Credibility Gaps
Convention Speeches
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:
Editorial

CREDIBILITY GAPS

The term “credibility gap” is frequently used in the sphere of the federal government. In all likelihood, it originated here. In government, public officials often say they are going to do many important things but when all is said and done, they do very little, or the very opposite occurs. For example: The president may say that federal taxes will surely be lowered within a certain amount of time, but before long, you notice them increasing. When this happens, you have a credibility gap. You begin to doubt that the president will actually do what he says he will do. There is an obvious contradiction between what he says and what he does.

The term “credibility gap” is not limited only to governmental officials but can also be used in scrutinizing the life of a church and individuals within a church. It is in this sense that I speak of Credibility Gaps.

We, as Protestant Reformed people, have a favorite expression that doctrine and practice are one. If I were to posit the idea that what we need in our churches is a little more practical preaching, I am quite sure that better than half the members of our churches would object and tell me we cannot divide the preaching into doctrinal and practical preaching because they are one. But it’s exactly at this point that we have a “credibility gap.” Not because the statement is false, but because we as individuals often do things, and say things which contradict the doctrines in which we believe.

In Old Testament history it was certainly true that doctrine and practice could not be separated. This is obvious when one studies the life of an Israelite. In his every day life he sacrificed to the Lord, he feasted to the Lord, he gave a tenth of all he grew to the Lord along with the first fruits of his crops. And yet often throughout their history “credibility gaps” appear. They claim to love the Lord, they sacrifice to the Lord but we read often in the prophets that God despised their sacrifices because they were disobedient, because along with their Jehovah worship they worshiped all the heathen idols of the nations around them. At times the conditions were so bad that the heathen nations could very easily have considered Israel no different than themselves. They were commanded to trust in the Lord but instead they gathered large armies with many horses and chariots in the belief that they would win in their own strength.

In the New Testament, the apostle James concerns himself with “credibility gaps” within the early Christian church. He angrily condemns the early Christians for honoring persons in goodly apparel and being partial to those that are poorly dressed. God, says James, chose the poor of this world who were rich in faith but you, the brethren, despised these poor and respect the rich. So also he bitterly denounces those in the church who do not give to those that are needy, destitute and naked.

His battle cry against these and other conditions within the church is a resounding “faith without works is dead.” Faith and works are one. You cannot have one without the other. So also doctrine without practice is a dead doctrine. The two go hand in hand. And yet in the lives of the people of God there is often a very obvious, apparent separation between the two. So much so, that outsiders are often inclined to disbelieve our Christianity. As James says “brethren, these things ought not so to be.”

As we carefully examine our doctrine and walk together we are sure to find many conflicts and outright contradictions. The “credibility gaps” in our lives are varied and many. Some of these that follow will apply to all of us. Some that you may discover in your own lives may not be included. It is possible that you may think that there are no “credibility gaps” in your life; in that case you should question your honesty in evaluating your life.

Scripture repeatedly tells us to trust in the Lord. This trust is a leaning on, or heavy reliance on the Lord. The Psalms are full of such expressions as “I have trusted in thy mercy . . .; Our fathers trusted in thee . . . ; O God, I trust in thee . . .; I
trusted in thee, O Lord . . .; Trust in the Lord and do thou good . . .; Blessed are they that put their trust in thee . . .". Over and over again the Word of God tells us to trust in the Lord. We sing of this in our Sunday services. We hear it proclaimed to us from the pulpit. Yet, are we paying attention to what is being preached and what we are singing? Or are we busy thinking about our growing savings accounts, the expected pension we'll receive when we retire, the insurance policy to be used in time of emergency. Often these things become thorns in our sides. They give us a false trust and a false sense of security.

When we claim to trust in the Lord but secretely perhaps, are filling barns with the goods of this world, is there not a very real "credibility gap"? God is not mocked. We may be able to hide our inner goals, desires, and our underlying trust from each other but never from God. I think a lot of us would feel much more comfortable if Scripture had said, "Trust mightily in your savings account and in your insurance policy."

Paul, in Romans 12, exhorts the believers to be transformed by the renewing of your mind and not to be conformed to the world. John, in John 1:15, commands "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him." Christ, in His sermon on the mount proclaims, "No man can serve two masters . . .". Repeatedly God's Word directs us away from the world and its pleasures. Yet, we in our foolish unconcern for things spiritual, think we can have both the material things of this world and the spiritual joys of God's kingdom. We try to look like the world by wearing their suggestive styles. We seek to be entertained by the world and its godless people. We do this not only in attending the theater but also in becoming emotionally involved in the growing sports craze that has spread throughout our country. Our ministers preach the antithesis and we go home, flip on our television sets and watch our favorite baseball team or football team in action. The old slogan "actions speak louder than words" condemns us and shows our hypocrisy.

In Psalm 101:5 we read, "whoso privily slandereth his neighbor, him will I cut off . . .". One of the seven abominations that the Lord hates is "he that soweth discord among the brethren." We believe that the Lord loves us, His people, and we say that because He loves us we love Him and also our fellow believers. However, if what we say is true, why does gossip, backbiting, and evil talk about others rampanty spread almost unchecked throughout our various congregations? This certainly is not Scripture's idea of loving the brethren. Are we not listening when the minister preaches on the ninth commandment? Or are we too busy trying to determine who the minister might have in mind that we fail to apply God's Word to ourselves.

When is the last time you went to visit someone who was in trouble, someone who was burdened with an overwhelming load? When was the last time you visited the sick or the bereaved to comfort them with God's Word? How often in the past year have you shown your concern for someone else's problems? We believe that we are one in the Lord, brothers and sisters in Christ; and yet when one of these brethren experiences difficulties almost too overwhelming to bear, he is almost certain to feel deserted by his own at the very time he needs them most. We find that we are too busy to bother or we'll do it tomorrow but, of course, tomorrow is even busier. And so it goes.

Our churches have organized many societies in order to help us study and discuss the Word of God. Would to God that Paul could say of all of us what he said of the Bereans, "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Our Lord also exhorts us to "search the scriptures: for in them ye think, ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me." Our societies help us search the scriptures and yet what a small percentage of us are faithful members. Our societies should swell with one hundred percent attendance but in many cases the very opposite is true; hardly enough members to keep meeting week after week. And parents, don't expect
your children to go to Young People's Society if you do not attend adult societies. You do not even have a right to insist that they go to societies until you yourself become a faithful member. The same applies to reading our periodicals.

Often the Lord blesses us with special events during the week. To be able to attend a lecture by one of our capable ministers; a graduation program of one of our schools; a pre-synodical sermon; an inspirational meeting; or a Theological School Convocation exercise are blessings the Lord has given to strengthen us spiritually. And yet so often such special occasions are so poorly attended that those who sponsor such activities begin to doubt (there is that credibility gap) the spiritual strength of our people.

I am going to quote from a letter I received a while back. This person speaks about our Theological School Convocation exercise. "Prof. Hoeksema spoke on Psalm 119:162, 'I rejoice at thy Word, as one that findeth great spoil.' I am sure the speech was inspiring for the young men who are beginning another year of study. Attendance was very poor. One wonders if our seminary is appreciated. Are not our people filled with joy that seven young men are studying and preparing for the ministry in our churches? Don't our people know that there is not another seminary in all the world like the P.R. Seminary? That it really is the last bastion of the 'Reformed Truth'? Do not our people realize how merciful and gracious God really is to them? If things were right then our auditorium would have been much too small and the faculty and student body would have gotten a send-off which they and all in attendance would never forget. We thank the Lord for our seminary; it fills us with joy; but the apathy and lukewarmness (if one can even call it that) of our people makes us mourn." Our unconcern in regard to matters as important as these should be one of great concern for each of us.

And now Young People, I commend you when you invite your boyfriend or girlfriend of another faith to worship with you in one of our churches. But, please don't spoil it all, as I have seen done with my own eyes; by whispering, joking, laughing, or sleeping during the service. Your actions have one and only one result. Your date or steady will begin to disbelieve your sincerity. They will think if the preaching in your church means no more to you than that, why not come along with me to my church. Why do you make such a big fuss about which church you go to? Again, actions speak louder than words.

Why do we worry when scripture states "take no thought for tomorrow." Why are our congregational meetings so poorly attended when we have important business from the Lord to deal with? Why are we tempted to cheat on our income tax returns? Why are we prone to tell little discreet lies to pull us out of something we would rather not do?

In the Church of God and in the life of each individual believer these "credibility gaps" ought not so to be. We should use every effort we can muster to overcome them and destroy them. You have faith; then show it by your works. If you have a living and abiding faith you will witness of it in your walk. John Kalbheek

A sincere thanks is rendered to the South Holland Young People's Society for laboring hard and long to make the 1971 Convention not only entertaining and enjoyable, but most important of all, spiritually enriching. We speak for all the young people when we say from our hearts, "It was good for us to have been there."

Sincerely,

The Federation Board
Carol Dykstra, Secy.

We are sorry to announce that we have not received the post-convention review article which usually accompanies the convention pictures. (ed.)
CONVENTION SPEECHES

As in the past we of the BEACON LIGHTS Staff and the Federation Board wish to share with our general reading audience the speeches prepared for the 1971 P.R. Y.P. convention.

The Mark of a Disciple

REV. J. KORTERING

Text: John 13:34, 35, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another: as I have loved you, that ye also love one another, by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."

Discipleship is crucial in our day. True it is that the NOW generation is caught up in the fantasy of individualism. Young people pride themselves in doing their own thing. It would seem as if we live in the day of many teachers, but few pupils. Yet, it is a fantasy. A cartoon I saw not so long ago illustrates this point. It pictured a long haired, ribboned, tattered fellow sitting with his guitar by the side of the road. He had a sign around his neck, "I’m doing my own thing.” The photographer who took this picture used a wide-angle lens, for as far as you could see in the distance, the road was lined with fellows, dressed exactly as the one in the foreground, each bearing a sign proclaiming, “I’m doing my own thing.” It is not a question whether we are disciples, rather it is a question, whose disciples are we!

You young people are surrounded with a cacophony of confusion, many masters want you to sit at their feet. On the one hand you have the worshippers of satan who blatantly mock all things that are holy and gladly follow the devil. You have the Jesus movement which is even more deadly, for they appear to give recognition to Christ, but deny Him as Savior and Lord. In between you have every form of belief and morality. Yet, in the midst of this confusion, we hear the clarion call of the Word of God, “By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” In truth, the mark of a disciple must be easily distinguished and it is observed by the way you young people love each other.

Christ tells us in our text that his disciples are those who learn to love. Before we can appreciate this in any detail, we should remind ourselves just what a disciple is. Undoubtedly, we think immediately of the disciples of Christ, they were 12 in number and sat at the feet of Christ for some 3 years. They asked Christ questions and He taught them many truths. From this, as well as from the word used in our text, we may conclude that a disciple is a pupil, a learner, one who has not graduated from school, but is in the process of learning. Bearing this in mind we can distinguish 6 elements: a teacher, a pupil, subject material, communication of this material by the teacher, assimilation of it by the pupil, and determination, that is the influence which this knowledge has upon the life of the pupil.

In our text Christ tells us emphatically, “Ye are my disciples.” This indicates that Christ Himself is the teacher. No wonder for He is the exalted Christ, who having gone through death and hell is now at the right hand of God. He has received of the Father all knowledge and truth not only, but also the Holy Spirit by Whom He is able to make all things known to us. Who are pupils? Not all men, for by nature not one of us will sit at His feet. Rather, all the children of God who are regenerated and possess the gift of faith. As born from above, we have the necessary interest in the things of heaven. The material which Christ teaches is the truth. This applies to the creation, science, history, and all things which God has made and done. The key to interpreting all this knowledge is the Word of God. In the center of all truth stands the infallible Scriptures. The class room wherein this knowledge is communicated is in the narrowest sense, the house of God. True it is that at such a time that a Christian school teacher presents the truth of Christ in the class room or parents in the homes, Christ is communicating this knowledge by the Holy Spirit. Yet, the
preaching of the Word is unique and distinct. Through the preaching and sacraments, Christ communicates His grace. By the grace of God we are enabled to assimilate this instruction. Faith is worked in us by the preaching of the Word and by faith we believe that which is true. In this way we are influenced in our lives, we believe and live according to His will.

Now, Christ tells us that as far as the material which He gives us as disciples is concerned, it may be summarized in this, Christ teaches us to love! “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.” We may well ask, why is it that the command to love constitutes the heart of Christ’s instruction to His disciples? Two things have to be considered in answer. First, when Christ teaches us to love He brings us to the chief end of our existence viz. to glorify God. The love of God is always first and precedes love for one another. This is made plain for us in Matt. 22:37-40. Without God’s love in us and our love to God in return, there can be no true love for one another. Divine love provides us with the necessary strength to love one another. In doing this we fulfill the purpose of our creation; we praise God. The second reason is that love makes it so easy for us to learn. Notice carefully, Christ does not simply teach us the academic subject of love, He teaches us to love. He actually provides us with the power to love. When this is present, we eagerly learn what Christ teaches us. We have a slight reflection of this when we go to school. It is easier for us to learn if we love the teacher and the subject. Then we have the necessary initiative and drive to work hard. How true this is for disciples of Jesus, when Christ teaches us to love Himself and through Himself to love God, we eagerly learn and assimilate the truth. Our relationship is one of love and that makes all the difference.

What is love? It is obvious that we have to answer this question by being faithful disciples of Christ and pause at His feet. What does our Master say? The import of this approach is forced upon us by the barrage of those around us who would teach us a wrong idea of love. The world of unbelievers have an idea of love, but it is wrong. Their love-ins fly under the banner of love. They have in mind a passionate embrace whereby they commit fornication; this they call love. The social activists unfurl their banners, “Make love not war,” and mean that we should care for the poor of the world, remove discrimination, enhance peace by social justice, but pay no attention to the heart of man which is sinful. Social justice without salvation from sin is not justice, it is simply a refined form of sin. The Jesus movement has its slogans, “SMILE, Jesus loves you,” or, “If you love Jesus, honk your horn.” All this superficial talk of love is a perversion, for a love of Jesus apart from the atonement is a denial of God Himself.

Love is rooted in God. According to 1 John 4:8, God is love. Since it is the will of God that His love be communicated to us, He accomplishes this through Jesus Christ. Christ died on the cross in order that He might take away the wrath of God against our sins and merit for us the love of God. Through the blood of Christ on the cross and the Holy Spirit’s work in the gospel, our sins are taken away and we are brought into fellowship with God. He sheds His love abroad in our hearts. It is this love that we share with one another. Christ tells us that His commandment is that we love one another and this love for one another marks us as His disciples. Notice carefully that this love which we must have for each other is not a different love from the love God has for us, rather it is the same love which God gives to us which we in turn share with one another.

How do we know this? Listen, “A new commandment I give unto you that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” The amazing phrase is this, “as I have loved you.” We are to love one another in the way that Christ loved us! This involves 4 things. First, Christ loves those who in themselves are not worthy objects of love. By nature we hate, we sin, we break God’s holy law. Yet, Christ loves us! This also applies to our love for one another. We certainly are not such nice people, not even in our youth, we sin so frequently, we hurt each other, we are not desirable in our selves. Secondly,
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Christ loves us in such a way that He makes us pleasing to God. Even though we are unworthy in ourselves, Christ's love is sanctifying, through His love He removes sin and cleanses us from evil. This must also characterize our love for one another, by loving one another, we must seek to make each other more holy in God's sight. Thirdly, Christ expresses this love through giving, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." This Christ has done for us as an act of perfect love. So too in our love for each other, we must give of ourselves for one another. True Christian love is giving not only of one's possessions, but of one's self. Finally, the love of Christ is persistent, we do not deserve it, sometimes we respond gratefully, sometimes we take it for granted, yet He continues to love us. Through riches and poverty, war and peace, through life and death Christ gently and lovingly leads us along unto our final glory. This too must be true of our love for one another. In all conditions and in all events, we are to love each other. We must persist in that love even when it is not received, even when we encounter enemies.

Christ presents this to us in the context of a commandment, "A new commandment give I unto you." This is a commandment not in the sense that Christ sits over us with a long whip forcing us to obey, rather, it is a commandment as the sphere of life. Just as fish need the water for life and birds need the air to survive, so we need love in order to abide in the covenant friendship with God. It is a new commandment, not as if it had never been known before, but in the Old Testament it was a commandment of letter, it led Israel to long for deliverance, but now it is written upon the portals of our heart, so that in the newness of spirit it is a way of liberty and freedom.

We should next observe that a disciple of Christ does not only learn to love, but he practices this love which he has learned. This is done in two ways, first we have to help one another in dealing with our sins. Love demands this of us. Secondly, love causes us to help one another do that which is good.

Concerning our sins, we should briefly notice that in order to deal with each other's sins, we have to first of all deal with our own sins. This is necessary if we are to be qualified, "Thou wilt behold the mote that is in thy brother's eye and not consider the beam in thy own eye, thou hypocrite," Matt. 7:3. We must first remove the beam in our own eye in order that we can see clearly to remove the sliver in our brother's eye. It stands to reason. We must learn that love demands the repentance of sin for ourselves first of all. We have sin and sin is a breach of love. We can never walk in sin and say that we did that in love to God. Love is expressed in obedience of God's law. When we sin, it acts as a barrier between God and us, we try to cover up and God seems so far away. Only when we get on our knees and plead with God for forgiveness and earnestly endeavor to flee from all sin, can we experience the removal of that barrier and fellowship in the love of God. If we are to love one another truly, we must flee from sin and thus be in a position to express this love to one another.

Having done this, we must next realize that we must not lead one another into sin. If we truly love one another, we will desire that sin be removed from one another. We realize that as sin is a barrier between God and us so it is a barrier between God and our brother and sister who sin. We desire that they also walk in righteousness and truth. This causes us to feel the horror of being responsible for leading someone into sin. Love will do its utmost to avoid such a thing.

And yet, isn't this what we do so often as young people. What about those times you sneak to the movies and share the fun by subterfuge with a younger brother or sister? You can't truly love each other in the family circle and be a bad example to each other. What about the times you sneered at the gal or fellow who studies diligently and gets good grades in school? You know what such mockery amounts to, you are challenging him to waste his time as you are and isn't that leading into sin? What about your dress, tight pants, short skirts, and hot-pants. You can't wear that kind of clothes and claim that your Master
Jesus Christ instructs you to wear them. If you wear them you have sat at the feet of the unbelieving world. They have a morality that advocates free-love and this includes the styles of clothes which they make popular. By wearing them you are identified with them and may lead others into sin. Sexy clothes produce lustful thoughts and deeds soon follow. You cannot love each other and do such things. Similarly for long hair, it isn't that long hair makes a worse Christian no more than short hair makes a better one, rather, it has to do with identification. Look among yourselves as young people, see the fellows with long hair, they are not telling us that they gladly sit at Jesus' feet, rather they sit at the feet of the world with its hippie movement, Jesus freaks, peace movement which taken together is anti-christian. A disciple must bear a mark. That mark is love; not as the world loves, but as Christ loves us. In all our appearance we must divorce ourselves from the world and reveal the love of Christ.

What do you do when you know another young person has done wrong? Do you show love to him? Then you won't joke about it and think sin is funny. Neither will you whisper about it and make him the butt of your gossip. Love demands that you talk to him or her and point out his or her sin and call them to repent. Our love must be sanctifying! Do you do that? This is the mark of a disciple of Christ.

Still more, a disciple of Christ promotes good in the lives of those around him. To do this we must be good pupils and listen intently to our Master. How can we promote good if we do not know what is good? We must be ardent students of the Scriptures, be steeped in the doctrines of the Word of God and enthusiastic about the great truths of redemption and grace. We won't say, I hate doctrinal sermons; we will love them for they form the basis of our morality. We will grow in the conviction of the truth and thus be able to conform our lives and those of others to the will of God revealed in the Bible.

How? Begin at home: obey your parents, respect them, show them love by doing what they require of you and appreciate their efforts to guide you in the right way. Encourage each other in school, admire the best gifts and seek to create a truly Christian atmosphere in school. Use your spare time profitably, if you sit by the TV and radio, filling your soul with rock music and jazz and musing upon the comedy programs that present life as a playground instead of a battleground, you are not revealing love to God and will not be able to love each other. Engage in physical exercise; it's important for a healthy body influences a healthy mind. Read good books, enjoy Christian music, keep abreast of our times in the light of God's Word, develop your skills at music and different hobbies, all this reaps fruit unto godliness. Let your whole life be a witness in word and deed.

Finally, a disciple of Christ will not only practice the love he has learned, he will be distinguished by it. Our life is an open book for all to see. This is a reason for our concern to love one another, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples." True it is that by loving one another, we glorify God. It is in this way that God is acknowledged as the God of all praise and His purpose is furthered. Besides this, we also enrich our own lives as well as each other's when we love each other. Christian marriage is a good example. Here however, Christ emphasizes that all men must know that we love each other and through this love they will know that we are Christ's disciples. Why? Three reasons, first, by our loving each other the wicked will be without excuse. As we love each other in Christ, we will criticize the workers of iniquity and they will hate us for this. We must not avoid this, rather expect it. They will increase in their sin and if they hurt us, God's vengeance will fall upon them and their cup of iniquity will become full. Secondly, there may be some young people that we may lead to Christ. Our life must be a testimony of the love of Christ to that end, to provoke true jealousy so that they will seek our company and reject that of the world and its folly. Finally, by loving each other we will also be joined closer together within the Christian church. I know there is an element among even our young people who try to walk as close to the world as possible, you see them here at this convention as well. Don't be at-
tract to them, make them feel that if they walk close to the world in their ways, they are not popular here at this convention. Encourage each other in fighting off the influence of sin and maintain the truth and morals of the Word of God. This will attract you to each other and nothing binds Christian young people more closely than when they flee from sin and walk in the will of God.

The mark of a disciple is that he loves others. Make this a time of examination, are you truly a disciple? Does it show in your life? This convention is dedicated to helping you answer it personally. My prayer is that you may be able to say with conviction, I am a disciple of Christ, I know it, His love in me shows in my love for others.

May God be praised for this!

Following After Jesus

REV. M. SCHIPPER

Introduction:
We are pleased to be present with you on this 31st annual Convention, and to have a part in the program which has been arranged. We are also pleased with the general theme of this Convention, which is: Disciples of Christ. It struck me that such a theme would be chosen in a day when there seems to be considerable confusion as to precisely what constitutes a disciple of Christ; when young people go from the one extreme of seeking independence, and appearing unwilling to follow after anybody, to the other extreme of becoming "Jesus people." Indeed, we live in a day when it becomes increasingly difficult to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ. In the light of this, we say again, that we are pleased to help in the development of this theme.

We also suppose that the first speaker who addressed you on the theme: The Mark of the Disciple, also defined for you the significance of the term "Disciple." Knowing the thoroughness with which the first speaker usually treats his subject matter, we believe he has given you the Scriptural idea of a disciple. Consequently we will not take the time to define this part of our subject, except to point out how the text given to us uses the term. We were asked simply to speak on the: "Costliness of Being a Disciple." And the suggested text given to me is: Matthew 16:24, which reads as follows: "Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

*Prepared from notes used at the convention.

There are two things in the context that ought to be pointed out, and which have bearing on the text proper.

The first has to do with the verses 13ff. where Jesus is said to be in Caesarea Philippi, and where He asks His disciples concerning His identity. He first asks them: Who do men say that I the Son of man am? To this question the disciples offer various answers: "Some say thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and other Jeremiahs, or one of the prophets." He then asks the disciples: "But who say ye that I am?" Simon Peter, answering for the disciple group, replies: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus, after first pronouncing a blessing upon Peter for having made this confession, then informs him that the answer could not have come from him, but through the revelation of His Father in heaven. And He marks this confession as constituting the very basis upon which God will build His church, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail.

The second matter of which the context speaks is the important information which Jesus gave His disciples concerning His suffering and death in Jerusalem, and Peter’s reaction to it. The Lord was very conscious at this time of the suffering which was about to be imposed upon Him by the leaders of the Jews, and of His death and resurrection which would follow. Peter began to rebuke Him, saying: "Be it far from thee Lord: this shall not be unto thee." Jesus interprets this rebuke as being the very words of Satan, and at the same time an indication of the wrong understanding the disciples had of the reason for
following Him. This latter became the occasion for His announcement of the words of our text. As the word “then” indicates, it was the proper time for Jesus to instruct His disciples in the true meaning of discipleship, and the requirements true discipleship demands.

With these remarks in mind, we would speak to you for a little while on the subject: FOLLOWING AFTER JESUS. Concerning this subject, there are three questions we would like to raise and answer. What does it mean? What does it require? And, Unto what does it lead?

I. What does it mean?
To come after Jesus means to be His disciple. But what is involved in being a disciple of Jesus? In the light of the context this is an important question. We should not forget that though the disciples through Peter had made a wonderful confession: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” they nevertheles did not understand the full implications of that confession. To them the term “Christ” was synonymous with glory, honor, power, the ascent to the mighty throne of David, a way of conquest and victory. And discipleship was for them considered from the viewpoint of the question: Who shall be the greatest? When Jesus therefore informed them that He was going to suffer and die, this violently clashed with the conception they had of Him. And when he intimated that discipleship consisted not in merely becoming great, but it entailed bearing a cross after Him; this, too, violently militated against their conception of the disciple.

True discipleship consists, first of all, in hearing and receiving His Word. That is to say, His entire Word, not merely that part of it which may appear acceptable to us. It is the Word of Him Who is the truth. And that Word becomes an awful Word of Jesus. It is the Word that condemns all self-righteousness of men. It closes the kingdom of heaven against all whose righteousness does not exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees. It condemns the world of unrighteousness, and insists that we have no righteousness of ourselves, that we are corrupt and inclined to all evil as we are by nature, that we are guilty, undone, and worthy of death and damnation. It leaves no hope for the natural man, no ground on which he can merit before God. And at the same time that Word of Jesus reaches down to us in our hopelessness only to declare to us a righteousness of God. A righteousness which is perfect because it is founded on the death and resurrection of Jesus our Lord, and that can be ours only as an eternal gift of free grace. It is the Word concerning a righteousness which is freely imputed to us, that is wrought in us through the Spirit of Christ, that justifies us freely and sanctifies us wholly, and that makes us new creatures in an old world, light in the midst of darkness, citizens of heaven while we are in the midst of this worldly Babylon. O, that Word contains still more. It demands of us that we fight the fight of faith unto the end. That we be holy as God is holy in all our walk of life. That we forsake the world and its lusts, and be of God’s party in every phase of life.

Indeed, to be a disciple of Jesus, you must hear and receive His Word. And it is not enough that you merely hear it. O, to be sure, it is necessary that we ever come under the hearing of that Word. But there is much more. That Word must be hidden in our hearts. The hearer must also receive what he hears. It must be an abiding factor in his innermost spiritual being. That Word must be the controlling principle in one’s whole life, shall he be a disciple of Jesus. He cannot walk without it. It must guide him wherever he goes. It must shed light on his pathway. It must draw and lead him to the light. A true disciple listens continually to that Word of Christ, and always he asks what the will and the word of Christ is. Always he is hearing, receiving, and doing that Word. So, and so only, can one come after Jesus.

At this point we wish to ask you young people, considering all that is implied in being a disciple of Jesus: Would you be a disciple of Jesus? You feel the awful import of this question, don’t you?

Today it is becoming popular among youth of our time to be “Jesus’ people.” As we said in our opening remarks, the crazy bent of youth is to swing from one extreme sweep of the pendulum to the very opposite extreme. One day, not long ago,
the young would recognize no one whom they would follow, casting off from them all authority, and living riotously as revolutionaries. Today, the sweep of the pendulum moves them in the apparently pious direction — to follow after Jesus. Not, you understand, the Jesus of the Scriptures, Who is the Son of God come into the flesh, the Jesus Who took upon Him the guilt of the sins of His people, and bore that guilt unto the tree of the cross, in order to remove it from before the face of God. Of that Jesus they do not know, nor do they want Him to be their leader. Not the Jesus Who speaks to us the Word of God which discloses our depravity, and the need of a righteousness which God has prepared, which righteousness only will allow us to enter through the gates of His heavenly kingdom — but a Jesus of their imagination — a Jesus who is a super star.

I am not speaking today to young people who would have a Jesus that will allow them to rock and to roll; nor is my question directed to those who would claim to follow such a Jesus. But I ask you, Protestant Reformed youth, who have become acquainted with the Word of God, and have met therein the Jesus of the Scriptures: Would you be His disciple? If your answer is: Yes; then you have heard and received His Word, and hid it in your hearts. That Word will be the principle whereby your whole life is regulated and controlled. This is a very important question, and very personal, which you must answer. When you are one of Jesus' disciples, you will to come after Him!

But you know, don't you, that no man wills or can will to come after Him, as he is by nature. All men by nature are carnal. They love darkness rather than light. They love and seek the world, rather than the kingdom of heaven. They love their own word, and would hear the word of man, rather than to have anything to do with the Word of God and of Christ. The natural man wills just the opposite of following after Jesus. O, he may have an imaginary Jesus, whom he has concocted in his own mind, whom he will follow — but not the Jesus of the Scriptures.

You and I must understand that the will to come after Jesus is the fruit of mere and sovereign grace. To follow and to will to come after Jesus, is the result of His efficacious call. He calls you and you come after Him. He speaks His almighty Word, and you obey it. He irresistibly says: Follow Me! and His disciples say spontaneously: I come! Strange as it may seem, he who wills to come after Jesus is already after Him. It is the choice of his heart. He who hears and receives His Word, will be Jesus' disciple.

Now I was asked to speak to you today especially on: The Costliness of Discipleship. And so now I come to the heart of this subject when I call your attention to:

II. What it requires.

Jesus said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me."

You will notice that the Lord specifies especially three requirements: self-denial, cross bearing, and following Him. Allow me briefly to delineate each of these requirements.

The first, and perhaps the most humiliating requisite of true discipleship is self-denial. But what does that mean?

Literally self-denial means: to disown, to renounce self. It means in the most absolute sense that we must forget about ourselves, give up our own interests. Self-denial is the very opposite of maintaining one's self. It is that act whereby one becomes nothing in his own eyes. It is the will not to insist on one's name and position, one's honor and glory, one's means and possessions, yea, even one's own life.

A special thank-you to you retiring Federation Board members, Dave Lanting, Jim VanOverloop, Linda Ekenna, and Nort Brower, for the dedication which you've shown while serving on the board. As you recall the past two years, hopefully you will remember not only the headaches and responsibilities, but more important, the Christian fellowship and fun which you must have enjoyed. On behalf of the Protestant Reformed Young People, we say, "Thanks for your services."

Sincerely,

The Federation Board
Carol Dykstra, Secy.
You must understand that the Lord does not say that you must deny something to yourself, if you would be His disciple. If the Lord had said that, it might be comparatively easy to be His disciples. That kind of self-denial, one finds in the world, and often also in the church. Men will deny themselves much for many reasons when it involves themselves. They will deny themselves food and drink which otherwise they crave, if their health is at stake. They will deny themselves leisure and rest, if the object of their ambition is involved. Paradoxical as it may seem, men will deny themselves the world and the things of the world, in order to gain more of the world. Remarkably Jesus says something much different than this. Never did He say: deny yourself something, then you will be my disciples. No—His requirement is an absolute one. He says: deny yourself!

That means, everything you have and are. It implies that before God and His Christ you do not insist on your own righteousness, and that you confess that you are utterly lost in yourself. It means that you experience and confess that you find all your righteousness, yea, all you need for your salvation in Christ alone. It implies that before men you seek not the praise of men, but are always ready to suffer reproach and even death if necessary for Christ’s sake.

Indeed, this self-denial is quite contrary to the spirit of the world. The world wants men that have ambition to make for themselves a name, who have the energy to gain riches and position in life. And it offers riches, fame, and pleasures to all who will follow her. Christ, on the other hand, demands the very opposite. He offers you no inducement to self-ambitions, but condemns them. He requires complete abandoning of self, shall we be His disciples.

The second requirement necessary for true discipleship is that we take up our cross.

The cross of which Jesus here speaks is said by some to refer to what Scripture calls the “old man of sin,” the corrupt nature the disciple retains after his regeneration and conversion; the old nature which the apostle Paul admonishes should be mortified. Accordingly, when the old nature overpowers one so that he falls into sin, he is supposed to have a cross with which he has to contend. For example, a Christian may be quick-tempered and fly off the handle, as they say. Quite often he will even excuse himself when he does this with the remark: I’m sorry, but you will please excuse me for what I said, for my hot temper got the best of me. You see, that’s the cross I have to bear. In my opinion that is not a cross, but an evil nature that often rules over us, and we would do well to get rid of it.

Neither is the cross the affliction and sufferings one often bears in this life. Many speak of sickness and pain as so many crosses we have to bear. But hardly can the suffering in the body and mind in the world be an emblem of the cross of which Jesus speaks.

Rather, the cross is always centrally the cross of Christ. Not, you understand, when that cross is the emblem and means of atonement; for then it stands uniquely alone. In this sense there is only one cross, and that is the cross which Christ alone bore, and upon which He alone suffered and died. But Jesus meant that His cross which is the ultimate expression of the hatred of the world against God and His Anointed must also be ours. You see, His cross and our cross are closely related. The world hated Him because He was of God and they are of the world. And the servant is not greater than his Lord. If they hated Him they will also hate them that will come after Him. For He is in them, and becomes manifest through them. His cross reflects in the crosses they bear who will follow Jesus. And when you bear that cross, you take it up. You must assume the burden of it. One who takes up a burden assumes willingly to carry it. So also one who takes up the cross, expresses thereby the willingness to not only bear it, but also to suffer its reproach. Cross-bearing is inevitable for the true disciple of Jesus. Jesus’ disciples do not come after Him to gain a crown in this world, but He who wills to be His disciple must will to deny himself and bear the reproach of Christ in this world.
The third requisite of true discipleship Jesus imposes upon us is: “And follow Me.”

That means, of course, that Jesus must lead. Never may the opposite be true. Indeed there are many in our day who would have the opposite be true. They would have you do something for Jesus. And when you follow this conception through you find that they make Jesus to follow them. No! Jesus must lead. He must command. He must speak first. He must tell us first of His cross. This is precisely what Peter, according to the context, failed to understand. He did not want Jesus to lead, to go before His cross; but Peter would bear his cross before Jesus. In reality Jesus always leads. He was the obedient Servant to the Father. He entered the evil world in which we live, assuming our nature in which He could suffer and die. Here He was mocked and despised. Here He suffered and died. Yes, here He went on before us bearing His cross.

And we must follow Him. O, this cannot surely mean that we must or can go through what He did. That would be utterly impossible. As we pointed out before, there is an aspect of His cross which we cannot, nor need to bear. But follow Him we must nevertheless. Listening to His Word of the cross, and never asserting our own notions, and never saying: Lord, this shall never be unto Thee. But following willingly, submissively, silently; we bear His reproach, renouncing our own judgment to the Word of the Lord, and denying ourselves completely. That is bearing the cross and following after Jesus.

III. Unto what it leads.

When Jesus leads, and we follow Him, what will we experience as far as this world is concerned? Well, young people, your end will be His end. Being by His grace His disciples, you will experience shame, reproach, suffering, and ultimately death. For you see Jesus not only taught us that shall we be His disciples we must be partakers of His anointing, but also of His suffering. Would you follow Jesus, you can expect nothing more in this world. He warns you that as they persecuted Him so they will also persecute you. The world and the power of darkness will persecute you in every sphere of life, if you will hear and obey the Lord; while you take up your cross, deny yourself, and follow Him.

Are you prepared for that? Make no mistake about it, this will surely happen to you. And we would warn you that the Scriptures predict that in the last days this suffering will become more intense. Jesus forewarned us that when Antichrist will come the elect of God will experience suffering so severe that if God had not shortened the days the very elect of God would not be able to endure. These days, we believe, are fast coming upon us. Overnight the peace and quiet we now enjoy, may be changed. Now it is quite easy to be a Christian. We may still go to church, and worship as we please. We may still enjoy our society life, where unmolested we may study God’s Word. No one appears to bother us. But it will not continue thus. The day is not far away when the power of darkness will break forth in all its fury, against the church, and against the people of God. In fact, even now, if we would let our light shine more than we do, we would experience more opposition than we do. In the light of this, would you still be Jesus’ disciple? This is what it is going to cost you, if you would remain true to Him.

Yet, let not this discourage you! You have every reason to rejoice and to be exceeding glad. For your reward shall be great! If this were not so, you would have reason to be the most miserable of all creatures. But remember, Jesus leads! He went on before you. He suffered and died, but He also arose from the dead. And He ascended to highest glory. And He has promised to give unto His faithful disciples His glory. In the way of faithfulness, they shall also attain unto it. This is His Word, “If ye shall deny Me before men, I will also deny you before My Father which is in heaven; but if ye shall confess Me before men, I will also confess you before My Father which is in heaven.” If we by His grace deny ourselves, and follow Him, bearing our cross, He will lead you and me unto everlasting glory. May He continue to give unto us that grace whereby we may continue to fight the good fight of faith, even unto the end, that no one take our crown.

Fourteen
The Freedom of Being a Disciple

REV. G. VAN BAREN

In the past two speeches given at this convention, our attention was directed to two truths: disciples of Christ have marks which identify them as disciples indeed; and, true discipleship is "costly." Now the apparent conclusion which might be drawn is that such a discipleship must surely be a very limiting thing. A disciple is certainly not free! There are so many things a disciple can not do: he can not seek certain forms of entertainment; he can not obtain certain types of jobs; he may not be friends with this world. Often discipleship appears to be merely negative: don't, don't, don't.

Because such seems to be true, young people often hesitate about confessing their faith. Some have even expressed that evil idea that they would desire to have their fill of fun before acknowledging discipleship. Later—but not now—will they be a disciple. Others believe that discipleship ought not to limit them at all. They should feel free to do whatever they please—yet be identified as a disciple! The second speech made plain that this is impossible.

My subject suggests the truth that discipleship represents the only truly free state there is in the universe. A true disciple is free in his union to Christ. And such freedom is a positive thing. There are, it is true, things which no disciple can do or may do. But he is free as a disciple to serve God from the heart with all that he is and all that he has. No child of this world has that freedom. No one can obtain that freedom with money. None can seek it and find it in and of themselves. This freedom is a gift—purchased through the blood of the Lamb on the cross of Calvary. In that freedom we ought to rejoice.

The seeming contradiction which we face is this: One who insists that he is "free" because he can do as he pleases, is really a slave. He is a slave of sin; he can not do nor seek the good; he is under the sentence of death. His imagined "freedom" is in actuality an illusion suggested by satan already to Eve in Paradise. But one who is truly free, is a slave of Jesus Christ. Paul repeatedly identified himself as such a slave. Yet this same Paul boasted in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Bondage to Christ is true freedom. Let us understand this well and not be deceived by the siren songs of the world which would suggest otherwise.

But what is freedom? We have often been told that we live in the land of the free. First, we ought to remove certain misconceptions concerning freedom. It is not the removal of all restraint. There are some who seem to believe that they are free when they free themselves from parental, ecclesiastical, or governmental restraint. Some youth movements of our day proceed under such an assumption. Children want to be free from all parental control. Many want no control or rule in their lives by either church or state. The oft-used phrase, "Do your own thing," suggests the same thought. One then is free only when he can do whatever he may please without fear of consequences.

The absence of all restraint would result, of course, in chaos. A fish in the water could not claim to be truly free only when he leaps from that water upon the land. As soon as he frees himself from the restraint (water), he dies. And though we supposedly live in a free land, obviously that does not mean that restraint is gone. Try telling the policeman who stops you for speeding, "But we live in a free land!" Or again, my freedom to use my hand or fist ends at the point of my neighbor's nose. Nor am I "free" to take or occupy property which belongs to my neighbor. Remove restraints, and there would be chaos and anarchy.

Nor is freedom the ability to choose between alternatives. Some suggest that true freedom means that one can choose either the good or the evil. He must have the ability and inherent right to choose thus—or he is not free. But that suggestion is also false. God, for instance, can not choose the evil. Yet God is absolutely and sovereignly free. Nor will we be "free" in that sense in heaven. There we shall be perfectly free—yet unable ever to choose any more the way of sin.

May I suggest, without entering into the
various philosophical arguments, that there are several points to the idea of freedom which we ought to remember. First, true freedom can only exist within prescribed boundaries or laws. Without such laws, freedom is impossible. No nation or city could continue without laws; laws against speeding; laws against murder and stealing; laws for property possession. The universe could not continue without laws which God placed there: laws of gravity; of properties of light; of growth. Nor can there be true freedom without moral laws. Freedom presupposes boundaries.

Nor are boundaries mere arbitrary laws which men devise. Dictators, evil rulers, and others might seek to enforce laws which are evil and contrary to the Word of God. But laws which are opposed to the Law of God, laws designed to promote the honor and glory of man—these proceed out of the sinful heart of man and to his own condemnation. The proper boundaries for freedom are established by the Almighty, the Sovereign One. He Himself is absolutely free. It is He Who reveals to His creatures what are the limits and bounds in which they can exist and enjoy true freedom. The laws which God establishes are not only "natural" laws, but also moral law. And the heart of the law or bounds which God establishes is this: Love God with thy whole heart. In violating that law, man lost his freedom and entered into that state of chaos which is evident also today. Freedom is to love God perfectly with one's whole being.

Secondly, freedom supposes the ability to live and act within the boundaries God has established. The inability to live within the restrictions which God establishes, results in slavery and death. Such would be true of the fish which jumps from the water. Similarly, a man who ignores God's laws and seeks to walk under water, drowns. And the man who seeks to escape God's laws in the moral-spiritual plane, dies. This did Adam when he refused to obey the good command of God concerning the tree of knowledge of good and evil. But true freedom involves the desire and ability to live within the limits of God's perfect law. This freedom presupposes perfect holiness and righteousness. One who is truly free is bound by God's law, loves it, and walks according to it.

Finally, freedom has as its end, perfect fellowship and communion with the ever blessed God. Freedom is not some state in which the creature in any way seeks self. It is that state in which he can perfectly serve and glorify the Creator. In this way, he also enjoys the blessings, fellowship, and communion with God.

This freedom, true freedom, can be traced through the record of Scripture. Adam possessed freedom by virtue of the fact that God created him perfect and good. But Adam could and did lose that freedom in the way of disobedience. Immediately, however, God revealed to Adam the only way of freedom (Genesis 3:15). And throughout the Old Testament age, the saints enjoyed freedom—though it was the freedom of a child. They lived under the type and shadow. They were bound by many laws regarding sacrifice designed to point them to the deliverance which would come in the cross. But they were free in Christ.

That freedom developed in the New Dispensation under the direction of the Spirit of Pentecost. The child of God no longer must observe the laws of sacrifice

**ANSWER TO LAST ISSUE'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

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and circumcision, for these were fulfilled in Christ. Now he lives under God’s law as an adult—he must still fully obey the law of God, but he obeys it voluntarily and with an understanding of that which he does. However, because he has still a sinful flesh, the child of God continues to sin against God and His law.

Finally, freedom will belong to the saints in glory in the fullest, most glorious, sense. Then the members of Christ’s body shall no longer sin—nor will they be able to sin. They will be able to choose the good all the time with their whole being. That is the perfect freedom which we desire to possess—and which is promised us for Jesus’ sake.

But how can one obtain such freedom? I repeat, such freedom can not be obtained by removal of restraint or law. This is what the devil had suggested to Eve in Paradise. He said, “Yea, God doth know that in the day you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil.” In effect, satan told Eve that she would be free only when she removed the restraints which God placed upon her. The devil and this world constantly emphasize that same lie today. And we sometimes begin to succumb to its snares. Through song, on television and in movies, in book and magazine, man suggests that freedom is attainable through the removal of all restraint. That is the idea too of the “new morality” of which we have heard much in past years. According to this new “morality,” one need no longer observe the details of the ten commandments, as long as he “loves.” One can commit murder, adultery, stealing—in love. And with modern technology it is seemingly possible to avoid some of the consequences of violation of God’s laws.

You, young people, are particularly susceptible to this reasoning. It is rather normal that young people begin to desire to “use their own wings.” You think in terms of freeing yourselves from “momma’s apron strings.” Therefore, too, this lie of satan that freedom is obtained by removing all restraint is appealing. You, especially, must beware of it.

Nor is man born free. One is born in bondage of sin and death. Adam, our first father, represented all men when he fell. The result of that fall of Adam was that all men are born dead in sin. Man has then neither the power nor the desire to deliver himself from the slavery of sin. While wicked men boast, “I am free!”, these are really slaves to sin.

Jesus tells us that the truth shall make you free. What is truth? That is the question Pilate asked Jesus at His trial—and did not await an answer. There has been much philosophizing about this question. But again, Christ, in John 14:6, tells us simply: “I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me.” Jesus, Who is the revelation of God, is the truth. All that is in harmony with the perfect being of the Father is truth and is found in Christ. Christ is the Truth because He manifests the love, mercy, grace, and wisdom of God. Christ shows God to His people. He does this in His incarnation. And He does this when He records infallibly the Scripture through holy men. That truth which is Christ is evident centrally on the cross. There is seen the truth of God’s righteousness (for He does not allow sin to go unpunished). There is revealed the truth of His infinite love (for He sends His only Son to die under His wrath for His people). There is revealed God’s grace and mercy (for He desires to cause His people to be blest forevermore).

That truth makes free. Nothing else does. Through full payment, the justice of God is satisfied. Through the cross, we are delivered from the bondage of sin and death and are assured a place in glory.

To enjoy to the full your freedom, you must know the truth. One does not become free merely by knowing the truth, of course. Many know of the truth who are not at all free. One is free according to the eternal determination of God as He
realizes His plan in time through the cross. But the consciousness of our freedom, the joy of freedom, comes in the way of knowing the truth. The more children of God know of the truth, of the cross, of their redemption; the more they stand amazed in the freedom that is theirs. And these who know the truth, also live in that freedom. These surely desire to serve God in all things.

Therefore, Christ insists that true disciples are to continue in His Word. The Word of Christ is revealed in Scripture. It is an infallible Word which therefore never changes. That Word is given for our benefit and instruction. One will not find the Word of Christ in creation. By special revelation, Christ reveals Himself — and the meaning of creation.

It is that Word which we must know and hear. We must hear that Word in the preaching — that God-ordained means of grace for the strengthening and calling of the church. We are not to try to find more “pleasing” substitutes for that preaching. It must, rather, be used faithfully according to the commands of Scripture.

And we are to study and know that Word. It is the revelation of God through Christ. And we need know it particularly in these days of great wickedness and apostasy. False doctrines of every sort are creeping into the churches. You must be able to distinguish the false from the true. You, then, MUST know the Word of God. I would urge you to study it diligently. How much would we not know of that Word if we spent as much time with it as we do with television or with sports? Yet that Word deserves more study and time than that which is set aside for recreation or entertainment. Study that Word in preparation for the hearing of the preaching. Study that Word in preparation for society discussion. Study it in the home with family, and privately in your own personal devotions. But study that Word.

A true disciple, says Jesus, continues in that Word. The confession of the child of God is not merely a single act. It might seem that way sometimes. At times, young people can quickly and thoughtlessly make a confession of faith. These might have no real intention of abiding by the teaching and instruction of that Word. They will readily depart from the church for the sake of marriage or of work. Such is hypocritical.

One enjoys true freedom and knows the truth only in the way of continuing in the Word. He knows the Word and loves that which it teaches. He seeks out the meaning of that Word as a guide for his own personal life and walk. For he desires to do that which God requires of him. He continues in the Word when he seeks out entertainment. He continues in the Word when he chooses his friends. He continues in the Word when he seeks his life’s calling. That Word is a lamp to his feet and a light to his pathway.

You, young people, continue in the Word. Then you shall know the truth and consciously enjoy the only freedom there is: freedom from sin and death, freedom in holiness before God. God grant that to you.

Remember the

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(See June-July issue for rules)
NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

KAREN KARSTEN

From Loveland, Colorado:

Loveland's young people are busy thinking and planning ahead for August, 1972. Hopefully, next year's Convention will bring many young people to the beautiful state of Colorado.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Schwarz rejoice in the birth of a daughter.

From Hope, Walker, Michigan:

Mr. and Mrs. A. Brummel rejoice in the birth of a daughter.

The new address of Dick Eerdmans is:
Dick Eerdmans 379-56-3060
H. B. 32nd AADCOM (AG ASD)
APO, New York 09227

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Schipper and son were received from First Church in Grand Rapids.

From South Holland, Illinois:

Confession of faith was made by Wilbur Bruinsma, Marilyn Haak, and Jennie Hoving.

Mr. Gary Eriks and Miss Joan Zandstra were united in marriage on September 23.

On September 17 Prof. Hanko delivered a public lecture in South Holland on “The Christian and the Film Arts.”

From Hull, Iowa:

A combined young peoples party was held in Doon on August 10 with the young people of Doon.

Mr. Leon Uittenbogaard and Miss Phyllis Hoekstra were united in marriage on September 3.

Miscellaneous News:

Rev. Moore accepted the call to Doon and Rev. Lanting conducted the installation service of Rev. Moore.

A singspiration was held in the Hudsonville Church on September 26. It was sponsored by the BEACON LIGHTS.

School doors are open, societies have begun, house visitations are scheduled and we are busier than we were last November. In the bustle of living let’s not forget to live.

Extra copies of this and other issues are available from the editor at 30¢ a copy while supply lasts.
Announcing our new editor for the Department News From, For, and About Our Churches.

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