

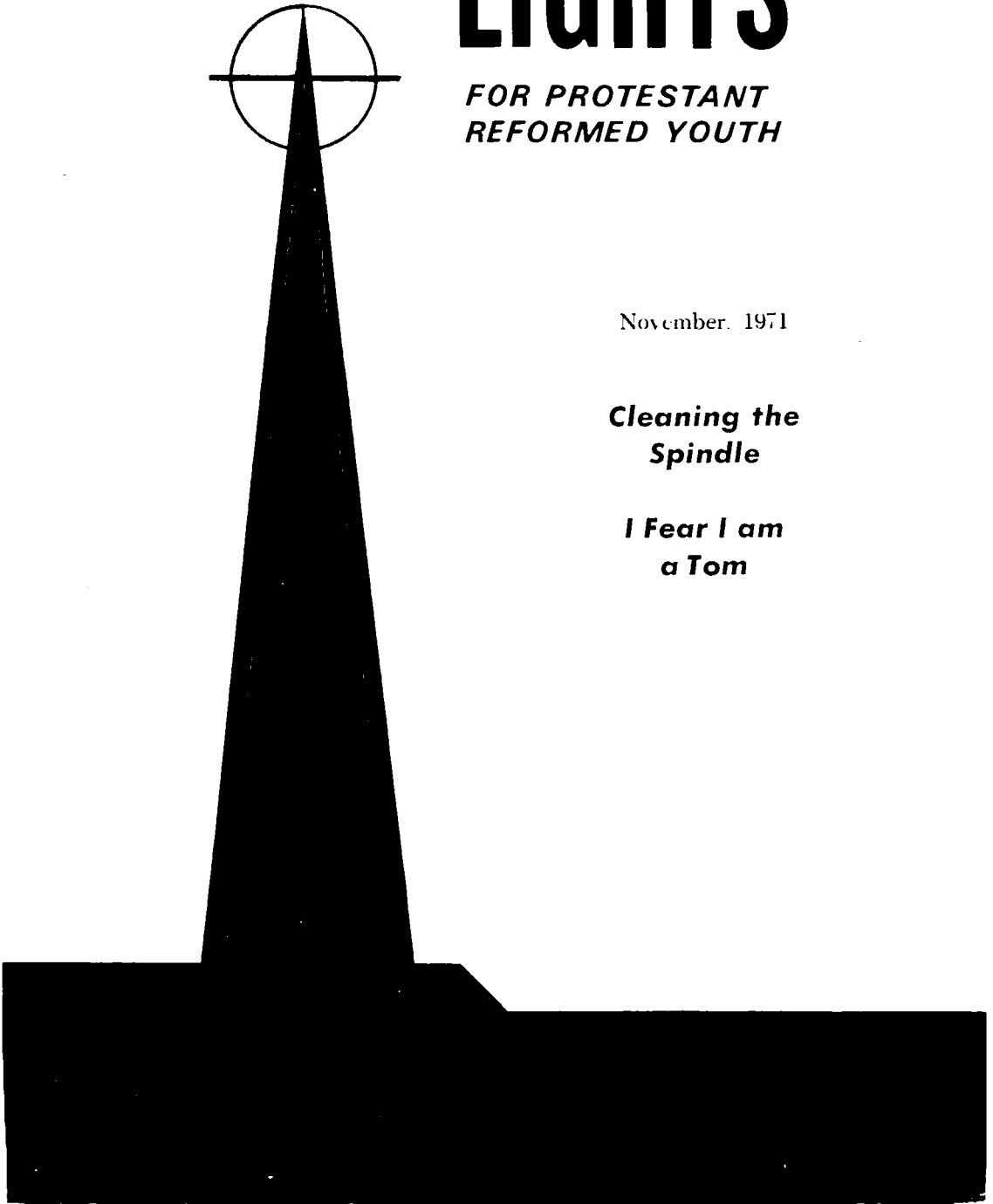
BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*

November, 1971

*Cleaning the
Spindle*

*I Fear I am
a Tom*





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BILLY GRAHAM, WILLIAM EWALD, AND ORAL ROBERTS: A STRANGE BUT UNIFIED CONSORTIUM

If you are at all familiar with any or all of the above contemporaneous persons, you might wonder how they got thrown together to form the subject of this article. No, they did not serve together at a symposium nor do they function on some prominent national committee. They were thrown together at me in the course of a week. (That is one of the marvels of modern communication. It makes possible combinations heretofore unimaginable.) Billy Graham, the fundamentalistic Baptist preacher came to me from Oakland, California; Oral Roberts, the faith healer and university president came to me from Honolulu; and sandwiched in between was William Ewald, an existentialistic city planner who came to me from the campus of a local college. At first sight, they appear to have very little in common, but it struck me as I listened to them that they were all talking about a common theme: the future.

Let me review for a moment the things that I heard them say. Billy Graham made his familiar plea for the acceptance of Jesus Christ. He talked about sin; he talked about the moral degeneracy of our nation. And, he talked about the return of Jesus Christ to this earth. He did so, however, in typical premillenarian fashion. The church will be spared those awful days of tribulation and the upshot of the whole thing was that if you, too, wished to escape that awful torture, you had better accept Jesus today. Now this all sounds nice and is very appealing to human nature (who, after all, wants to be tormented) but there is no truth in it at all. You are familiar, no doubt, with that premillenarian position. If not, you can read all about it in Rev. H. Hoeksema's book *Behold, He Cometh!*

Then there was Oral Roberts. He did not practice any of his magical gifts of healing on the television special that I watched. As a matter of fact, I wondered whether I really had the right program. There was nothing religious or sacred about what I first saw: Hawaiian music, Don Ho and his gang, secular to the very core. The dis-

turbing thing to me is that it was planned that way. He had me tuned in, you see. He had caught my attention. Then came the Oral Roberts message. And, he talked about, of all things, the coming of the antichrist. Strange, too, he had it all right. I detected nothing of the premillenarian flavor of Billy Graham. Had I heard only that part of his program I would have had to say: "That's right, Pastor Roberts, you've got that part straight." And he did. But, then, why criticize, you say? Do we always have to find something wrong with everybody. I can only reply: "No, but if he's wrong, let's not be afraid to call it wrong." And, that is what I believe Oral Roberts to be: dead wrong. But why? He did not, you see, have the spiritual discernment to see that the two parts of his program did not fit together. On the one hand, he talked correctly about the antichrist; he correctly identified him. But, on the other hand, he failed to see just exactly how this antichrist would come. The antichrist is going to do exactly what Oral Roberts did, he is going to thoroughly compromise the secular and the sacred. He is going to wed Athens and Jerusalem and the final result will be that one, unless he has the discernment given him by the Spirit, will not be able to discern between the two. Taken as a whole, then, Oral Roberts really didn't understand the future.

Finally, there was William Ewald. Educated, author of five books, and currently a city planner he, too, offered his insight into the future. He was very much concerned with the future of mankind, of man's ability to survive, especially in the next fifty years. He came to us because he felt that, for a large part, educational institutions were not with it. They were not really in tune with the modern age. It was his belief that we were still educating people to live in the 1940's and earlier. In effect, what he suggested was that if man is to endure the next fifty years, he is going to have to change a great deal. And, the conclusion to the whole matter was that

he must become existential. In short, man must throw off all of the encumbrances of the absolute, everything must become relative. Morality, ethics, mores, you name it must not be guided and determined by any kind of absolute, inviolable code but must be subject to change and modification to fit the needs of modern society. His concern for the future was motivated by his desire to survive. He was interested in his own security. Man, after all, wants to live forever at any cost so this position ought not surprise us a great deal.

You see, then, that we have three viewpoints juxtaposed indiscriminately but all nevertheless with a common theme and concern: how are we going to make it in the future?

But, you ask, what is the purpose of all this? Why bring it up? These ideas are, after all, very strange and remote. The Christian might often wish that such were the case. Many times, I think, the Christian would opt for the isolated don't-bother-me-with-that-stuff position. We ought not be

so naive, however. The Bible clearly tells us that the life of the Christian is one of one continuous struggle and battle. My concern, then, is that we are adequately prepared to fight. And, this is especially true of younger people. You need not expect calm and serene days in the future. Maybe you are tired and weary of hearing such remarks. Maybe so, but do not discount them lightly. The things that you hear about your future life are not myth nor are they based on wild speculation. Scripture and the experience of older saints witness to these very things. So, the directive comes: prepare yourself. My real concern, then, is with our ability to refute these ideas. Are we going to take the attitude that if we wait long enough, most of these things will eventually slide by me, or, are we going to prepare ourselves to fight in the defense of our faith and our heritage? The only answer to the type of thinking illustrated above is the truth of scripture. Question is, then, are you prepared to give that answer? J. H.



CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

CLEANING THE SPINDLE

"Critique" is Twelve Years Old This Issue

"Mr. 'K' visits a 'christian nation'" was the heading of the first article contributed by the undersigned to a new rubric in the BEACON LIGHTS in the October-November-1959-issue, and now Nikita Krushchev is dead. The introduction, "Ground Breaking," indicated that the writer would be committed to the reporting of, and commenting on important events which occur in the world around us, in the church world, and more particularly in the Protestant Reformed Churches. During these years it has been the policy of this contributor to view and discuss all events and issues through

the "spectacles of the Word of God." When the rubric was conceived and born, the writer welcomed the suggestions of our young people for topics to be discussed in this rubric. BEACON LIGHTS was then, and still is the periodical of our young people.

Once again I solicit suggestions from our young people. What do you want discussed in the BEACON LIGHTS in this rubric, "Critique"? I am anxious to hear from you, young people of the 1970's, who were not old enough to go to school twelve years ago.

About That Toynbee Series

I have been giving this series some serious thought, and I have not had the time

to prepare an article in the series. A series as complex as this demands much time and preparation. Besides, I wonder whether the subject is pertinent to the needs and interests of the young people of the 70's, and whether it deserves the efforts which I expend for this type of article? I firmly believe it is good for us to examine carefully the writings and interpretations of others so that we can understand the world and its ideas; we must always be ready to give an answer to any man for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15).

Because there are several topics that I wish to discuss during the next several months, I am temporarily postponing any further articles in this series.

Knowledgeable Young People

The time to learn and the time to be taught is when we are young. This does not mean that we are ever too old to learn. The adage is most true that one is never too old to learn, but it is likewise true that the time to learn and the time to form habits is in our youth. These are the years when we are strong; these are the years when we can memorize easily.

I teach Modern Church History in Covenant Christian High School. This is the high school which was part of the dream of those who have been Protestant Reformed for many years. It is a dream which makes possible the realization and fulfillment of parental, covenant obligations. Now Covenant Christian High School is beginning its fourth year of training Covenant youth. The youth that we train and instruct are members of various Reformed denominations and churches. Students in the school are members of the Protestant Reformed Church, the Christian Reformed Church, the American Reformed Church (Liberated), the Orthodox Reformed Church, and the Christian Reformation Church. Within that welter of denominational allegiances I must teach the history of the Christian Church in the Modern times.

This is the first year that Modern Church History is being taught in the school. During the past three years courses in Ancient and Medieval Church History have been taught, but a course as complex as Modern Church History has not previously been taught. Since the time of the Reformation

when many denominations began to develop, the history of the church institute has become exceedingly involved and variegated.

This has been an interesting week for several of the students in this Modern Church History class. Jone Teitsma, a member of Southeast Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, and Ron Cammenga, a member of the Holland Protestant Reformed Church, went to speak for a "comparative religions class" at Grand Rapids Catholic Central High School. They were provided an excellent, and providential opportunity to witness to Roman Catholic young people concerning the hope and the faith that lives in the hearts of our young people. God made this opportunity available so that these young people could testify and witness to Roman Catholic young people. Jone and Ron were surprised when they observed the evident lack of understanding that these Roman Catholic young people had for the doctrinal position of the Roman Catholic Church. There were very few of the young people who understood or even knew the meaning of the term "transubstantiation." Could this doctrinal lethargy be one of the causes for the confusion which is now raging in the Roman Catholic Church? Jone and Ron came home to Covenant with an enthusiasm and a thankfulness for their own blessed privileges which we wish all the young people of our churches could have shared — an enthusiasm the rest of the Modern Church History class could only gain through the reports of these ambassadors.

Modern Church History classes must concern themselves with contemporary events in the Reformed, pseudo-Reformed, and liberal ecclesiastical communities. In order for the student to know contemporary events he must read the periodicals in the ecclesiastical community, which provide the medium to report the attitudes and opinions of the writers and leaders in other churches and denominations. It is at this point that I am appalled by lack of knowledge which our Protestant Reformed young people possess.

Fridays will be the day at Covenant Christian in Modern Church History class when current church events will be discussed. We began this activity on Friday,

October 15. I was disappointed when I asked the questions, "Who is the editor of the *Standard Bearer*?" and "Who is the editor of the BEACON LIGHTS?" that so many of the young people in my class did not know who these men are.

This lack of ecclesiastical information of the very formal kind indicates either a basic lack of concern on the part of our young people for the church periodicals or else the source of the problem must be traced to some other improper kind of emphasis. Is the emphasis in the covenant home misplaced? Don't parents and children sit down to discuss basic religious issues? Are the periodicals, which are published in the Protestant Reformed community, not pertinent to the needs of our young people? The answer to the last question is obviously an emphatic, NO, if the reader is but faintly aware of the contents of the *Standard Bearer* and the BEACON LIGHTS. The answer to the two previous questions I will not venture to answer for I cannot answer them with any degree of certainty. I know there are *some* homes in which parents and children obviously discuss issues and the people who write about these issues.

Is this your kind of home? It ought to be!

There Is No New Thing Under the Sun — or Gnosticism Revived

We live in a religiously bizarre and Godless age. Along with the proposed homosexual churches there arises an open espousal of the "Jesus Revolution" and open reports by adherents of the ascendancy of Satan worship. The occult Ophitic, Gnostic, religions of the ancient period of the church are being resurrected with astonishing rapidity in today's world by the same Gnostic, Christ-denying sorcerers.

The *Grand Rapids Press*, October 17, 1971, in an article entitled "Satanists' world goes to the devil" reports: "No one knows how many people there are and how seriously they go about it. But the number of reported cases are increasing in every section of the country. There has been an outbreak of grave robberies and other strange events at Daytona Beach, Florida, cemeteries. Six skulls have disappeared from the disinterred caskets, and in one a

cowhorn with a leather thong was inserted. Evidence of a ceremonial fire was found near another grave, and dim figures were seen dancing around a tombstone at midnight."

All this seems strangely similar to the mystique of "The Devil and Tom Walker" by Washington Irving, or the allegorical "Young Goodman Brown" by Nathaniel Hawthorne, not to mention the three hags in Shakespeare's memorable, *Macbeth*. Irrespective of this similarity, it is God-less and should provide an added incentive to us who look for the coming of our Lord and Saviour that we must see in all these events reported in the daily news periodicals that HE, our Lord and Christ, is coming again.

Time, the weekly news magazine, of September 6, 1971, reports that the Process Church of the Final Judgment has adherents who are hard to miss these days if one walks up Manhattan's Fifth Avenue or Chicago's Michigan Avenue. The points of their collars are festooned with red three-horned goats' heads; between the horns dangles a large silver Cross. *Time* asks: "Satan and Christ?"

The Process attitude is: "Christ said love your enemy. Christ's enemy was Satan. Love Christ and Satan."

The fundamental and blasphemous Christ-denying dualism of all anti-Christian, syncretistic religions is evident in this form of Satan worship. The Process adherents espouse a Manichaeian "Three Great Gods of the Universe" theory. These gods are jealous and are warring deities who battle among themselves an eternal "game" for the control of men's souls. The three gods of this "bizarre tri-theistic theology" says *Time* magazine, represent "three basic patterns of human reality." One of them is Jehovah, a wrathful God of vengeance and retribution who demands discipline, courage, and ruthlessness from his followers. (This sounds strangely like the theories of Marcion the anti-Judaistic Gnostic.) The second is Lucifer, wrongly confused with Satan, say the Process people. They claim Lucifer is the "Light-Bearer" who urges humans "to enjoy life to the full, to value success, to be gentle and kind and loving." The third of this tri-theistic arrangement is Satan.

"the receiver of corrupted bodies and transcendent-souls," who impels humans toward a subhuman life of asceticism. The Processeans see Christ as a transcendent "unifier" who ultimately reconciles all three of the competing gods. He is a sort of Gnostic "Paraclete" (comforter) who was the answer to all of the dilemmas of Ancient and Medieval syncretistic religious systems.

The Process, founded in London about eight years ago (it doesn't exist there any longer), consists of about 500 members with chapters in Toronto, Chicago, New Orleans, and Cambridge, Massachusetts (the home of Harvard University), and soon in New York City. The Process adherents come from the drug-strewn, rootless backgrounds from which other "Jesus people" have fled. Processeans are strict in their ethical teach-

ings. They do not deny adherents the right to marry, but the unmarried must remain chaste. One of the key practices of the "movement" is a weekly telepathy session in which contact and communication are emphasized in much the same way they are in encounter therapy.

Process people see Christ's enmity with Satan to be soon overcome by Christ's own dictum to "love thine enemy." They believe in the imminent end of the world.

Christ says to us, "Believe them not. There will be many who will say here is Christ and lo there is Christ, but do not believe them. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith I have made you free and do not be deceived."

The days will be shortened!

Come Lord Jesus, yea come quickly!



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. LUBBERS

"... ever learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." II Timothy 3:7

THE LEARNING OF FOOLS

I am very well aware that the little text which I have written above this message from my "Study" is not even a complete sentence. Fact is, that it is not even a clause. It is merely what is called in English a participial phrase used adjectively. But as

a mere fragment of a complete sentence, it packs a mighty punch. It is descriptive of the learning of fools. And a fool says in his heart: there is no God! A fool tries in a thousand ways to deny the God of the Scriptures.

This ever learning and never being able to come to the knowledge of truth is characteristic of all who have a corrupted mind. It has been corrupted by sin and the devil; it is in a completed state of such a mind which is thoroughly reprobate to all that is of God and His Christ. These men are on a par with Jannes and Jambres who withstood Moses before Pharaoh, and who had to say finally, Yea, very soon: it is the finger of God! They withstand the messenger of God, who will bring mighty Egypt to its knees and beg Israel to leave. That was a grievous time for the church of God in Egypt.

Such are the grievous, the heavy times in which we are now living in these last days. Satan has little time and he has great wrath! And the matter is so grievous because the evil men here spoken of are not the men of the world who openly oppose Christ. Oh, if Paul were speaking only of war and sickness, famine and disease, revolution and social upheaval. This he does not do. The battle-line is not in this dimension. The battle-line is here between those who deny the truth under the pretense of religious piety and pretended godliness. Such pretend to be good, god-fearing children of God, while they really are veritable children of the Devil. They are not really Christians who are partakers of Christ's anointing and who walk in their office of believers as prophets, priests, and kings of the Living God.

Our day is full of such. Their name is legion. Let us not be deceived by these theological charlatans in the church. They make mighty progress in this church-world and number their devotees in the hundreds of thousands. They are where you find the multitudes: on the broad way which leads to destruction. Think of the "four major cults" as described by Dr. Anthony Hoekema: the Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah Witnesses, Christian Scientists, and Latter Day Saints. Yes, these too are "ever learning" and yet "never able to come to the knowledge (the accurate knowledge) of the truth." They cannot know the truth which sets the Christian free from sin, guilt, corruption, death. Or think of the Social Reform hawkers of our day who prate their grievances and publish their panaceas in

the name of the truth. Think of the hue and cry that what we need is the "kerygma" of the Bible. The historical reality of the Bible is not of the essence; what we need is the "demythologizing" of the New Testament so that we may find the truth in the "myth" of the Scriptures. We need a brand new set of rules of interpreting the Bible. Rudolf Bultman was not the first to promote this error and damnable lie. This was already the hue and cry of the Gnostics and their kind in the days of the early church.

No, there is nothing new under the sun. Paul here characterizes the false teachers in the "latter times," that is in the entire New Testament when Satan makes his onslaughts in the church!!! Ever there are those who deny the Five Points of Calvinism, and calumniate those who would make their calling and election sure. Refusing to enter the kingdom of God themselves, they would prevent others from entering. But the gates of hell will not prevail against the church!

Are not these teachers earnest men, sincerely attempting to come to the knowledge of the truth? We know better. Paul tells us who they are. They are merely resisters of the truth, bringing all their evil influence to bear against the truth. They make their false propaganda in a sneaking way. They

Remember the Beacon Lights Literary

Contest

send entries before

December 31, 1971 to

DONNA KNOPER

1438 Elliott St., S.E.

Grand Rapids, Mich. 49507

creep into houses, lead captive silly women, laden with sins. Think of the women who played such an outstanding role in the false religions of Seventh Day Adventism, and Christian Science. Silly women, laden with sin! Not one had a hair on her head that fought against sin and Satan with a free and good conscience! And these men therefore are mere hawkers of their lie, and do not stand speaking the truth with Paul in Christ before God! Truth they cannot speak. Truth they do not know. Truth they *cannot* ever come to know! They are of corrupt and reprobate minds.

Small wonder that Paul thus speaks of these men. Did not the Lord Jesus Himself unmask the hypocritical Pharisees of ancient times for what they really were: white-washed sepulchres full of dead men's bones. "These men with countless vices," as says Calvin, "enjoyed a reputation for outstanding holiness." How Calvin castigates the Roman clergy of his day with "impurity so great it stinks in the nostrils of the whole

world." Thus it is with these men in Paul's day: They are lovers of their own selves! Hence, they were despisers of others, harsh, cruel, fraudulent, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, despisers of those that be good!!

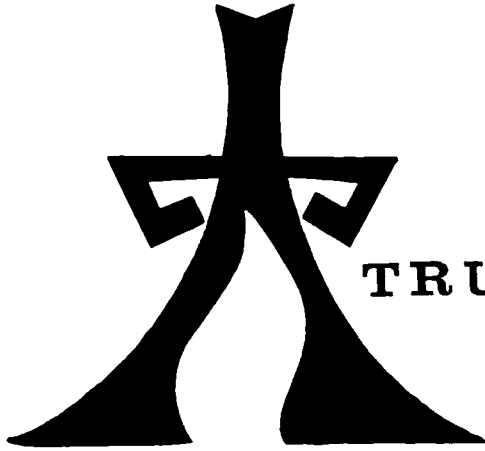
These men sincere scholars?!!

They are not able to ever come to the correct knowledge of truth. Yes, they sport their scholastic degrees, and have great and impressive diplomas from universities, perhaps. Or they are the nonliterate from the rank and file in the church-world.

Yes, we live in grievous times. To the law and to the prophets is the call of the hour else there is no dawn of the day of God. It's time for earnest study, young people. Time for rejection of all errors which are repugnant to the truth. A time of testing and trial this is. It is the trial of your faith which is very precious, like precious gold with the Lord. Buy out the time whereas the days are evil!

Rules for the Beacon Lights Literary Contest

- I. The divisions are poetry and prose. Under the division of prose there will be further divisions of fiction and nonfiction.
- II. All entries must be done by either baptized or confessing members of the Protestant Reformed Churches.
- III. The age categories for each of the 3 divisions are grade school, high school, and adult.
- IV. Entries must be typewritten or legibly printed. The title, not name must be on the entry. The type of entry and title and *name* must be on the title page. As many entries as you like may be submitted.
- V. Entries will be judged on artistic quality and content.
- VI. First prize is \$10 and your picture in the BEACON LIGHTS. Second place prize is one year's free subscription to the BEACON LIGHTS and your picture in the BEACON LIGHTS. (If the winner already receives the BEACON LIGHTS, he will receive one free year on his subscription.) Third prize is honorable mention.
- VII. No entries will be returned and BEACON LIGHTS will publish appropriate entries with the permission of the author.
- VIII. The due date is December 31, 1971. Mail entries to:
Donna Knoper
1438 Elliott St., S. E.
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507
- IX. No previously published articles are eligible.



TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBT. C. HARBACH

Faithful In Vanity Fair

Christian and Faithful, passing on from the wilderness, approached the town of Vanity. An all-year-round fair was there so that it came to be called Vanity Fair. This was no newly erected business, for it was a thing of ancient standing, going back, actually, to the Tower of Babel. Babel represents the antichristian worldpower, and every world's fair has a tower or space-needle which may be seen from every point in the fair. It symbolizes the Man of Sin's dominance over all things against God and against His Christ. Yet it goes back even farther, to Cain's city, where the junior chamber of commerce boasted the original masters of agriculture, industry, arts and sciences. One of them, Jubal, belonged to a family of musicians, expert in the art of music. Jubal invented the musical pipe, for the horn, for the organ. The word in Genesis 4:21 is *ooghehbc*, an onomatopoeic word, one which imitates the sound imbedded in its meaning. (Even today you can still purchase an old fashioned *oogah* horn for your car.) This and all the other inventions of the Cainites, as well as the beginnings of their year-round fair, were for the purpose of shutting out God. It is not the thing as such, but the use and purpose of the thing which make it good or bad.

Now Vanity Fair had on sale simply everything — houses, lands, trades, places, honors, titles, countries, kingdoms, lusts, pleasures and delights of all sorts, as whores, bawls, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants,

lives, bloods, bodies, souls, silver, gold and precious stones. Going on at all times are jugglings, cheats, games, plays, fools, apes, knaves and rogues. To be seen, and for nothing, are thefts, murders, adulteries, false swearers and that of blood-red color. Dominating the fair is a space-needle stretching to the sky in the sinuous form of a huge red dragon standing on its tail, with its revolving head forming a restaurant platform, and topped with a black crown which houses the office of the head of the fair. The door of the office bears the name, Diabolus. Those "in" with Vanity Fair profess nothing of Christ or His kingdom, for He commands His own to come out from among them and be separate. Here God is shut out. Here Diabolus teaches men to abuse the good creatures of God to vile purposes. Here the Devil commercializes birth-control, abortion, heart (and other organs) transplants, legalizes prostitution, gambling, dangerous-drug use and euthanasia (mercy killing). The people of the fair are deluded and bemused into thinking that genuine satisfaction from and enjoyment of all these things is perfectly consistent with humanity. In fact, he who opposes any of these things is immediately pounced on as an inhuman monster. So these wares of the fair are used to bait man's lust, avarice, levity, sensuality and carnal mind to the point of degrading him below animal level and rendering him totally incapable of even ordinary accomplishment. Man is thus reduced to a low-

brow menial of the state. Completely fulfilled is the divine word, God gave them up to vile passions!

Every fair has its own rows and streets representing countries and kingdoms. There are the priests in the Italian Row with their beads and crucifixes. There are the higher critics in the German Row with their philosophies and their scripture-shredding theories. There are the fashion models in the French Row with their mod-styles emphasizing floppy, bloodless, pipe-stem limbs protruding from baggy but truncated "hollowe'en" costumes. The Italian Row for years ran and operated the fair. But you know who then and still does own and finance it. Since the Renaissance and the Reformation, the Romish counter-reformation had given place to the more plausible and intellectual issuance of modern skepticism in the Enlightenment, to the prideful supremacy of so called science and humanism.

It was through this fair Faithful and Christian had to go. For travelers on the way to the Above-Jerusalem who would avoid and not go through this town "must needs go out of the world." Prince Immanuel himself went through it, where He encountered the lord of the fair who flattered Him with becoming Lord of Vanity if He would but bow to his dominion. But the Prince of princes did not so cheapen himself, having no mind to the merchandise, and so bought nothing of it.

Every fair throbs with the noise and bustle of a vain show. But the presence of these pilgrims caused a furor to arise. The first cause of the furor was the dress of the pilgrims, different from the denizens of the fair (Rom. 3:22; 13:14; Gal. 3:27). Such clothing made the people stare at them. Some called them fools; others said they were insane (the cage-keepers of the fair); and still others said they were "too far out." The second cause of the furor was their speech. Few could understand what they said. They spoke the language of New Canaan, while the people of the fair were men of this world. Hence, they seemed barbarians to each other. The third cause of the furor was that the pilgrims paid no attention to the displays or the goods of the fair, never caring so much as to glance at them. The merchants were not amused

at this. Their cry of "buy! buy! why don't you buy?" was only met with the pilgrims' putting their fingers in their ears and running off with, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity." The fourth cause of the furor was when one merchant tried to pull them into his concession with "What will you buy?" and they answered, "We buy the truth! and sell it not!" Then you never saw such mocking, ridicule and inciting of others to riot against them. Then the furor became so bad all order was destroyed and pandemonium reigned. What a confusion of voices! Some were yelling, "O Baal, hear us!" Some were screaming, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" Others waddled like apes with heads down chanting, "Not this Man, but Barabbas!" And others raised left-handed fists in the air shouting, "His blood be on us and on our children!" Together the mad babel of sound made one hellish roar from morning to noon. It almost blew the fair apart.

Word was brought to the big man of the fair. In fact he had already seen and heard everything about it on his inter-circuit TV set. Soon his roustabouts apprehended the men, taking them into custody for examination. Pilgrims are suspect at Vanity Fair. Not only are Christians under continual surveillance, but there are more spies against them than they know. Espionage is unceasingly carried on against them. Then the two were taken to UN Row where an agent of H.E.W. examined them. They told who they were, where they came from, where they were going, what they were doing there in the dress they wore and why they would buy only the truth. But their inquisitors did not believe them, putting them down as either escapees from a mental institution or worthy of committal to same. They were then turned over to some huge, wild-eyed men who beat them with crab-tree cudgels, smeared them with dirt (1 Cor. 4:13) and put them in the cage.¹

Their behavior in the cage was that of patience, "not rendering railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing," and giving good words for bad. Nevertheless, they were made the authors of the disturbance. For this they were beaten pitilessly, put in irons and led up and down the fair (1 Cor. 4:9) in chains to terrorize the city. Then they

were remanded to the cage again with their feet fast in the stocks. Here they learned the truth of

*Behold Vanity Fair! The Pilgrims there
Are chained, and stoned beside:
Even so it was our Lord passed here,
And on Mt. Calvary died.*

Here they recalled the words of Evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5) in which he had warned them: "in that town you will be hardly beset with enemies who will strain hard to kill you; and be sure that one or both of you must seal the testimony which you hold with blood. But be faithful unto death, and the King will give you a crown of life! The one who shall die here, although his death shall be unnatural, and his pain great, yet will have the better of his fellow; not only because he will arrive sooner in Zion, but because he will escape many miseries the other will suffer the rest of his journey." Then they began to comfort one another with the thought that the one whose lot it was to die here should have the better of

the two, each man secretly wishing he might be that one.

(Continued, D.V.)

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1. a. Cp. Gen. Edwin A. Walker's case: arrested, taken into custody in the Lyceum building on the Ole Miss campus for about an hour; from there taken to the federal building in Oxford, Miss.; then in a few hours, spirited away in irons secretly to a mental institution in Springfield, Mo., without benefit of counsel, notice or a hearing. — Read "The Invasion of Mississippi," Amer. Opinion Reprints, pp. 91-97, \$1.00, Belmont, Mass. 02178.
 - b. Cp. Fox's Book of Martyrs, especially the cases of Wm. Lithgow, Anthony Rivetti, Mary Revol, Capt. Joshua Gianavel, John Wicliffe, John Huss, Jerome of Prague.
 - c. Cp. the same treatment of Pilgrims repeated over and over in the Book of Acts, itself both an amazing and rewarding study in: 3:13-21; 4:17-29, 40-42; 7:54-60; 12:1-19; 16:19-24; 17:5-9, 13; 18:12-17; 19:23-40; 20:1-3; 21:27-36; 22:22-30; 23:1-2, 12-15.

FEATURES

MY GOD, HEAL ME!

KAREN KARSTEN

This article was written for all kinds of people — for those who live in a perpetual fear of being socially unaccepted, for those who are afraid to share themselves with others, for those who are too hard and calloused towards others to recognize the cry of a desperate life. It was written for those who enjoy life, for those who hold dreams close to their hearts, and for those who patiently seek to build and shape the lives of people they love. This article was written because at some time in our lives we all are these kind of people and most of us fail to see beyond the types we set up to what lives in other's hearts. It is the cross that opens our eyes.

Hurt. There are few things in life more capable of dragging up the human heart than hurt. The wounds it leaves behind may never heal or when they do, the remaining ugly white scars continue to press into consciousness a remnant of the pain left from yesterday's hurt.

Hurt often marks some of the greatest

landmarks in our lives. The wonder of a discovering child may be marked with the hurt of failure and words of reproach. Or separation may lance itself deeply into the love of a young couple and the agony of hurt may tear open two hearts. Hurt does not by-pass parents either. It may crash into their lives in forms of parent-child alienation or leave massive wounds in the aftermath of sorrow and death. Hurt inches itself into the lives of the young and the old most often in forms of loneliness, a disease which eats away self-confidence and trust. Hurt works through words too. Even life's strongest ties of love and understanding are marred and torn by cruel words. Marriages are rent by barrages of angry words or by words that cruelly point up short-comings and weaknesses. Hurt tags those friendships that are broken through words of snobbery and through unkind gossips. Words *not* spoken cause hurt to thrive in almost everyone's heart. Kindness not recognized, accomplishment not praised, and

happiness not shared leave behind hurt that so easily grows to bitterness. Both unspoken apologies and unvoiced praise allow hurt to breed barriers of envy and jealousy.

One often wonders why our lives must be so often marked with the agony of hurt. And yet, when we hurt, somehow it is always easier to find the road that leads to Calvary. When people fail us, the face of Jesus shines more brightly in the darkness and to find the way to the cross through sorrow and to see the path through tears makes it become a bit less difficult. Then too, it is easier to see the throng of aching hearts and broken up lives that are stumbling on that same road to the cross. But not only is it easier to see into the depths of other's lives, but suddenly our own lives turn themselves inside out and an awareness of weakness and a realization of how incapable we are of handling life's troubles and hurts floods our souls. Filled with dismay, frustration and agony, we climb the last incline to the cross and there meet Jesus Christ. We see that his face is lined with

sorrow, criss-crossed with eternal lines of suffering. His eyes meet ours. Wordlessly and gently he searches our hurting hearts, overturns hidden thoughts of desperation and listens to the sobs.

Amazed, we turn again to look into his piercing eyes. They speak of sorrow but also of strength. His entire visage is marred with scars and wounds — scars and wounds from thousands of years. As a father he has borne the insults and rebellions of his ungrateful children and suddenly we become acutely aware of our own contributions to those wounds. Feeling again the wounds of hurt with which we came to this place, we gratefully sigh as His words like balm have healed us enough to go back into life once again. Having given to us of his limitless Self, a Self bearing more sorrow, agony, and hurt than our lives could ever know, we humbly turn from Him and with lifted heads and reflecting hearts are ready to face the hurt in life with more courage and more strength.

I FEAR I AM A TOM

RACHEL LUBBERS*

The blue curtains in Tom's bedroom move just slightly from the window's tiny opening while early dawn streaks across last night's sky. November's light chilly breeze disturbs Tom from his peaceful sleep as he awakes to find himself chilled from the window he had forgotten to close. Being as tired as he was however, his brown eyes closed and again he was asleep. Minutes and seconds ticked away one half hour of time before Tom was re-awakened by the cold. Forcefully he ripped from himself the warm blankets and sleepily walked over to the window. While Tom gave his first glance to this new day, a great sigh of disappointment escaped from him. He hated last night and he wished it had never arrived for he found that the first slight bit of snow had at last fallen. And today was no better. The sky was grey, cloudy, and sad, and the wind was cold. Everything was dead and it almost seemed that the

sun had died in the heavens. What a day — a day not worth anything too much, at least not for happiness. Tom dragged himself back to his bed but strangely did not sleep. It perplexed him to hear his sisters talking so excitedly in their bedroom across the hall so early in the morning. Tom lay quietly for some time listening to the conversation. Suddenly he realized what it was all about. Today was Thanksgiving Day and all the relatives were coming for dinner. What a relief for him because there would be no school and his school work was not finished. But now he remembered he had church this morning. To him it seemed as if he could never win. He remembered from last week's bulletin that the sermon was going to be entitled "Thankfulness to God." And why a sermon on this again? Every year on the same day he heard the same thing. Who is not thankful for a home, a place of shelter, warmth, food and love? And am I not thankful for parents who, since I was a small child, helped me find who I am, he thought? Or

*Committee included: G. Bouwkamp, V. Haveman, J. Holstege, L. Ekema, J. Van Overloop, D. Van Uffelen.

what about health and the ability to hear, smell, taste, see, and touch? Oh, he admitted of course, that he often forgot about some of the most significant things that he had. He knew he should be more thankful for such things as friends, God who cares about him, the freedom to raise his voice in singing and to bow his head in prayer, the ability to laugh with his friends, to share with others and have others share with him. Right, as he had learned in Sunday School when he was a small child, "Be ye thankful for all things." For . . . all . . . things . . . A-l-l . . . things?? I guess that is right, he thought. Even for last night's snow and today's cloudy sky, for school and also for church. Yet, he could not stop here. All things included the world of sickness and sorrow, pain and death, the world of loneliness and the world of war. But perhaps the most important part is to live in the world of true appreciation for all these things.

Tom, sadly and quietly, slowly turned under the warm blankets and buried his head deeply in his pillow as the minutes of this Thanksgiving Day ticked away. He stared out into the dimly lit room while his mind seemed to cry. Tom walked back in time to the day he unexpectedly discovered a verse which struck him strangely but which he forgot as time traveled ahead. He recited it perfectly to himself. "For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord; whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."

. . . .
*Lord, help me to be a thankful Christian,
For life and what is given in that life,
For all things of today and all things of
tomorrow.
And grant repentance for complaining about
yesterday.*

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CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

RACHEL LUBBERS

A CRYING FAILURE

Huge clouds of smoke rise into the endless blue sky while man again writes on the pages of history. Excitedly, society waits for Apollo 15's new and more advanced trip to become more a part of them. Meanwhile, research is being conducted and hours of study invested to bring into reality the not so distant Apollo 16.

This is great, isn't it? It is a real privilege to be able to see the moon, have our men walk on it, to be able to find what it is made of, and have our flag erected there. It is amazing the ways in which experimentation can continue to fill in our questions and show others we can accomplish what they cannot.

Well, let us stop for a minute and look at it through a different magnifying glass, the glass through which I see a young father moaning weakly from lack of food while many a people walk politely by. And beyond this I spot a land where a whole country slowly is being destroyed by starvation. I find people crying in such fierce pain that it will never be forgotten. I view the many ghetto areas crushed with complete silence and yet screaming so loud that it fills the night. I see everywhere people trying to crawl out from ugly pits of unhappiness and sadly, I turn my magnifying glass to the pathetic scene in Vietnam. The mass confusion and the most sorrowful

faces that confront me there fill me with many questions.

How long can people go ignoring the tragedy of spending such a fantastic amount of time and money on going to the moon while at the same time we are living with conditions here on earth that are not improving or even in many cases growing more drastic! Surely all today's problems cannot be cleared away and all tears turned into a happy smile. But, where do people place their values? Is it not far more important to help some of our brothers come home to us again from the war in Vietnam? Doesn't it make more sense to feed a starving people? Or to try help repair the born ghettos? To at least *try* to help people find a smile with some kind of meaning should be the goal of any humanitarian society.

I fail to understand how man can become so excited over space ships sent to the moon and yet remain insensitive towards the dying nation. Perhaps Apollo 15 shows more clearly than ever the sad condition of people in this United States. Our millions of dollars are burned up into the sky as we explore the moon and we call it success.

Isn't it a pity?

Now I've seen through this magnifying glass. I'm going to throw it out and hope someone will reach up and catch it in the wind.



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NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

KAREN KARSTEN

Dear Readers,

This is the last article I will be writing for the BEACON LIGHTS News column. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who so regularly sent your bulletins to me. I am also happy to say that Jeanne Gritters will be taking my position and she is looking forward to the job. Please continue to send your bulletins but to this new address: 1130 Franklin, S.E., Grand Rapids, Mi. 49507.

Allow me also to make this plea. If you do not send your bulletins to BEACON LIGHTS now, *please* do make new efforts to do so. Thank you.

From Hope, Walker, Michigan:

Mr. Michael Engelsma and Miss Brenda Reitema were united in marriage on October 7.

From South Holland, Illinois:

Rev. Van Baren gave a lecture on October 29 in the church auditorium entitled "Can There be Reformation No More?"

Mrs. L. Regnerus and Mrs. P. Ipema were received from the Oak Lawn Church.

Confession of faith was made by the following young people: Lewis Bruinsma, Robert Hoving, Robert Lenting, Robert Poortenga, Julie Poortenga, Karen Poortenga, Lois Poortenga, Kathleen Regnerus, Gysbert Van Baren, Bert Worries, and Peter Zandstra.

Mr. Harry Rutgers has transferred to First Church in Grand Rapids.

The Church Extension Committee is busy at work. Its name has been changed to The Evangelism Committee and they are working on a new bulletin cover, the front page showing a picture of the church and the back cover containing a statement: This We Believe. They are also working on a new pamphlet entitled "Consolation For The Sick." As most of us already know,

their church services are also broadcasted over a local station and work continues on this project also.

From Hull, Iowa:

Miss Helinda DeJong and Mr. David Wiersma were united in marriage on September 17.

Miss Sue De Vries and Mr. Dennis Jansma were united in marriage on September 24.

Mr. Dennis Jansma and Mr. Loran Te Grotenhuis were received from the First Ref. Church of Hull and Mr. David Wiersma was received from St. Andrews Church.

From Loveland, Colorado:

Mrs. Grace Bruinsma has transferred to South Holland Church.

A Reformation Day speech was given by Rev. Engelsma on October 28 in the church. The program was sponsored by the Church Extension Committee.

Mr. Melvin Gries and Miss Robin Gries were united in marriage on October 15.

From Holland, Michigan:

On October 22 the consistory arranged a program and social hour in view of Rev. Heys' 30th anniversary in the ministry of God's Word.

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Vanden Berg and two baptized children were received from the Central Ave. Chr. Ref. Church.

Miscellaneous News:

A Reformation Day lecture was held on October 28 in the Allendale Chr. School Gym in Allendale, Michigan. Rev. Decker spoke on "The Foolishness of Preaching."

A singspiration was held in Holland Church on October 31 in commemoration of Reformation Day. The collection was for the 1972 Convention.