

# BEACON LIGHTS

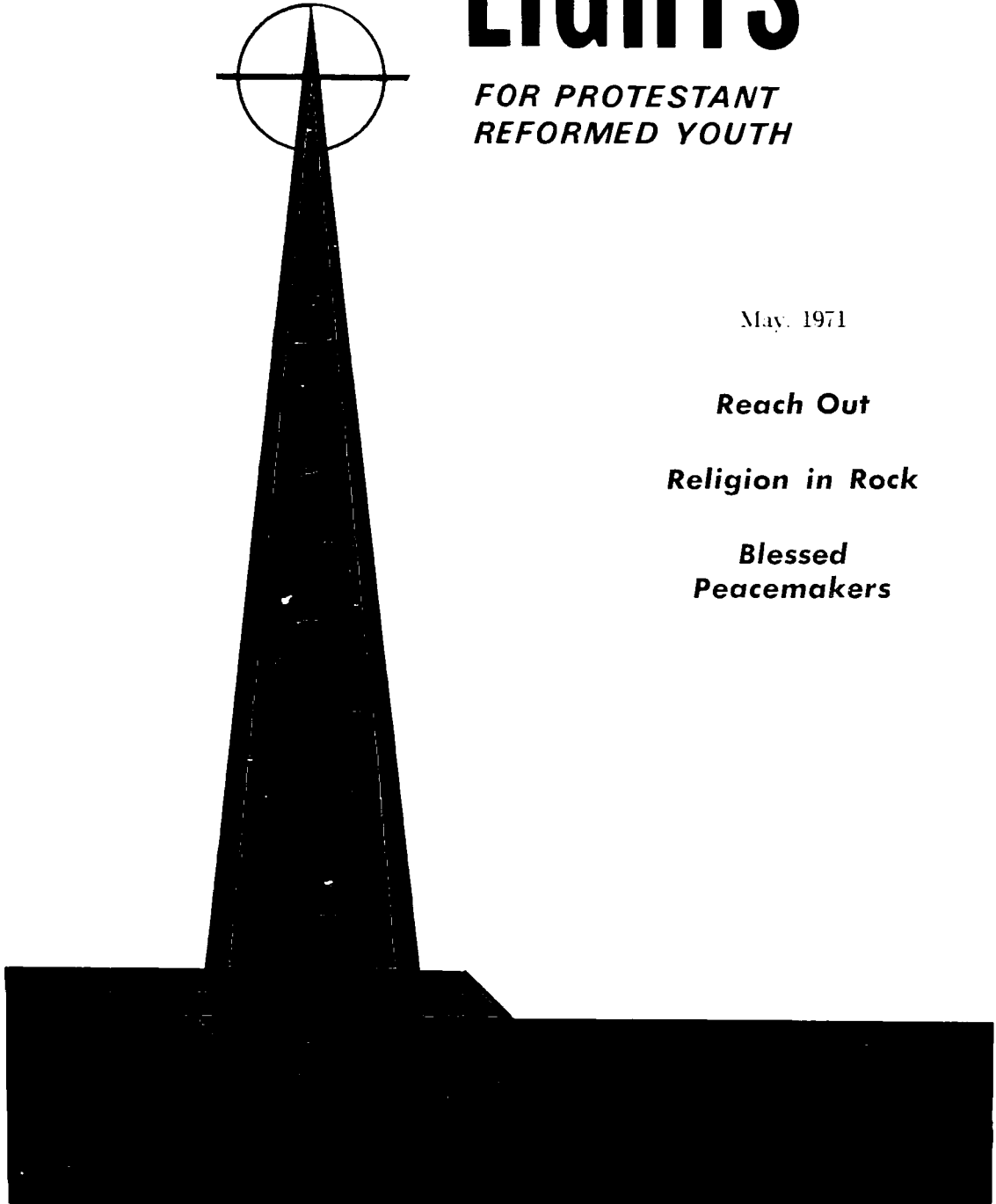
*FOR PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH*

May, 1971

*Reach Out*

*Religion in Rock*

*Blessed  
Peacemakers*





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## **LEST WE FORGET . . . A call for the appreciation of Protestant Reformed ministers**

It has been said many times that in order to be a minister in the Protestant Reformed Churches, one must be willing to do an immense amount of work. If possible, this could yet be considered an understatement. Consider for a moment what we expect this man to be and what we expect him to do. He must be "on call" 24 hours a day seven days a week (haven't we all commiserated with that poor M.D. who has such rotten hours and such a horrible work schedule?). We expect him, furthermore, to be our psychologist, our confidant, and our friend. We expect him to be a junior accountant, a financier, at times a janitor, and at times an innkeeper. He must be a model in his walk, he must raise a model family. All eyes are upon him and his family and his decisions tend to have congregational impact. How many of us have not heard the familiar statement, "If the domine's kids can do it, I guess you can, too."

But, you say, this is the way it must be and maybe he himself wants it this way. Maybe, as a minister he does not want to give up any of the things that constitute his job. Perhaps.

I think that you will agree, however, that the life of a minister is most difficult. I am close enough to it to support that fact. What I wish to bring to you is that we, as his parishioners, had better not unnecessarily add to his difficult labor. We ought, rather, to seek to make him and his family just as comfortable and at ease as we possibly can.

A few suggestions as to how we might accomplish this might be in order.

We ought first to see that he does not have any financial worries. He and his family ought to be well-provided for. As someone once put it to me, "We ought not think that we can live in palaces and that the minister can live in a pig sty." The minister should not have to sit in his study and worry about his family budget.

We ought to see further that he and his family are made to feel "at home" in our

congregation. Socially at home. We ought to invite them to our homes and share our lives with them. We ought to take the initiative here. A minister's life is lonely enough; he should not have to crack the social ice.

But, far more important than seeing that the minister is financially solvent and socially comfortable is our obligation to exhibit a genuine appreciation for the minister as a man, for his work, and for his office. He comes, after all, to serve us. He comes to us as a pastor, as a shepherd of us, the sheep. God has chosen him to feed us. He it is that brings us nourishment for our souls. We cannot do without him. Romans 10 testifies to that fact. His work is vital and necessary to our spiritual well-being. Appreciation and love ought to flow from us. We ought not let the fact that he is indeed a mere man detract from this appreciation. At times, we can be very critical of the man, of his personality and demeanor. You have probably heard of the cook book entitled 1001 Ways to Fix Hamburg; I get the feeling sometimes that we are trying to write one of our own which might bear the title of 1001 Ways to Serve the Preacher. This should not be our attitude. Rather, we should thank God for what he does for us through this man, the preacher.

Appreciation, however, of the minister's office and his work is not enough. We must also respect him and his office. We ought not make light of him or of what he says. Why is this so? He comes to us by divine appointment and with the authority of Jesus Christ. Now, I am not advocating that we must bow humbly before the human presence of a minister. What I am saying, however, is that we ought to treat him with honor and respect. He comes to us as an ambassador of Jesus Christ. To make fun of a minister, to speak to him in a way that is in any bit disrespectful is serious. Too often, I am afraid, the commentary reads the other way. How about it? How do you talk to him? How do you

talk about him? How do you behave for him? Do you receive him as one who has been divinely appointed and divinely vested with the authority of Christ?

The sum of the matter is this: God has graciously provided us with hard-working,

dedicated ministers of the gospel. They have been divinely called, divinely equipped, and divinely sent. Receive them as such. And, by all means, thank God for them. J.H.



# FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. LUBBERS

“. . . by the whole of our conduct . . .”\*

Sometimes one meets either personally or by letter young people who suddenly become very serious in their outlook upon life as a young Christian and feel that theirs is the calling to be “Witnesses for Christ.” And whereas we all have a streak of Arminianism in our flesh, and, furthermore, the Arminian appeal that all be “Witnesses” has the semblance of being based upon solid Scriptural considerations and to be a true spiritual-psychological manifestation of the new life in Christ. Nevertheless this type of witnessing for Christ is not a manifestation of giving ear to sound words of doctrine and life. It is really very seriously wrong and mistaken, and hurtful for the young Christian, and

must sooner or later lead to disillusionment and a deep sense of failure!

In the first place, youthful reader, bear in mind that Christ told his apostles on Mount Olivet that *they* were to be His witnesses. These were men whom Jesus had elected for this very purpose. They are witnesses of Christ in a special and unique sense. They were eyewitnesses of Christ's ministry for three years of all the wonders and miracles which he wrought; yes, they were eye-witnesses of his institution of the Lord's Supper, and they beheld the agony of Gethsemane from a stone's throw, and had experienced the awful night of the Lord's being taken captive of men, the unjust trial before Caiaphas and before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. And when Christ was nailed to the accursed tree they stood and beheld it, and were in

\*Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 32, Question 86.

great sorrow and gloom for three days till the Lord came forth triumphantly from the grave. And after forty days, when they had received commandments through the Holy Spirit they see their Lord ascend up on high in glory upon a cloud of majesty. And these men are to be Christ's witnesses in the world. Are all apostles? (1 Cor. 12: 29). Hath not God set in the church some to be office-bearers? Writes Paul in 1 Corinthians 12:28: "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers. . . ." And we ask: are all "witnesses"? To ask this question is to answer it!!

In the second place, no one besides the Apostles could possibly be "My witnesses" in our day and age. We did not see Christ labor, suffer and die. We cannot and may not be such witnesses. We have the written Scriptures which must be preached in our midst by ministers called for that very purpose. Writes Paul: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Romans 10:15; Isaiah 52:7). But even ministers are not witnesses as were the apostles. They are preachers of the gospel and preach that which the apostles witnessed and that which Christ has spoken to the church in the Word and Spirit. And this is very important to maintain with might and main!! How much of our discussion in the Young People's Society is not a re-echoing of what we heard from the ministry of the Catechism room and the preaching from the pulpit on Sunday, year after year? But when this is made suspect; when the preaching is belittled and we need to have "discussion groups" to take its place, (even on a Young People's Convention?) then Satan has had his day. Then we come together not for better but for worse!!

In the third place, there is a form of witnessing which is much more profound, spiritual and lasting—lasting even within the portals of heaven itself. It is that "our whole conduct we testify of our gratitude to God for His blessings"! This is really that we walk practically in a reasonable service of presenting our whole life on the altar of dedication, approving what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God! This is not a shallow, cheap "witnessing for Christ,"

but it is the sanctification of the whole man, body and soul.

This means, fourthly, that one has a spiritual and basic understanding of three things which one must know to enjoy the only comfort in life and in death, to wit, that we are not our own but belong to our faithful Savior, Jesus Christ. We know then that since we have been redeemed (delivered) from our misery, merely of grace, through Christ, without any merit of ours, we must do good works! Are we not God's creation in Christ Jesus unto good works which God before prepared that we should walk in them? (Ephesians 2:10). And this calls to testifying by the whole of our conduct that we are such a new creation, belonging to the one new man in Christ (Ephesians 2:15).

Yes, then there will be a mighty testimony of the Lord in our confession and walk; yes in that very order: confession and walk!! It will be such a walk that the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are children of God. We have assurance of faith by the fruits of faith. A tree is known by its fruit. And such "much fruit" is only when we abide in Christ (John 15:5). Yes, that is then the testimony in our own life and thus we make our calling and election sure, young people. Not by all kinds of philosophical discussions, and by psychological analysis, and mutually relating of life's experiences do we gain the certainty of being God's elect. Nay this is only ours when we add to faith virtue, etc. (II Peter 2:8-10).

Yes, such a life is a testimony to the power of the preaching of the Word, by which God works faith in our hearts. We will then be in our very life the proof of the ministry which by God's Spirit is effectual in us. Writes Paul to the Corinthian church: "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart" (chapter 2:3). Yes, the conversion of the Corinthians was the work of Christ, effected by the ministry of Paul. "Considered as a letter, they were a letter of Christ written by the hand of Paul as Christ's instrument" (Dr. Hodge).

When such a letter is read of those who

are not yet believers it must be a powerful testimony of God's grace. And even those who believe are greatly won to Christ, more and more in their affections.

Young people let your whole conduct testify to the grace of God in the keeping

of His commandments, and in a life of prayer. That is the battle of constant conversion, the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new man in Christ.

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## FEATURE

### REACH OUT

GARY BOUWKAMP

I would like to present a few thoughts concerning a quote from a recent issue of the BEACON LIGHTS. The statement is taken from the section "News from, for, and about our churches." Although it was entered in this section only as a fill-in because of news shortage, I feel quite strongly that this quotation deserves much more attention from us as children of God. "The more you try to keep of yourself the less there is to keep. The more you give yourself away the more there is to give. To live the abundant life you must die to yourself, be alive to Christ, and share with others. If we live this way we are born to eternal life."

Although the preceding statement may well apply in the many situations we may find ourselves, more often the opportunity for sharing, or giving a few moments of our time out of love and concern for others, can be found when in the presence of fellow Christians.

How often don't we simply look the other way or pretend not to notice when a friend is confused or down and out, or simply finds making friends a hard thing to do. In most cases, these young people move off by themselves; they don't mix readily in groups and in activities, but instead withdraw into a world that seldom generates a smile on their lips or a sparkle in their eyes. Their world is not one of enthusiasm and excitement, but instead, their failure to communicate and express themselves forces a withdrawal. A barrier builds up and soon they live in emptiness, a void where there is no sharing of thoughts and experiences.

Can we look at these people and cast the blame on them? Is it their lack of being

sociable that creates the problem? The answer is a very definite No. Certainly their being unsociable does not encourage us who easily make friends to include them in our circle of friends. This is very evident in our schools and young people's activities where cliques form between close friends. As a result, this creates an even greater problem for those who need friends, but find making friends a difficult thing to do.

What is holding us back? Why do we continue to neglect these individuals?

There are many opportunities in our sphere of life as Christians, especially as young people, where even a smile or just a few words would help to erase someone's feeling of being left out.

Don't stop here; pull yourself away from the crowd. Try to avoid forming cliques where just a few individuals become so involved in themselves that they lose the whole idea of what sharing really is.

Take a bigger step, start showing more than just a passive interest in their feelings and thoughts. Encourage them to talk and relate their feelings. Become involved in trying to generate a feeling of friendship.

Isn't it a shame that so many of us never take the time to do our part to make life a little easier, or the day a bit brighter for someone who needs encouragement. Too often we are too busy or indifferent to share a part of ourselves with someone who really needs a friend.

Many opportunities to overcome this are present at retreats, conventions, society parties, etc. In fact, never have we as Christians been in contact with each other as much as we are now.

Reach out; take someone's hand.

# CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

## Religion in Rock

KATHY BYLSMA

At the time of the writing of this article, religion has found its way into much of our modern-day music. Such songs as "My Sweet Lord," "Amazing Grace," "Put Your Hand in the Hand," and the controversial rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* have become very popular and some have even become best sellers. Why do these songs, which are so different from the popular drug and sex orientated songs, have such an appeal to today's youth? Also, what is the motive of the artists in producing such songs?

To help answer these questions I decided to take one of these works separately and study it, trying as I progressed to understand exactly what the artist was saying. The work I chose was *Jesus Christ Superstar*, a rock opera written by two Englishmen, Lloyd Weber and Tim Rice. The opera is said to portray Christ's final days on earth in contemporary language and music.

To understand the meaning of the opera, its content must first be studied. The opera opens with Judas Iscariot speaking of his feelings toward Christ. He states that when he first met Jesus he had a great admiration for him and looked up to him as a great man. But now it was bothering Judas that Jesus had fooled the people by claiming to be the promised Messiah and causing large crowds to follow him. Judas was afraid that the Romans would see this, interpret it as an uprising, and come down and crush them. This fear was also found in the conversation of Annas, Caiaphas, and a priest:

*Annas:*

'What then to do about Jesus of Nazareth Miracle wonderman, hero of fools?'

*Priest:*

'No riots, no army, no fighting, no slogans'

*Caiaphas:*

'One thing I'll say for him - Jesus is cool.'

*Annas:*

'We dare not leave him to his own devices His half-witted fans will get out of control.'

*Priest:*

By leaps every minute - he's top of the poll."

*Caiaphas:*

'I see bad things arising - the crowd crown him king

Which the Romans would ban.

I see blood and destruction, our elimination

Because of one man . . . For the sake of the nation

This Jesus must die.'"

Jesus tries to explain to his disciples his purpose for coming to them but they are shown in the opera to be stupid and confused men. Mary Magdalene, portrayed as a prostitute, begins to realize that there is something different about Jesus and his message to the people but still looks at him as being "just a man." All Judas understands is that he must be rid of Jesus and save Israel from possible destruction, therefore he goes and bargains with the Pharisees to betray Jesus. The last passover supper Jesus had with his disciples is lightly touched upon with the familiar words of the Lord's Supper changed in this way:

"The end . . .

Is just a little harder when brought about by friends.

For all you care this wine could be my blood

For all you care this bread could be my body

If you would remember me when you eat and drink . . .

I must be mad thinking I'll be remembered - yes

I must be out of my head!

Look at your blank faces. My name will mean nothing

Ten minutes after I'm dead!"

A larger section follows that is devoted to the feeling of agony and doubt Jesus felt in the garden of Gethsemane and the betraying kiss of Judas. After Judas betrayed

Jesus, he slowly went mad and accused God of using him to accomplish his purpose. Just before Judas killed himself he screamed out to God, "YOU have murdered ME."

Jesus is sent to Annas and later to Caiaphas, who questions him about his statement of being the Christ. During this time Peter denies Jesus three times. Caiaphas does not know what to do with Jesus so he sends him to Pilate. Pilate finally washes his hands of the whole matter and decides not to stand in the way of a "misguided martyr." The doubt and frustration Jesus supposedly experienced is found in these words of his:

"I have got no kingdom in this world —  
I'm thru, thru, thru  
There may be a kingdom somewhere  
— if I only knew."

The final scene is of Jesus crying out on the cross and giving up the ghost. The opera ends with beautiful soft music which I took to portray the rising of Christ's spirit into heaven, but which actually was a funeral dirge.

After studying this opera, I was confused and did not know what to think. I had to admit that it did sound blasphemous and seemed to make our Lord no more than a frustrated man who died for his beliefs. This very fact was reflected in the title, Jesus Christ *SUPERSTAR*. But I wanted to give Weber and Rice a chance. I couldn't accept the fact that they could be mocking Christ as the opera seemed to indicate. Instead, I said that they were representatives of some of the young people who today are trying to determine a purpose for their existence in a world so filled with evil. I made the mistake of reading my own beliefs into the words of the opera instead of letting it just speak for itself.

Then one night I read Isaiah 5 and came across God's words in verse 20, "Woe unto them that call evil good." Was this God talking to me concerning *Jesus Christ Superstar*? My answer came that same week. I received a copy from my minister of a news bulletin of the Association of Christian Reformed Laymen. In it was a quotation from the *Chicago Tribune*, November 21, 1970, which quoted Tim Rice, the author of the lyrics of the opera, as saying, "We ourselves don't believe Christ was God but a fascinating man with colossal influence for

2,000 years. The story of Christ as a man is more interesting than Christ as God." All that time I had been trying to justify two men who did not even believe that *Christ is God!*

I believe now that we should condemn *Jesus Christ Superstar* for what it is, utter blasphemy against the name of our God. Let us pray to God that He may give us strength and faith that we may not be deceived and led astray by such anti-christian ideas. Remember Paul's words in Galatians 6:7, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

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## ADVANCE NOTICE

*The BEACON LIGHTS Staff is planning a Literary Contest. The due date will be sometime in late 1971. Exact due date, categories, age groups, rules, and other details will be printed later. Start thinking about it.*

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## BIBLE QUIZ

### WHAT'S WHAT IN THE PSALMS?\*

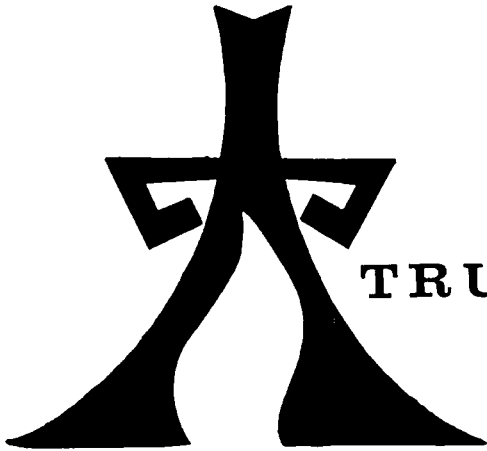
1. A good man, the Psalms tell us, is "like a tree planted by the rivers of water. . . . The ungodly are not so but are like . . ." What ?
2. "Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be . . ."
3. "Thy rod and thy staff . . ." Do what?
4. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen . . ."
5. "Thou crownest the year with . . ."
6. "So teach us to number our days that we may . . ."
7. "As for man, his days are as . . ."
8. "I said in my haste . . ."
9. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is . . ."
10. "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to . . ."

[Answers on page 12]

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\*Taken from *The Bible Quiz Book* (p. 41) by Frederick Hall, and reprinted by permission of Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich.





## TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBT. C. HARBACH

### **Christian Meets Agape**

Her name is Agape (pronounced ahGAH-pay). Christian visited her in her lovely condominium complex apartment at House Beautiful. A rare and beautiful woman, she lives up to her name, and is not to be confused with the voluptuous Eros. The latter does not belong in her book and is nowhere to be found there. According to Plato's book, *Symposium*, Eros is the offspring of Generation, and is goddess of Catamites and Sodomites, slaves and heads of State. But these two, Agape and Eros, are unrelated and total strangers to one another. Before she was born, Agape's Father, in settling upon a suitable name for his child, looked through the book given by the Lord of the House and found that that name is purely of that book and that house, and although at one time appeared in the form *Charity*, as to its origin is found nowhere outside of that book or that house. It is a lovely name, "born within the bosom of revealed religion . . . but there is no trace of it in any heathen writer whatever." The word makes its first appearance in a divine Song of Love written by Agape's ancestral father, Shelomoh, and translated by Alexandrians who had exactly the right idea of the *love* in this Song.

She asks him, "Have you a family? Are you a married man?" Christian is a pilgrim. He's no dreamy idealist, nor self-inflated individualist, no religious gad-about, nor fugitive from house and home. His pil-

grimage, so far from home, he makes, all the while, at home. His journey is accomplished while hammering at his forge throughout the heat of the day, or while sitting under his own vine and fig tree of a summer's evening. His path is in the line of the covenant, in the line of generations, within the family unit, and in harmony with family responsibilities. The first question made Christian feel himself an instance of a real miracle. For coming from the City of Destruction, he came from a birth and nativity, a family tree he no longer cares to remember. His father had been an Amorite, and his mother a Hittite. Also in that city he had been "educated" at the University of Eschropolis. Here Professor Prurient occupies the chair of Saint-Simonism. He introduced the Campus Clevers to a Campus Queen whom, he said, they should be delighted to know, was a Miss Social Science. Without her ideas, neither faculty, classes, sororities nor fraternities could boast their intellectual Brahmins and ivory-towered elite. From her, Campus Clevers soon came to learn that the world's problems have their cure in Socialism, and that Socialism's acute and chronic problem is the Adamic World. People are the problem. The trouble with people is the family. Get rid of the family, and people will evolve to Seraphic Level. The family is the source of the ills of the race. In fact, the family is an enemy to the survival of the race. As-

sociate Professor O. B. Scene, always in the company of the new Campus Oddity, parroted her line on and off campus. He succeeded, with not much effort, in convincing many of the Clevers that She was a product and invention of the university. But Christian knew her when she was a junior high school drop-out running around with a pack of Phrenologists and Spiritists. But she had been sneaked back into the university so incessantly, despite many ejections through the rear door and out the window, that now she was accepted as a permanent university mascot. With these thoughts running through his mind, Christian was joyfully reminded that he was now an adopted member of a great family, Prince Emanuel's, and had a family of his own. He was further reminded that a true pilgrim is concerned for the souls of others, especially for those of his own family.

"Yes, I have a wife and four children," he replied. "Then why did you not bring them along with you?" was Agape's next pressing question. "For you must know," she continued, "that it is a very poor testimony when one's own flesh and blood are not exhorted to know the truth, follow the Lord, and warned against eternal hell. To excuse this neglect on the basis of God's determining all things in His eternal decrees is absurd. No one uses such argument in earthly affairs. A man is diligent enough in earthly matters without thinking of whether he is ordained to success or failure. The real reason carnal men reject the gospel is because they can't stand being strangers and pilgrims in this world." To this Christian enthusiastically agreed, yet it made him weep, for he had to confess that all in his family "were utterly averse to going on pilgrimage." "But you should have endeavored to have shown them the danger of staying behind," Agape insisted. "So I did, but I seemed to them as one that mocked."

Christian was more like David than Lot. But his wife was more like Lot's wife, to begin with, than the Lydia she turned out to be. "But did you tell them of your sorrow and fear of destruction? For I suppose that destruction was visible enough to you!" "Yes, over, and over, and over. They might also see my fears in my countenance, in my tears, and also in my trembling under the

apprehension of the judgment that did hang over our heads." Then Christian related how he had warned them that the only cure for their sin-loving city was destruction by heaven-sent fires of judgment. His wife thought him, on this point, silly in the extreme. She often said, There are such great advantages living in the city. The place is so up-to-date, the people so modern, so full of life, so cultured. And we live so close to the center of the world's cultural institutions, the beautiful University of Eschropolis. Really, dear, I can't see why you, an alumnus, keep referring to the place as Orgiastica. The professors are so popular, so liberal. And our children need to grow up in an atmosphere ("miasma," said Christian under his breath) of refinement, with social opportunities and advantages for broadening the mind; where they can mix with people, lose their backwoods, old fashioned, strait-laced ways, move to Superbia, and settle down after finding socially acceptable mates. Old style living was fine for the Dark Ages, when our forefathers were serfs and had to dress like gypsies. But why must we? We belong to a younger generation. We must live where we can study the latest fashions, move with the latest trends. Then, too, what's wrong with our young people and their friends having a nice party and a dance once in a while? They can better enjoy such things openly here than to go running off on the sly to Aphroditopolis. So his wife used to argue, to turn him to her way of thinking. It's like being dead, being sheltered from life, she'd say. To which her husband would quietly reply, "The love of the world is death."

"So," Christian went on, "my family went not on pilgrimage with me because my wife was afraid of losing this world, and my children were given to the foolish delights of youth." Marriage ties and blood-ties are no guarantee of grace. It is possible to be wife of a saint, yet a daughter of Belial. Or to be a child of a prophet, yet come under the curse of the prophet's God. What brought this household so close to ruin was not as Campus Queen Miss Social Science said was "its narrow privacy and tawdry secrets, its little inward look upon itself, intensifying emotional stress between husband and wife, so making the world unfit

for young people to live in," no, but it was the wife and mother who was at fault. Her heart was glued to this world. All her desires and delights were in it. It's a good thing her comfort was not in it (she could find comfort nowhere on earth), or her all and herself would have been consumed in the judgment which fell upon the City of Destruction.

Great care I've taken, Christian continued, to point my children to godly examples. Job's ten children in their houses feasted together, each one in turn entertaining the others. This revealed a spirit of unity, and that they preferred one another's company. Their festivities were in their own houses, with their own families, never in places of suspicious reputation. Such places, especially today, threaten the safety of body and mind, as well as soul. I can, no more than Job did, forbid my children these earthly enjoyments. For we may feast to the glory of God. In the days of Lot "they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they plianted, they built." These things in themselves are not wrong. Why, then, did the Lord rain fire and brimstone from heaven upon them and destroy them all? because they did these things without Him; they ignored God, and absolutely refused the warnings of judgment. Yet Job's children were not like those in the days of Lot. Job's children were godly, as his "it may be my sons have sinned" imply. They were obedient children, respectful of their father's concern for their spiritual welfare. They never accused him of being too strict with them, or of interfering with their lives. They never murmured against their parent's conducting of family worship. They willingly concurred with the sacrifices of prayer, confession, repentance, praise and thanksgiving offered by their father. Yet they all died in one day, the worst of Job's afflictions. Job was glad, then, that he had made those prayers and offered those sacrifices for his children, believing that they did not go for nothing.

A man called the Last of the Puritans said, "Lot," with his wife, "ought to have been more firm, more steadfast, more thorough. He had no business to have gone to Sodom. If he had said to his wife, 'No, my wife, we belong to a chosen people. God called us out of Haran, and away from

the gods of our fathers, that we might live a separated life, and here I am going to stop, and you must stop with me,' she would have had to obey, or even if she had not done so, Lot was not to do evil to please his wife. She could not have learned the ways of Sodom — she might have given her heart still to the world, but she could not have been so clearly mixed up with it, and her daughters could not have been so ill-moralled as they were, if he had resolved to live apart from the town's people. I believe that fathers and husbands ought to take the lead in the management of their families, and parents are bound to arrange their households after a godly fashion. . . . If Christian men leave their families to go anyhow they choose, they will soon find the Lord has a controversy with them; and if the children, and if the wife should after all perish, it will be a horrible thought for the head of the household, even if he be a saved man, that it was his ill example which caused their ruin. . . . Poor dear old Eli, he did not like to get into trouble with his sons by finding fault with them. But what did his softness cost him? The Lord smote his family because he had not ordered his household aright."

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The Federation Board thanks retiring staff members Karen Hoekstra as Out-of-town subscription manager, Bern Wigger as Managing editor, and Jim Lanting as Assistant to the managing editor. May they heed the words of Paul in his epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 6:10: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." We also welcome to the staff Eunice Hoeksema as Out-of-town subscription manager and member of the Public Relations staff, as well as Jan Lubbers, Nona Miersma, and Larry Looyenga, also members of the Public Relations Staff. Let us work together in the confidence that "forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. 15:58.

THE FEDERATION BOARD

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# CRITIQUE

SUE TERPSTRA

## BLESSED PEACEMAKERS

There has seldom in our world been as much concern for peace as there is today. Most of this concern may be traced to wars and rumors of war, racism and rioting, which are increasing daily. Many people have taken it upon themselves to find an answer to this problem of hostility between nations and peoples. Their goal is to establish peace between the citizens of this entire planet and teach a love for others to all in this world.

Many thousands of people have been engulfed by this huge wave of peace seekers. And as more and more peoples join the peace movement, more and more of those from the Church are being swept along in subtle current. Various arguments and excuses are formulated by them to explain the position which they have taken upon themselves along with many of those known as anti-religious peacemakers.

One of the arguments these Christians use is a supposed proof from Scripture that Christ encouraged and advocated the efforts of peacemakers. They quote as this "proof" Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the Children of God." Thus, they compare themselves to the peacemakers whom Christ has called blessed.

But they are sadly mistaken in using this text to prove that their job as peacemakers is in the right. Why would the same God who determines the wars and rumors of war that come into being, encourage His people to rebel against His Will?

God does not ever contradict Himself, nor does He need the advice of men to help Him see the effect war has on the world. He has in His Eternal Will determined all that must happen before His kingdom can come. All the efforts of peacemakers, then,

have no effect upon God's unchangeable counsel, for as He has revealed in Isaiah 45:7, "I make peace and create evil."

Who then, are those peacemakers called blessed by Christ? The answer is not found in those who are trying to make peace in the world, but in those who are directing their thoughts from the turmoil of the world to the gathering of the Church from out of this turmoil.

Blessed peacemakers are those who are contributing to the peace of God's people. They are those who are found teaching the peace of God, and that peace is "the peace that passeth all understanding" (Phil. 4:7). They are those who live peaceably among their brothers and sisters in Christ, following Christ's command. They are the ones who teach the same love they show to others.

Blessed peacemakers are seldom given the praise and recognition that the peacemakers of the world are given. But they do not seek world recognition either. Their reward is far greater than a Nobel Peace Prize or other awards of an earthly origin. Their reward is seeing that by the grace of God, in their work, they have sown seed for fruits of righteousness. "And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace" (James 3:18).

And herein also is the Father glorified, when our work as blessed peacemakers is accomplished (John 15:8).



# NEWS

## from, for, and about our churches

KAREN LUBBERS

### From Loveland, Colorado:

Robin West made public confession of faith and received Holy Baptism.

Mr. and Mrs. R. Brinsma were received from the South Holland Church.

On Good Friday, the church held a special communion service. Also, it was decided that the congregation would recite the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed with the minister when the communion form is read.

On April 8 the students in grades 5-8 of the Loveland Chr. School sponsored a public talent show in the church auditorium.

The Young People's Society sponsored an Easter Singspiration on Sunday, April 11.

### From Hull, Iowa:

Here is an interesting topic found in Hull's bulletin. At a Ladies' League meeting Rev. Kortering gave a speech on "The Wonderful Gift of Memory." It was followed by a question hour.

### From Hudsonville, Michigan:

A grocery shower was sponsored in the church basement for Mr. and Mrs. Ron Van Overloop and Mr. and Mrs. Marv Kamps. Mr. Van Overloop and Mr. Kamps are in the seminary and were former members of the Hudsonville Church.

The Hudsonville Choral Society sponsored a program on Easter. John Peterson's Cantata "No Greater Love" was presented by the choir and the program was sponsored by the BEACON LIGHTS.

On April 27 a farewell program was held in the church for Rev. Veldman who has accepted the call to the Southwest Church in Grand Rapids. Each of the societies presented a number to make an enjoyable evening.

### From Hope, Walker, Michigan:

The Hope Heralds of this church received a note of appreciation from Rev. Lubbers for the 72 Psalters they sent to him. They were needed very badly.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. John Hoekstra in the birth of a boy and to Mr. and Mrs. Jim Huizinga in the birth of a girl.

It was decided to change the doxology at the end of the service from Psalter No. 196 to "May the Grace of Christ Our Savior."

The Hope Choral Society presented an Easter program in their church.

### From First in Grand Rapids:

The Young People's Societies sponsored a car wash on Saturday, April 24 at the Adams St. School.

### Miscellaneous News:

The Federation Board sponsored a hayride in April for all the Grand Rapids area young people. It was held at the Chapel of the Pines in Hudsonville. Refreshments were provided after an exciting ride!

The students of the Hope Chr. School presented an All-School Program on April 2 in the First Church of Grand Rapids. It was centered around the theme, "Our Catholic, Undoubted Christian Faith."

Rev. Van Baren presented a lecture on April 22 in the First Church on the topic "Ted and Alice and Groppi and . . . Grace." It was a consideration of the open embrace of the world by many in the church and an explanation of this fact. A terrific crowd turned out for this lecture; in fact, the entire auditorium was filled!

On May 7 and 8 the Federation Board sponsored a discussion seminar at Camp Manitou-Lin.

Just one final reminder. Have you written any servicemen yet this month??

## ANSWERS

### What's What In The Psalms?

1. "... the chaff which the wind driveth away." Psalm 1.
2. "... acceptable in thy sight O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." Psalm 19:14.
3. "... they comfort me." Psalm 23.
4. "... the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Psalm 37:25.
5. "... thy goodness." Psalm 65:11.
6. "... apply our hearts unto wisdom." Psalm 90:12.
7. "... as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth." Psalm 103:15.
8. "... all men are liars." Psalm 116:11.
9. "... "the death of his saints." Psalm 116:15.
10. "... dwell together in unity." Psalm 133:1.

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