works this faith in us by means of the Word.

Nature's Weavers

By Mr. C. De Boer — Kalamazoo, Mich.

"There was no bud, no bloom upon the bowers;
The spiders wove their thin shrouds night by night;
The thistle-down, the only ghost of flowers,
Sailed slowly by—passed noiseless out of sight."

Thomas B. Read.

Dawn breaks. Now the little weaver cautiously retreats, for during those long hours of darkness she has ceaselessly been engaged in spinning her snare—a masterpiece of intricate art. Patiently, she awaits the arrival of her prey. But who can this spinner be? Certainly, it is no insect, for observation reveals that it has eight legs instead of six and its body is divided only into two parts rather than three. On its head is a crescent arrangement of bright beady eyes, usually eight in number. The abdomen is marked by four to six tubular shaped spinnerets, the secretion of which forms the silk of the web. Perhaps, by this time all of you readers have guessed that this little creature is a spider.

Spiders vary considerably in size; the smallest being about one twenty-fifth of an inch, while the largest species are three and one half inches. The female spider is greater in size than the male, and she is responsible for the rearing of the young. Usually she is encumbered by the carrying about of the egg-case or cocoons in which the many eggs are hidden, or the transporting of the countless progeny, which frequently ride in masses on their mother's back.

Wondrously adapted is the body of the spider for accomplishing the greatest feat of all—the spinning of the web. Have you ever watched a spider in action while thus engrossed?

There are many varieties of spiders, but perhaps, one of the most common is the garden spider, whose web is geometrical in design, and is sometimes two feet in diameter, frequently, hanging in a vertical position. The silk secreted in a liquid form by the spinnerets—glands located in the posterior section of her body—solidifies when it comes in contact with the air. The number of spinnerets she uses at one time depends on how fine or how thick she desires the thread; thus she can change the quality of the fiber to suit her purpose.

After a desirable site has been selected, she commences secreting the silk for the foundation threads which radiate as spokes in a wheel. Carefully, she attaches them to form her web, by rubbing her spinnerets at the point desired to cement them firmly. One hind leg

directs and guides the thread and pulls it taut, for the claws of the leg are very well adapted to arrange the threads while the spider is weaving. These claws are modified in such a way that they appear as a very delicate comb wondrously specialized for effective construction of the web.

These primary threads must be tightly drawn and carefully arranged so that it will remain intact when winds blow or when victims endeavor to escape. Now the secondary threads are added in a special fashion, being firmly attached to each of the radiating spokes. But even now it is not complete for the fibers are dry. To be a real menace to any prey they must be sticky. Once again the spinnerets perform a feat for now a viscid cord is produced containing small globules of glutinous substance. She draws these out with her hind legs and attaches them to the spokes of the web.

Now the time has come—that moment of suspense and period of waiting. Cautiously, the spider finds a retreat but, very wary is she—alert for that instant when some hapless insect might fall into her webbed realm. Her vision is poor but her sense of touch is very well developed. Ah, suddenly, she is aware of a foreign presence; her feet can sense that something has alighted on her carefully completed home. Instantly, she dashes to the scene of action and then decides her next step.

If a small insect has entered her domain, no difficulty awaits her, for she merely has to pour some of her silken threads on the culprit enmeshing it in a maze of silken cords. Then, after seizing the helpless creature, she carries it off to the edge of her web to devour and enjoy.

However, if the victim is large and stronger, his resistance is greater and consequently, must be handled with extreme care. From a distance the spider produces many meshy strains which are thrown over the invader. Very effective in battle are her powerful jaws which are not only sharp and tough but contain glands which produce poison. When the spider fangs clutch the prey, the result is immediate, for the poison paralyzes the intruder and death frequently follows.

The third possibility is the entrance of enemies too large for the spider to cope with. Instinctively, she senses the strength of her opponent and becomes concerned when the foe struggles for freedom. In order to save her web, she releases the captive by severing the threads which entangle it.

Thus, the spider spins her web, and we mortals can only stand in awe as she constructs her marvelous home so skillfully wrought in every intricate and delicate detail.

Editors Desk

We wish to take this opportunity to thank the agents in our various congregations for their work in connection with Beacon Lights in their particular localities during the past season. Many of these agents continued to send in new subscriptions from time to time. Right along, we felt that we could depend on them and we certainly thank them for their splendid cooperation.

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But, like many other things the "Beacon Lights Seasons" are like swinging doors. The closing of one season means the opening of another. So, as we thank our agents for their work during the past year, we must also ask them for their continued cooperation during the coming season.

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Renew your subscription to Beacon Lights early! If you have not yet subscribed, do so now! Get in touch with the Business Manager or with your local agent.

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Beacon Lights has just recently made its way into several homes in Doon, Iowa. In response to the sample copies which we sent, Jeanette Stellinga, from Doon, writes, "We greatly enjoy reading the different issues of Beacon Lights which you sent us. The issue of 'Iowa' was especially interesting because we all knew the writers and so forth. We are eagerly waiting for the next issue of Beacon Lights."

* * * * *

Olga Flikkema, a member of the Y. P. Society at Manhattan, Mont. dropped us a few lines this past month. She writes: "I think it's a very nice idea to have a few extra issues of Beacon Lights this year. The men in Service certainly seem to enjoy them."

* * * * *

DONATIONS

Recent donations toward our Servicemen's Fund, for which we are very grateful, were received from:

Miss J. Stellinga, Doon, Iowa	$1.00
S/Sgt. Henry Pipe	1.00
Pvt. Fred Ophof	1.25
Creston Young Peoples Society	5.00
Pvt. George Engelsma	5.00
Kalamazoo Ladies' Aid Society	8.00
Pvt. Peter Koole	1.00
Miss H. Schipper, Redlands, Calif.	1.00
A Friend in Hawaii	5.00
Miss P. De Koekkoek, Denver, Colo.	1.00
Miss A. Dykstra, Byron Center	2.00
Hope Young People's Society	5.00

(Second donation this season)

To Our Boys In Service

Grand Rapids, May 20, 1943.

Dear fellows:—

Here in Grand Rapids the weather is still chilly, and we have had considerable rain the last few weeks, so that the farmers hereabouts cannot be in the field to sow their seed. From other parts of the country we hear of cloud bursts, swollen rivers, flooded farmlands, crops destroyed. And so we are forcibly reminded that man may plan, and also boast much of raising the biggest crop in history, but that God is the Lord, and that the counsels of men are vain. And although this may be a cause of worry and fear to an ungodly and vainly boasting world, it always is a source of much comfort to the people of God, and should be such to you fellows, wherever you are, and whatever your way and lot may be. For all things work together for good to them that love God!. May you richly experience the truth of this! Such is always our prayer in your behalf.

And that the Lord hears our, and also your, prayers, I was glad to notice from your letters. I received several of them since my last general epistle in Beacon Lights. I like to get letters from you. And remember, I never fail to answer them, not by a mimeographed generality, but by an individual letter. So, let me have more of them!

More than one letter I received lately contained a question, which is probably of general interest to you, and which, though I sent a personal reply to the inquirers, I will answer also through this channel. The question is whether I would advise our boys in the service, though not in their own church, to partake of communion when opportunity presents itself, either in some other church, or in the camp. And my answer is, first of all, that under ordinary circumstances it would, of course, not be proper to accept an invitation to "open communion." And even under your extraordinary conditions in the service you will have to use discretion. Nevertheless, if communion is served in the proper way, that is, according to the Scriptures, to celebrate the atoning death of our Lord Jesus Christ; and if you feel the need of partaking, and should, perhaps, feel as if you were denying your Lord by abstaining, you certainly may feel that you are in the Lord's way, when you take your place with them that love the Lord, and commemorate His death at the table of communion. And so, my advice is: partake, but use your discretion.

Perhaps, you have some other problems of a more or less general nature. If so, I will be glad to serve you with advice through Beacon Lights, if you will but present them.

As ever, your friend and brother,

H. Hoeksema.

Lincoln, Nebraska
June 11, 1943

Dear fellows:

This time I am writing from the Middle West, from the capitol of Nebraska, the center of a rich farming community. On the Middle West it is especially that the eyes of our government are hopefully fixed, for it is from its corn and wheatfields that the crops are expected, so sorely needed for our own sustenance, and for the nourishment of a large part of the entire world.

How times have changed in a few years! We all remember that only a few years ago the return of economic prosperity was sought in the way of limitation and wanton destruction of crops and live stock. It was, I believe, in this very state of Nebraska that farmers emptied their trucks loaded with precious wheat, spilling it on the highway, and shouting: "To h. . . with the wheat!" because they could not obtain a sufficient price for it. But today we are hoping for the largest crop in the history of our country, and the farmers must produce all they can.

Nor are the prospects for those that have their hope fixed on fertile fields and human efforts any too bright. Everywhere the rains have been so abundant that the fields are soaked and the lower parts of the land are inundated by the swollen rivers. Many farmers replanted their corn three times already, while others were not even able to begin planting. And according to a well known radio commentator, it is estimated that the corn and wheat crops will fall hundreds of millions of bushels short of last year's crop.

The point I want to make is that those that trust in things, and in the wisdom and power of man, are always put to shame, whether in times of prosperity or of depression. God is not in all their thoughts, and yet, God will not be mocked, and He will not give His glory to another!

Blessed are they who on the living God rely! They are never put to shame. And this does not mean that their way is always smooth, and that prosperity in the earthly sense is theirs, but it does mean that they always have peace, and that God in Christ causes all things to work for their salvation.

And that is, after all, true prosperity!

May that confidence and that prosperity be yours!

As ever your friend,
H. Hoeksema.

Letters From Our Boys

Camp Murphy, Fla.

Dear Friends,

For some time I have wanted to write a letter for "Beacon Lights" but somehow the time was lacking. However I am now waiting several hours for a train to take me to a different post, so I will take this opportunity to pass some of my experiences on to you readers.

Yesterday I received a letter from one of our ministers which told of a plan whereby we would be supplied with meditations which the ministers have agreed to write. Needless to say, this plan will be a boon to us in the Service and it will bring a grateful response from all of us because we do not have the spiritual blessings of the folks back home. Thus far we have had to rely on our own spiritual food obtained by Scripture reading and I am sure we will find these meditations helpful. Another thing we look forward to is the publication of the book on the Catechism as anounced in the Standard Bearer.

A week ago Sunday night I had an unusual privilege. At the invitation of the Chief-of-Chaplains of this post, I had the opportunity to speak at the evening Protestant service. The text I used was Eph. 6:12-18 and centered on the admonition of the apostle Paul—"Be strong in the Lord and the power of His might." In the following verses, the apostle tells us how to be strong in the Lord, namely, to arm ourselves completely with the spiritual armor which He has given us and to fight with the sword of the Spirit. The military figure used by the apostle takes on new and intensified meaning when one speaks as a soldier to his fellow soldiers. I was grateful to have this privilege and unique experience and I shall cherish its memory.

The time we now live in is characterized by confusion and insecurity and everyone in a position of influence or power seems to add only to the mass of foolish human reasonings characteristic of this period. Therefore in closing, I want to remind you of One whose word is sure and cannot fail and who is absolutely trustworthy and all powerful. He proved the truth and power of His word by healing the sick and afflicted and raising the dead. Shall we not believe Him also when He says "I go to prepare a place for you—if it were not so I would have told you?" He also said "Behold I come quickly." What assurance His words have! A rock in the time of storm is He.

Your Christian friend,
Staff Sgt. Homer G. Kuiper.

* * * * *

San Francisco, Calif.
April 5, 1943

Dear Friends,

I must take time out to inform you that I am receiving the Beacon Lights but not until today did my first edition arrive.

I am very grateful for your thoughtfulness and kindness in sending me the Beacon Lights, while I am far away from home, yes even from the States.

I know the Beacon Lights to be the best magazine I have ever read. It gives my heart great comfort to read the things pertaining to how various societies are prospering and how the members are doing their parts to make their society a better one. We must fight the good fight of faith until the end.

I am now away from the States, which means that I can not write much as to where I am. All I can say is I am out in the southwest Pacific and am making the best of things.

I am not a very good letter writer, but I do want to thank you and all who make it possible for me to get the Beacon Lights, because I find it very profitable.

Your friend,
Wilbur Bruinsma S 2/c
(South Holland, Ill.)

* * * * *

New York City, N. Y.
April 18, 1943

Dear Friends,

I am happy to tell you that at last I received my first issue of Beacon Lights since I left the good old U. S. A. Often I wondered if I would ever see another one until I could again see the Land of the Free and the Home of the Brave.

With this letter I am sending a dollar bill—I would send more if I had it, but over here they just make good souvenirs so I have got rid of all the rest of them long ago. Over here we use the native means of exchange, which at first had me quite confused.

Although I only received the Beacon Lights just yesterday, I have read it from cover to cover and am thinking of starting over again. Good literature is hard to get.

Over here we boys get to see many things. Things that before we only read about and then forgot. Being in the middle East makes me understand the customs better as they are described in the Bible, for the people still act much the same. I have seen people "pray from rooftops" and also one can notice the disregard for human feelings.

I only hope I may receive the following issues of our booklet and wish you God's blessing in this work.

Yours in Christ,
Henry Pype, S/Sgt. (Grand Rapids).

* * * * *

Camp Pickett, Va.
June 9, 1943

Dear Friends:

As I was reading my Beacon Lights tonite I happened to read some of the letters from our boys and I began thinking it was about time that I did my share.

I have been in the Army nine months

now and it sure is a lot different from civilian life. I have been stationed in four different army camps:—Illinois, Louisiana, Florida and at present I am stationed in Virginia. So far I have been able to go to church almost every Sunday. But the services that we have in Camp are very short and not near like the sermons which we have in our own church.

I am in a Medical Detachment which is attached to the Infantry. I find my work quite interesting.

You can tell by my short letter that I am not much of a letter writer, so I will close for now.

P.S. We service-men appreciate it when all you folks at home write to us.

Your Friend (Oak Lawn)

Pvt. George Regnerus,
36371248 Med. Det. 110th Inf.
Camp Pickett, Virginia.

* * * * *

Fort Riley, Kansas.
May 17, 1943

Dear Friends:

I would like to do my share for the copies of Beacon Lights I am getting, so I am writing a few lines, or rather I will try to tell you something about my thirteen months of army life. I am in an armored division of the 73rd Field Artillery and am stationed here in Kansas almost one year. A little long to be in one place, I think, but we may be thankful we are still on this side. Right now we are pretty well-equipped with different kinds of weapons and tanks and this outfit is humming with noise at times. Things are changing here fast and I can't say too much, but I think this division is ready to go places. Where I do not know, because they don't tell us anything and you can't blame them either. But it will be a step nearer to going overseas. But we must be content in these dark times.

The weather out here hasn't been so pleasant, cold and rainy. It looks more like fall than it does like spring and to top it off, we had a tornado down here last Saturday. It did quite a bit of damage to the Cavalry Training Center, leveling off quite a number of barracks and roofs, also injuring a large number of soldiers and equipment.

As for churches down here, it isn't much, but I usually go every Sunday. Certainly is day and night difference between their preaching and the Prot. Ref. preaching. There are no Chr. Ref. Churches out here at all so there isn't much choice as to where to go.

Well, my time is running short so I will close now and wish you all the Lord's blessing and comfort and hope that we may all see each other again someday. Enclosed you will find my contribution toward the Beacon Lights Fund. I hope they may continue. Good-by everyone.

George Engelsma, Pvt.
(Hope Church)

Wall Plaques

By Miss Gertrude Vander Gugten — Kalamazoo, Mich.

All of us have seen wall plaques containing scripture verses, mottoes, or poems in many homes. Have you ever stopped to think what some of these say or mean? If you have, I am sure you will find many deviating from our reformed doctrines especially if they are misinterpreted as many are. So often we find only part of a verse quoted on these plaques; a fact which very easily leads to misunderstanding since all texts should be interpreted in the light of their context. Then many of them go unnoticed day after day by the people in whose homes they are found because their eye has grown accustomed to seeing that little dark speck on the wall, hardly realizing what it is. If only we could live up to these, but many bear silent testimony against us as we go about our daily tasks, deeply engrossed in only our own carnal interests. There is another danger in such things, that is, that they tend to make an outward show of our religion. Would not the Pharisee of old delight in having his home filled with such pious displays? Often plaques attempt to portray Christ and of course this is always based upon human imagination which is truly incapable of making a likeness of Christ.

Let us take a look at some of the typical sayings we may find. I once noticed a very striking plaque in the form of a little command, namely, "Do not do anything that you would not want to be doing when Jesus comes." It immediately reminded me that we must truly be prepared for the coming of Christ when He shall judge all peoples. No man knoweth the day and hour, but let us not be found as the five foolish virgins with no oil in our lamps. However, we must be careful not to interpret this wrong. We should not say then that the only reason we must not do that which is improper is because we would not want to, like the little boy with his face smeared with jam after a raid on the cupboard, "be caught at it" if Christ were to come. We should do right at all times, being examples to others.

Usually these plaques try to touch only upon the pleasant things of this life. For instance, "Jesus never fails" or "God is love." Is it not just as appropriate to say "God is a consuming fire?" But, that sounds a little too harsh for most people. Also when Christ is pictured, He is usually shown as a kind, loving, gentle shepherd, which He certainly is, but He has also rebuked hypocrites, even liken-

ing them to whited sepulchres. Do you ever see Him portrayed as such?

A very poor motto is the one saying, "Prayer changes things". Is it really prayer that changes things or is it the work of God? Indeed we must pray without ceasing, but prayer to be acceptable must be sincere and in faith and truly everyone cannot pray in faith.

A very common verse is "Christ is the Head of this house, the unseen Guest at every meal, the silent Listener to every conversation." Christ, to be sure, should be the Head of every Christian home and always is a witness of all our thoughts, words and deeds.

Because of the war a new fad for "patriotic Christian" plaques has arisen. Most of these contain verses whose meanings have been misinterpreted. The word "peace" is often used referring to peace following this war, but a text is used with it which means *the* peace which passes all understanding as a verse like 11 Thess. 3:16, "The Lord of peace, Himself give us peace." Another appealing word is the much emphasized "Victory" of today, misused often with a verse like "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." I John 5:4. A desire for liberty and freedom is frequently expressed by John 8:32. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free." Certainly, these texts, in their proper interpretation are fine and it is a shame to abuse them by such false applications.

Scripture texts which contain in themselves complete thoughts are very fitting plaques; such as: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to His purpose". Romans 8:28. Or "We have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ". Romans 5:1. And "Because I live, ye shall live also". John 14:19.

Let us therefore be careful of the mottos we select!

Am I a soldier of the Cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His name?

Must I be carried to the skies,
On flow'ry beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sail'd thru bloody seas?

Sure I must fight, If I would reign:
Be faithful to my Lord,
And bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy Word.

Thy saints in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer tho' they die;
They see the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.

Current Events

By the Rev. H. De Wolf

Manhattan, Montana

Prosperity

You undoubtedly remember that only a few years ago, while we were supposed to be suffering a depression, people were always saying "prosperity was around the corner." And then some wit would usually remark, "Yes, but where's the corner?" Well, there's no doubt now but what we have found the corner. Just when and where that corner was, I will not venture to explain; we can safely leave that to some great mind in the field of Economics, and undoubtedly also there one will find differences of opinion among those who are supposed to be in the know. So, although we may not know just when or where we turned the corner, we do know what we found around that corner. Prosperity? Yes, but also something else. . .WAR!

I wonder sometimes how many people would not rather have a depression, as we had a few years ago, than what we have now. We got, as a nation, our prosperity for which we clamoured (didn't the church have special prayer meetings for prosperity?) but look what else we got. No, we didn't want war—nobody wants war—but we did want prosperity at any cost, at least we thought we did when we were in the midst of the depression. And God gave this nation what it sought but He gave it with His judgments. Beneath the beautiful rose which we desired hid a very sharp thorn.

And where is this prosperity leading us?

The answer is evident; it is leading us into a tremendous national debt which will take years to pay. Yet even so, the cost in finances is insignificant when compared with the awful cost in human lives, not only with a view to those who die but also with a view to all the untold misery and affliction of those who are maimed for life. And besides all this there is the grief of those who must miss their loved ones or receive them back as invalids and human wrecks. That is the price that God is making us pay for the prosperity we cried for.

And still there are those who would explain our present prosperity as "common grace." That

might work with a view to the "rose" but how about the "thorn?" Let us as God's children learn to confess that our true prosperity consists in the blessing of our God upon us and not in the abundance of earthly wealth. May God make us wise that we may be able to discern these things and valuate them in their correct light.

Patriotism?!

In baseball you get three strikes and you're out.

In labor you get as many strikes as you want and nobody puts you out. At least that's the way it seems. If you don't get what you want, you strike; and when you get it and aren't satisfied you strike again, and you can keep that up as long as you please.

It surely is no wonder that some will question the patriotism of many today who, in spite of the fact that their industry is vital to the war effort, will lay down their tools and refuse to work. And why? Because they can't make a living on their present wage? We doubt that very much. Well, if it isn't that then it must be the lust for wealth.

But what about their patriotism?

It surely is silly to even speak about sacrificing for the nation if one is guilty of such things. Far from producing sacrifice, the patriotism of such a person is based upon selfishness and greed. And that is not simply true of the laborer who strikes for higher pay but equally true of the owner, employer or operator who wants to line his pockets with the spoils of war at the expense of the laborer.

To us "little people" who are constantly urged to buy war bonds, (to sacrifice in order to buy them,) such patriotism stinks!

And it stinks a lot worse to the boys who are giving their lives!

Something like this shows us that man is always concerned first about himself. At heart he is selfish and cruel; in spite of his vain show of loving his neighbor, he loves only himself. And that cannot be otherwise because the love of God is not in him. Only the love of God in our hearts will yield the peaceable fruit of love to one another. That is why in this world no one ever wins a war except the christian. We gain an everlasting peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Thou shalt beneath His wings abide,
And safe within His care confide;
His faithfulness shall ever be
A sure protection unto thee.

The Protestant Reformed Hour

There was a time when a Protestant Reformed radio broadcast was considered a fantastic dream; that time ended two years ago, when the Protestant Reformed Hour, a broadcast sponsored by the Young Men's Society of First Church, Grand Rapids, made a small, but significant beginning over radio station W. L. A. V. The quality of the broadcast was admittedly high, featuring the Rev. H. Hoeksema, supported by a mixed choir; that quality has grown. The range of the broadcast was woefully small, the station covering little more than the city of Grand Rapids. That range has grown slightly,—three other Western Michigan stations having been acquired during the past year. That range *must* grow if radio broadcasting is to be worthwhile for us.

During the past month the facilities of a 20,000 watt station, W. J. J. D. Chicago, were made available to us for next fall. This station, combined with the Muskegon, Traverse City, and Grand Rapids stations which we had last year, will cover Western Michigan, and parts of Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. This would be of great advantage for the spread of the Reformed Truth, *the* Truth as it is our privilege to know it. The facilities are present; our broadcasting range *can* grow.

Up to this time, the Protestant Reformed Hour has been supported mainly by the congregation of First Church of Grand Rapids, with some welcome help from a few other churches in Michigan. This has been a comparatively easy task; but now the burden will be greater, for broadcasting expenses alone will amount to $5000.00 for a half-hour program for 26 weeks. This amount looks stupendous, but it really isn't. Do you realize that if 800 people would pledge twenty-five cents a week for twenty-six weeks, we would have $200. more than our broadcasting expense? This bit of arithmetic is not presented with the idea of making you sit back and let the other fellow do the job; we need the 800 contributors after all.

If you have followed me in the printed page thus far, you will have seen these two facts: the scope of the Protestant Reformed Hour *must* grow, and the scope of the Protestant Reformed Hour *can* grow. Do you see, my friend, the conclusion for you and for me from these two propositions? It is this: The Protestant Reformed Hour, God helping us, *shall* grow, going forth into new fields, spreading as it goes the truth that God is GOD. Will you say that and *do* that with us?

Any requests for further inform-

ation or any contributions should be sent to The Protestant Reformed Hour, corner Fuller Ave. and Franklin St., Grand Rapids (6), Michigan. Meanwhile watch for further news in this magazine and elsewhere, and by all means remember this cause in your prayers.

The Radio Committee of the Young Men's Society of the First Church, Grand Rapids.

Denominational Loyalty

By Rev. A. Petter — Grand Haven, Mich.

It is always a pathetic sight to see a church that has lost the Truth and its spiritual power appealing to its members for allegiance. Pathetic also on the part of those who are thus exhorted is the attempt to make an honest response to such an appeal.

For usually in every church there is an element that carries in its heart a spiritual seriousness, and honesty and orderliness and loyalty. And that element usually has memories of better days when father and mother and the previous generation, found joy and strength and peace in that church.

And finally this loyalty is pathetic because having lost the guidance of the pure truth it stands in the way of that very health and well fare that is being sought.

Now we may not deny that loyalty has its great value. It is undoubtedly the will of God that we shall highly honor those relationships in which God in His providence has bound us. As children of a family we shall honor father and mother as those through whose hand God is pleased to rule us, and we shall be patient with their weaknessess. As citizens of the land we shall be subject to the authorities for God's sake. As members of the church we shall obey them that have the rule over us who spoke unto us the Word of God, and we shall support the organization with our goods and gifts and talents.

And we may also go a step further and hold that to a certain extent true love desires not to see sin but to hide it. For as long as a sin or weakness is not a logical outcome and product of that which the church openly professes and stands for, it is not at all duty to expose and reveal it as a warn-

ing to others. True love covers the sin of the church from the eyes of the uncharitable, unsympathetic and profane, who have not the spiritual judgment to evaluate a sin or a weakness according to its true character.

And yet the tragic part of this love is that it is blind and does not use the only remedy that can give clearness of vision, namely, the word of God. It has been said that people in such a church are like people being overcome by gas fumes in their lounging chair, they only know that they are getting a little drowsy.

Thus all kinds of remedies are applied that are essentially earthly. New clubs are organized, movements are set on foot, mottoes are coined. Be more faithful in attendance at services; bring a friend; say a good word for the minister; redecorate the auditorium; improve the social parlors.

And although all these may be good in themselves, none of them really answer to the appeal for revitalizing.

The only remedy is to return to the truth and an ever living closer to that truth. And in many churches that means a way of criticism and rebuke and conflict.

Now in our Beacon Lights we would like to view this especially from the view-point of young people. Shall we resort to all the above devices to show loyalty to, and help build the church. No, indeed we will be called to something quite different.

It will mean in the first place that we know increasingly better just what our church confesses in close connection with the Word of God from which we claim to have built our doctrine.

It will also mean certainly that we know these principles as they have been further developed by our leaders who have been given us of God to open the Word for us.

Thirdly we must see this truth in all its power to guide, strengthen and comfort us in our calling as children of God in this world.

Fourthly that we strive to live from those principles with heart and soul and mind and strength in all relations of life.

Now to me it seems that this calling will *become* increasingly difficult because of the increasing complexity of life and also because of the ripening of the world in the sin-process. In this respect there is quite a difference between today and the time of our beginning as churches. We need mention only the most familiar, such as Labor Unions, Governmental regimentation, and the tendency toward consolidation.

Moreover there is the branching out of our generations and the branching into various fields of life. Many of our young men in the service have expressed a strong

liking for their particular line of work, especially if it is work giving an outlet to their specific gifts. Others of our young men and women are taking higher education and are looking forward to various vocations.

Now one might easily get the impression from the deliverances of some Calvinists that Calvinism is a religion especially for the intelligentsia. But Scripture knows nothing thereof. It knows of no class or color that cannot be sanctified and glorified by the power of grace.

But it does teach that all—exactly all— classes can and must be brought under the dominion of the Reformed truth and those to whom God has given unusual gifts or calling stand under responsibility. And especially those young people who come into contact with the world of refined development, will have to learn and live the deep implications of the Antithesis as it is corrupted by any form of Arminianism.

Let us be glad that insofar as we strive for such allegiance to the truth and to the church, we can do so without opposition from within. We do not have to complain that we love the church but that all efforts for her welfare are misunderstood and in vain, as this is true in so many churches. A revival of life is always in order in any church and such a revival is always welcomed by those who sincerely love the church as a possession of God.

But let us not forget that faithfulness and loyalty at this stage always begins at home. We cannot and need not direct our efforts against an institution or against leaders, but will have to begin with self. And a faithfulness and loyalty must always go back to the means of grace: not only faithful attendance to, but above all faithful use of them in our lives.

That is the beginning of a revival, which is necessary for us at all times, and surely makes its influence felt beginning by those nearest us; it is also the only way to begin any reformation that may appear necessary.

Teach me, O Lord, Thy way of truth,
And from it I will not depart,
That I may steadfastly obey,
Give me an understanding heart.

In Thy commandments make me walk,
For in Thy law my joy shall be;
Give me a heart that loves Thy will,
From discontent and envy free.

Turn Thou my eyes from vanity,
And cause me in Thy ways to tread;
O let Thy servant prove Thy word
And thus to godly fear be led.

Let Thy Heart Cheer Thee

By Rev. B. Kok — Hudsonville, Mich.

> "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Ecclesiastes 11:9

Doesn't this advice sound rather dangerous? Doesn't it seem strange that the Word of God says, to the young man or young woman, do just as you like, just follow the inclinations of your heart, and the sight of your eyes? And yet, that is just what Solomon here advises the young man or woman to do. Just listen to what he says, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth. . . .and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes."

Some believe that Solomon is here using irony. As if he meant to say, go ahead, do just as you please, walk in the way of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, but you'll be sorry, for God will bring you into judgment for all these things. No, Solomon here is not ironical, but gives the christian youth the secret of true joy and happiness, when he says, "*and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth.*" True joy and happiness comes from *within*, not from *without*.

According to Scripture, the heart is the very center of our existence, both physical and spiritual. From the heart are the issues of life. Proverbs 4:13. It is the seat of our affections, the very center of our personality. From it proceeds the whole stream of human consciousness, our thoughts, our hopes and our aspirations. It is that mysterious force that gives direction to our whole life.

According to the Word of God that heart is either, or. It is regenerated, pure, righteous and good, *or* it is unregenerated, evil, wicked and defiled. Hence the great question is, is that heart pure, or wicked, good or evil?

By nature that heart is wicked and perverse. By nature that heart does not cheer us, but is darkened and evil. Therefore the world seeks to cheer that heart with all kinds of worldly, superficial mirth and hilarity, but it fails miserably. They seek to forget their cares and heartaches by drowning them in worldly entertainments and pleasures. And when even the Church resorts to such tactics there is something radically wrong.

Real joy and true happiness must proceed from within. If all is well, then we do not need to cheer our heart, but our heart

cheers us. O if that heart of ours has been regenerated by God's grace, and enlightened by His Spirit, then we can sing songs of gladness in the darkest night. Then that heart cheers us even in the midst of sorrows, trials, and dangers, and gives us a joy that is far more real and lasting than all the superficial joys of the world.

Then you can safely walk in the way of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes. For then the way of thine heart will be the way of God's covenant and precepts, and thine eyes will be opened for all that is really beautiful in all the works of God's hand both in this world, and in the world to come.

2-WEEK CONTEST

A New Name for our Radio Broadcast

The Radio Committee of the Young Men's Society of the First Protestant Reformed Church is looking for a new name for its broadcast. But time is *very* limited.

Any cards received post marked before July 1, will be considered. Any catchy name—write it down and send it in. The person who sends in the name selected will be given a copy of the new book "In the Sanctuary" by Rev. H. Hoeksema.

If you have a suggestion jot it down on a post card and send it to the

RADIO COMMITTEE

Fuller Ave. and Franklin St.
Grand Rapids, (6) Michigan.