

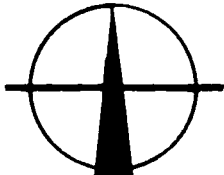
# BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH*

December, 1972

*Silhouettes  
of the Cross*

*True  
Pentecostalism*





# BEACON LIGHTS

VOLUME XXXII

DECEMBER 1972

NUMBER 8

Published monthly, except June and August by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.

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Forms 3579 should be returned to BEACON LIGHTS  
 Box 7383, Grand Rapids, Mich. 49510

Second Class Postage paid at  
 Grand Rapids, Michigan  
 Subscription price \$3.00

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## WHAT'S WORTH KNOWING?

The question raised in the title above is much on the minds of contemporary educators. The American system of education has come under attack from many quarters because it is claimed that what is taught—the knowledge dispensed—is not worth knowing. It is completely irrelevant. I called attention to such a critic, William Ewald, some time ago. Ewald claimed that students in today's educational institutions are being educated for the 1940's and 50's and not for the 1970's. Education is about 25 years behind. Such is the claim, too, of Neil Postman and Charles Weingartner in their book *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*. It is to one chapter in particular in this book that I would like to make reference in this article. The fact that the title of this chapter and the title of this article are similar is not coincidental.

The problem, with today's education, claim the authors, is one of relevance. The "communication revolution" and technological progress have left in their wake all kinds of problems. There is air and water pollution, drugs, civil rights, noise, garbage and radiation. The trouble is, say the authors, our society has not kept pace with this "progress." Our schools have failed to educate the next generation to cope with this mess. Change is upon us and our people have not been told how to cope with change. We have experienced more change in the last twenty years than other civilizations have experienced in centuries, but the schools have failed us. The purpose of the book, then, of course, is to propose change in our school system.

The essence of the problem according to Postman and Weingartner is that schools and teachers have made the mistake of distinguishing between method and content and have emphasized content. The result has been that students have been told things which are not true and have been forced to believe that what they have been taught is relevant. This approach, contend the authors, must be dumped. We must listen rather to Marshall McLuhan who tells us that "the medium is the message," that is, the most important thing

is not what a teacher says but what he does. What is important is not what a student learns but how he learned it. The schools must not equip the student with all kinds of facts and figures and opinions of so-called authorities but must go about the business of giving the student a method that will enable him to survive and adjust to change. The most important thing in a classroom is not what is being taught but the environment. We must create a new classroom environment.

The method to be used to do this is what Postman and Weingartner call the inquiry method. Teachers must teach the art of asking questions. Students must be taught to not rely on authorities and textbooks but must be taught how to think for themselves. The new environment would not stress that learning is being told what happened but that learning is a happening in itself. The push is for an environment that encourages students to imitate the behavior of good learners. Confidence in their ability to learn, enjoyment of problem solving, a sense of relevance, independence of judgment, and flexibility are some of the characteristics of such people.

In addition, this environment must have teachers with the right attitudes. This is most crucial. The ideal teacher for these men would have the following characteristics: 1) He never tells his students what they ought to know. 2) He uses almost exclusively the method of questioning. 3) He avoids the Right Answer approach since there are many right answers. 4) He encourages student-student interaction rather than student-teacher interaction. 5) He rarely summarizes and concludes but leaves things open-ended. 6) He develops his lessons from student responses and from student-expressed needs. 7) He poses problems rather than solutions. 8) He measures success not in quantitative but in behavioral terms.

The design of the new environment, then, would be to have a student who is taught to ask questions, to make his own definitions, to make his own meanings and a teacher who encourages and facilitates

such learning. The teacher is a facilitator and not an instructor and the student is an active searcher rather than a passive receiver. The student must be equipped with a *method* to find answers to questions and problems which bother *him*. The student decides what is to be learned since obviously that is the only way that relevance will ever be attained.

That brings us to the original question of what is worth knowing. Postman and Weingartner conclude that the content of knowledge is not to be found in textbooks and course syllabi or in the opinions of so-called authorities. Rather, the content of learning ought to be determined by the student, the learner. He alone knows what he needs to know. What is worth knowing, then, depends upon who you are and where you are. The teacher, then, too, if he is to be effective, will have to zero in on these needs if his course is to be at all relevant.

What, then, do we make of this position, and how does it relate to us for we, too, need to answer this question of what is worth knowing.

First, let me make a positive comment about the book itself. To me, the book raises a question which must ever be before us: we also must be relevant in our Protestant Reformed education. We must be very aware of the needs of our students. One of the things which the authors condemn is knowledge for the sake of knowledge and we, too, would say, "Amen." But that is where the similarity ends.

What is worth knowing for us, you see, can never be determined by us. We will always select the wrong thing. We need guidance and direction from elsewhere. Man must never be set up as the measure of things. Neither, then, may man determine what is ultimately worth knowing. What we need to know comes as a command from God in his scriptures, namely, know ME! That is not an arbitrary thing but is an absolute command. Thus, when Postman and Weingartner tell us that we can decide what is good for us to know and what will allow us to survive, they are dead wrong.

And that really is what our Protestant Reformed education is all about. Protestant Reformed teachers are indeed concerned, and must be, about how you know and

they are concerned with why you must know (because God commands) but they are also very much concerned with what you know. They realize that what a student really needs to know and the only thing worth knowing at all is the knowledge of God and that is what their business is, too. They impart to you the knowledge of God. All the effort expended in our schools is for that purpose alone: to tell you who God is and what He has done.

You clearly understand, then, do you not, that of ourselves we would never place this value upon the knowledge of God if it were not for the regenerating work of God in us. By grace we say that the knowledge of God is alone worth knowing and even more, by grace we say that the ultimate worth of this knowledge is life eternal (John 17:3).

This truth ought to give us tremendous impetus in our pursuit of knowledge here on earth. It ought to give you as students (and not as young people alone—we all ought to be continuing learners) the motivation to work diligently for we know that we are not concerned simply with the survival of our physical bodies but that we are concerned with acquiring that which is the most precious thing to us. That, after all, will be the essence of heaven. We will know God in the highest sense possible.

Students, then, and, for that matter, teachers as well, do not determine what is worth knowing. All such attempts must end as the attempt of Postman and Weingartner, in subjectivism and relativism. Teachers must give and students must willingly receive the *what* of the knowledge of God. And that is to be found in the scriptures and in the creation, in God's revelation to us.

JON HUISKEN



## SILHOUETTES OF THE CROSS

MRS. R. REITSMA

Christmas is a time of joy, of fulfillment, of promise. But the True joy of Christmas is not to be found in the birth of Christ — though that is hope promised. Rather, the true joy of Christmas is found as we look through the nativity star to the cross — which is hope fulfilled. In Christmas we can see silhouettes of the cross.

I cannot help but see the  
Silhouette of the cross  
In the face of Joseph.

It had been a long journey, and a most difficult one. His was the responsibility for a virgin, great with child. His was the responsibility for the Christ-child. And what had he found? A filthy stable as a place for the Son of God to be born. His was now the awesome burden of raising and nurturing the God-man. To him had been entrusted the life of the Church of God. To him was given the complicated task of both teaching and yet always learning from his child, who was not his, but God's . . . who was GOD! I can well imagine that his face stood out in bas-relief in the flickering half-light of the stable. But the Angel of God had told him to fear not, truly God was with him now. How could it be otherwise? He had sent His Own Son to bring him into eternity! Joseph saw in this babe the Son of God, and because he, after the help of the Angel could see God in this Child, he bore the silhouette of the cross.

I cannot help but see the  
Silhouette of the cross in the heart  
Of the Virgin mother.

Hers was surely a unique experience. To be impregnated with the very life of God, to bear the Child who would carry the sins of the Church throughout history was joy without measure. It had been many months since the Angel had told her of the special place God had chosen for her. She had rejoiced with Elizabeth in the knowledge that through her the promise given to Abraham was to be realized. She was filled with the overwhelming power and mercy of Jehovah.

And yet she, too, must have been weary after her long and painful journey. And now, to bear a child — her first-born — in a stable. But God was there. He was there in the presence of the Holy Ghost, he was there in the presence of His Son incarnate. God was there, He could hardly go unnoticed. His Son was born! God had come, and no amount of weariness or disappointment could change that glorious fact. Christ was born! Mary's heart must have been bursting with joy of God's greatness. A double happiness was hers, for her first-born, a son, was the Son of God! He was the Son of God, come to lead her, along with the rest of the Church, into eternity. How could she, having this knowledge, not bear the silhouette of the cross?

But more than in the face of Father Joseph, more than in the heart of the Virgin Mother,

I cannot help but see the  
Silhouette of the cross  
In the gentle Babe.

A baby born, how thrilling! A life to make a home. A flower, tender as the dawn, a breath of hope, a wind-born song. A babe is born, the CHRIST is born, and in His soul he carries the knowledge of the heaven left, the hell to come, the cross he never will cease to bear. The Christ is born with the single, God-ordained purpose of delivering His Church. And this deliverance, this cross-bearing must begin at birth and cannot cease until hell is fought and conquered. The Christ is born, and

I cannot help but see the  
silhouette of the cross.

The silhouette of the cross . . . a silhouette, not a shadow. A shadow is darkness in the light, a sadness in the heart. I see a silhouette, not a shadow, for this silhouette was the promise of hope fulfilled.

Joseph, Mary, the Christ Child, all bore the silhouette of the cross. But they did not bear it alone. This silhouette of the cross has been born by the covenant seed for countless generations to come. We bear

the silhouette of the cross, for we bear in our souls, seared as though with a flame, the salvation of Christ, the Promise fulfilled. So this Christmas, look through the

nativity star to the cross. Bear the silhouette of the cross in your heart, show it in your life, and rejoice. for Christ is born!

## Mercy Killing in relation to the calling of a Christian Nurse

by MRS. V. HUNTER

Mercy is that compassion which causes one to help the sick or the poor. Showing mercy is one of the cardinal virtues of a true Christian (James 2:1-13) and is one of the determinants of God's treatment to us. Christian Mercy is a part of the fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:22 and 23) made up in part of love, long suffering, gentleness and goodness.<sup>1</sup>

Killing is the depriving of life.

Premeditated killing is murder.

All that mercy is, is essential to the calling of a Christian nurse. But of all the attributes none is more important than that of long suffering or patience. In the care of the ill, the infirm, the aged and especially the dying patience, much patience, is required. Patience for the tasks that need to be done. Patience with families that are often impatient, and Patience to wait for death to come according to God's Plan. When one has cared for the aged or terminally ill over a long period of time, many aspects of that task may become unpleasant, difficult and even repugnant at times even to one trained for such a task. The suffering endured by the dying is often hard for the nurse to bear. Added to these things are the anxious questions of the family. How long can this go on? Can't you do something . . . Is there no way to hurry the end? We rationalize. In our foolish finite minds we rebel against God by thinking how much better off this person would be if his earthly pilgrimage

were over. But God is sovereign. He is the ruler of heaven and earth. In all our behaviour we must recognize that Sovereignty, acknowledging that God determines the length of man's days. Now more than at any time mercy is demanded of the Christian nurse. The daily care of the dying must manifest love, gentleness, goodness, patience, and humility before the will of God.

In Mark 15:7 Jesus says to us, "Thou shalt do no murder." He gives us no exceptions. He does not say we may take the life of those who suffer and those who have no possibility of recovery. Jesus says to us, "Thou shalt do no murder." Thus it becomes blatant presumption to even consider that any mere creature, doctor, nurse, or loving family, should decide that the time has come for any person to die. This remains a part of God's council.

Any Christian nurse is called to that work by God. Such a calling demands obedience to God's commandments including, "Thou shalt do no murder." In this calling the Christian nurse must also minister in mercy till God in His sovereignty causes the curtain of death to descend. Such a calling demands all efforts to preserve one's own life and the life of one's neighbor.

Mercy killing or rather mercy murder? In administering mercy we may do no murder.

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1. *Zondervan's Pictorial Bible Dictionary.*

## TRUE PENTECOSTALISM

by REV. W. BEKKERING

The whole matter of Pentecostalism has troubled us for quite some time. Many of us have studied it either on our own or in societies and generally we understand it. We know that Pentecostalism is wrong, but

that is yet negative. What is this Spirit baptism of which they speak? How is the power of the Spirit manifest in our lives? What are the fruits of the Holy Spirit? Are we yet today to expect visible con-

crete evidences of the presence of the Spirit in our lives as it was manifest in the early New Testament church?

It is not my purpose in this article to trace the history of Pentecostalism, nor even to show the error of the movement as a whole. It is my purpose to show that as children of God we do have the Holy Spirit with all its power in our lives, and we have its fruits as they are set forth for us in Scripture. It is also my purpose to show that the Pentecostal's teaching with respect to the baptism of the Spirit is incorrect in the light of Scripture.

We as God's children have the Holy Spirit. In all His fulness and power He is operative in our lives. As members of the Body of Christ we are partakers of His fulness by the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit as poured out on the day of Pentecost is the Spirit of the exalted Christ. Jesus promised His disciples that He would pray the Father and that He would give them another Comforter that He may abide with them forever, even the Spirit of Truth (John 14:16). Christ would actually be present with His disciples and with the church of all ages through the Holy Spirit. That we do indeed have the Holy Spirit can be seen from what happened at Pentecost. Recall how the Holy Spirit was poured out on the 120, and how Peter, immediately upon receiving the Spirit, was able correctly to interpret Pentecost in the light of the Old Testament Scriptures, and in the light of the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. Upon hearing Peter's sermon as many as were ordained to eternal life believed, and asked Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:37-38). The promise is that ye shall receive the Holy Spirit! Sovereignly, graciously the Lord God bestows the gift of the Holy Spirit upon believers and their seed.

Pentecostals do not teach that when God quickens the dead sinner and bestows faith upon him that the regenerated sinner then has, in principle, the fulness of Christ and His Spirit with all His gifts and fruits. Rather, in harmony with the Arminianism

that characterizes most Pentecostal groups, they teach that when a person "accepts" Christ he receives the Holy Spirit as a potential power in his life, yet he needs more; he needs the baptism of the Holy Spirit in order to develop into a vital Christian and to receive the gifts and power of the Holy Spirit. The only way that a person can receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and tap the potential power in his life is by an act of his own will. He must consciously, actively seek it. He must meet certain requirements, such as earnest prayer, the complete yielding of oneself and cleansing his heart from all known sin. Then and only then can and does God bestow the Holy Spirit. In order to retain the Spirit in his life as a vital power he must continue to fulfill these requirements. (Various Pentecostal groups differ greatly in their idea of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and in the requirements to be met for His reception.)

Nowhere does Scripture present the reception of the Holy Spirit as do the Pentecostals. Christ, before he ascended, commanded His disciples to wait for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4). Peter told the repentant Jews, "ye shall receive the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38), and the apostle Paul in all his contact with the churches assumed that all the saints had the Spirit in all His fulness, as can be seen from Galatians 4:6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." We find in Scripture no initial seeking on the part of the recipient. The Pentecostal view is a distortion of Scripture and must be rejected.

Most Pentecostals today say that following upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit one may expect such unusual gifts as the gift of tongue speaking, gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy and so forth. We must establish, first of all, that these gifts did indeed accompany the outpouring of the Spirit on Pentecost. However, since that time many of the more spectacular gifts have passed away with the close of the apostolic age and the completion of the canon of Scripture. God bestowed unusual gifts upon the early church to show them, beyond a shadow of doubt, that the promised Spirit was come, and to show the

miraculous nature and power of the Spirit. Since that time, however, those unusual gifts are not necessary, for we have the infallible record of God's Word, and the Spirit in our hearts as a sure testimony that we are God's children, and, therefore, possessors of the Spirit of Christ.

In the nearly two thousand years that followed the apostolic age there never has been, in the orthodox church, any evidence of tongue speaking, or of the other unusual gifts. Not even at times of great spiritual strength, such as times of persecution, or the Great Reformation of the 16th century, were these gifts evident.

It is also important to note the position that Scripture gave to the unusual gifts at the time when they were legitimately in use in the church. Consider the gift of tongue speaking, since it is given so much prominence today, and notice that according to the apostle Paul it should be given a very small place. The Spirit gave utterance in unknown tongues and not all could interpret them, therefore, it was only to the individual's edification, and perhaps to a few who could interpret them. Paul rather, emphasized the use of the spiritual gifts that edified the whole church rather than a few individuals. He says in I Corinthians 14:4, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself, but he that prophesieth edifieth the church." Also in I Corinthians 14:18 and 19 Paul writes, "I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than ye all; yet in the church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." That shows the relatively small place Scripture gives tongue speaking; yet the Pentecostals today have elevated it to prime importance.

One of the attractions of Pentecostalism today is its emphasis on the sensational, the emotional and the unusual. Such emphasis has caused them to overlook or at least give small place to what might be called the more common gifts of the Spirit, such as those listed in Romans 12:6-8: prophecy, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling and showing mercy. It is these gifts, among others that God bestows, in varying degrees, upon members of His church. It is these gifts that we should expect and

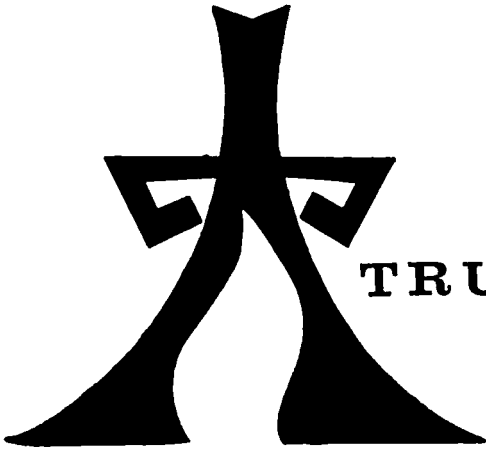
cultivate, and not a few spectacular ones, for it is by means of, and in connection with such gifts that the fruit of the Spirit is manifest.

The fruit of the Spirit is one, yet with many aspects, and that one fruit is love. The apostle Paul admonished the Corinthians to "covet earnestly the best gifts and yet show you a more excellent way" (I Cor. 12:31), and that more excellent way, as seen from I Corinthians 13, is love. That can also be seen from Galatians 5:19ff where the works (plural) of the flesh are compared to the fruit (singular) of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit is set forth in nine words the first of which is love. That obviously means that joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance, are all encompassed in the one word "love." In that one word is the whole law fulfilled. First of all we must love the Lord our God with all our heart and soul and mind. That implies, of course, that we have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness but rather reprove them (Eph. 5:11). This is the way in which we are to walk. This is the fruit we must seek and expect.

The Pentecostal with their seeming zeal and sensationalism make everything sound so nice and easy. Beware! They disregard the authority of Scripture and make their own subjective experience the standard of what to expect as fruits of the Spirit. In harmony with their Arminianism and Perfectionism they are often very superficial in their understanding of sin and its consequences. They emphasize the miraculous as evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit whereas Scripture does not.

Walking according to the Spirit is not an easy way, for it requires prayer, self-denial and a daily struggle against our sinful nature, which never seeks to walk after the Spirit. In that way, however, there is the joy that comes from knowing that we are God's children, and the peace that comes through the consciousness that our sins are forgiven through the blood of the cross. By grace let us steadfastly continue in the way of love, which is the chief fruit of the Spirit. Let us not be attracted by the way that is sensational, empty and vain; the way that can not stand the test of God's Word.





# TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBT. C. HARBACH

## Flatterer

*For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness. — PAUL*

The very first case of flattery on earth was when Adam and Eve fell, the result of listening to the enticing words, "Ye shall be as gods," and which proved the truth of "a flattering mouth worketh ruin" (Prov. 26:28). Flatterer is a false prophet, a black man in a white robe who has transformed himself into an angel of light. He knows how to put on an appearance more beautiful than the reality. A very confident guide he pretends to be. One day, while talking to and walking with him, Christian and Hopeful heard a slithery, snaky movement in the grass, felt a whip-lash grip on their ankles, and before another breath, both were up-ended, hanging suspended by their feet in mid-air with a net falling all around them. Attempts to get free only more entangled them. With that, the white robe fell off the black man, revealing who he really was. Then they saw, too, how far astray they had been led. But there they were abandoned, crying in their misery. Finally a Shining One appeared, carrying a whip of small cords. He cut them loose and put them back on the right road again. Then the interrogation began. Where did you stay last night? With the four shepherds on the Delectable Mountains. Didn't the shepherds give you a note of direction for your way? Yes, true. But didn't you, every so often, read the directions? No.

Why not? We forgot. Did the shepherds warn you against Flatterer? Yes, but we did not think the man we met could be he.

Flattery is a sin against the ninth commandment. Just to see what company this sin keeps, read what the Larger Catechism lists as the sins forbidden by the ninth commandment: "all prejudicing of the truth, and the good name of our neighbor as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving false evidence, suborning false witnesses, wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, out-facing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence, calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery, concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calls for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful or equivocal expression, to the prejudice of truth or justice; speaking untruth, lying, slandering, back-biting, detracting, tale-bearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh and partial censuring misconstruing intentions, words and actions; FLATTERING, vainglorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly or

too meanly of ourselves or others; denying the gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults: hiding, excusing or extenuating of sins when called to a confession; unnecessarily discovering of infirmities; raising false rumors; receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears against just defence; evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any, endeavoring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful contempt, fond admiration; breach of lawful promises; neglecting such things as are of good report; and practicing or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering what we can in others such things as procure an ill name."

In this list, just before flattery, you find talebearing, and in a connection with very evil implications. "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets; therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips" (Prov. 20:19). The talebearer worms his way into the secrets of the unwary, and by flattery gains his materials for talebearing. He flatters those present to get material for gossip about those absent. Then he will go out and sow in people's minds seeds of jealousy. Flatterers quickly turn talebearers. "Do not be familiar with them, nor give them a hearing when they vend their tales and reveal their secrets, for you may be sure they will betray your secrets too, and tell tales of you." "When the wolf licks the lamb he is preparing to wet his tongue in its blood and to whet his teeth on its bones." It is his way, as Joab with Abner and Amasa, to kiss and kill. Flattery is the sign of the tavern where deceit is the bar-tender. Therefore we need to sing and pray,

*O Lord, be Thou my helper true,  
For just and godly men are few;  
The faithful who can find?*

*From truth and wisdom men depart,  
With flattering lips and double heart,  
They speak their evil mind.*

*The lips that speak the truth to hide,  
The tongues of arrogance and pride,  
That boastful words employ,  
False-speaking tongues that boast their  
might,*

*That own no law, that know no right,  
Jehovah will destroy.*

"It is worthy of observation that flattering lips, and tongues speaking proud things are classed together. The fitness of this is clear, for they are guilty of the same vice. The first flatters another, and second flatters himself. In both cases a lie is in their right hands. One generally imagines that flatterers are such mean parasites, so cringing and fawning, that they cannot be proud; but the wise man will tell you that while all pride is truly meanness, there is in the very lowest meanness no small degree of pride. Caesar's horse is even more proud of carrying Caesar than Caesar is of riding him. The mat on which the emperor wiped his shoes, boasts vaingloriously, crying out, 'I cleaned the imperial boots!' None are so detestably domineering as the little creatures who creep into office by cringing to the great. Those are bad times, indeed, in which those obnoxious beings are numerous and powerful" (C. H. Spurgeon, Treas. of David, I, 159).

Sisera was flattered, Jael praised. There is a difference. Praise has its place, but flattery is a sin. The trouble is we love praise and are inclined to be easily flattered. There is the danger. For flattery is cover for a trap. One man expressed it, "A man whom it is proper to praise cannot be flattered, and a man who can be flattered ought not to be praised." This ought to remind us of the man Christ Jesus and just how far different from Him we are. He ought always to be praised, and cannot be praised too much: whereas, on the contrary, we deserve no praise, but the very reverse. "If thou shouldst mark our sins, who then could stand?" But we were thinking of Jael. "She brought him butter in a lordly dish" (Judges 5:25). Whether she intended it or not, Sisera by this entertainment was flattered. That is, he was deceived by the lavish gesture. He thought he was getting the comfort and hospitality of an honored guest. For wasn't he being entertained like a lord? The impression he received was that Jael ought to be and actually thought herself highly honored to pay him this respect. So his pounding heart was quietened and his suspicions were tranquilized. He asked for a drink of water. A more intoxicating drink was pressed to his lips. For he had hardly become comfortably settled in a quiet corner when he

had become inebriated with flattery. The man already had been pierced through both head and heart with the nail of flattery. That nail rusts the heart and puts reason in a delirium. "She brought him butter in a lordly dish." When he took it his foot went treacherously down on a slippery place. "The words of his (Flatterer's) mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords" (Psalm 55:21). Many a man has met his downfall because unable to stand against the powerful weapon of flattery. That is the weapon, among others, of the seductress. "The lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil, but her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword" (Prov. 5:3-4).

Flatterer belongs to a long dynasty, beginning with the first in that line, Satan, and culminating in his last tool, the Antichrist (Dan. 11:21, 32, 34). Even now there are many antichrists who by "the flattery of the tongue" turn many away to

a counterfeit gospel. Flattering words sometimes come in an unknown tongue. We ought not be surprised that the Roman Church now falls head over heels in love with its own "tongues movement." For it has, for centuries, delivered its religion in a strange language not understood by the common people, by which they have been kept in ignorance. Now with that practice much in the past, an ecstatic tongues-speaking, nevertheless, takes it place. Yet the same absence of edification prevails and remains.

Flattery, perhaps in its crudest form, is called "flapdoodle." The dictionary defines that as "the food on which fools are fed."

The cure for *all* these evils is to be had in the Word of God read, preached, taught and studied in our own language. The doctrine of the pure gospel of Christ is the alone antidote for all errors, heresies, superstition, idolatries, flatteries and deceptions. In it you have vitamins which you can safely take in massive doses. Take them and be well fortified and immunized.

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## REFLECTIONS

### **"Tempted Of God"\***

by REV. C. HANKO

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God. James 1:13.

The Word of God comes to us with a note of warning. When the hosts of darkness are set in battle array against us and temptations beset us from every side, when Satan lays his snares for us, threatening us with suffering, scorns and sneers, or luring us with the attractions of sin, when our faith falters and the battle seems hopeless, let us not say that we are tempted of God.

But is it not true, we ask, that no temptation can ever befall us apart from God?

It is.

When Job deprived of all his possessions and visited with a dreadful plague, even to the astoundment of his three friends, it was God who called Satan's attention to His servant Job and gave him consent and power to afflict him with bitter grief.

When David committed the sin of counting the people, it was God, in His anger against Israel, who moved David through the instrument of the devil to commit this folly. II Sam. 24:1. I Chron. 21:1.

And in this awefulest of nights when Jesus surrendered Himself into the hands of His enemies to be slain, and Satan was out to sift Peter as the wheat, it was God who directed Peter's way to the palace of the high-priest. When Peter, stunned to confusion, staggered before the sneer of a mere damsel and a few sporting soldiers, it was God who created the circumstances in which Peter found himself. And it was God who delayed the crowing of the cock until Peter was well on his way toward denying his Lord three times.

And why should we add more? We know that nothing befalls us, not even to losing one hair of our heads, without the will of our heavenly Father. Also the devil and

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\*Taken from the March, 1943 issue.

all the powers of wickedness are employed in His providence to serve His eternal purpose.

Are we, then, tempted of God?

Never say that.

Let not one of us ever lay the charge of our sins to God.

It would only mean that we are not even fully conscious of our own corruption and guilt. Nor are we ready to confess our sin in true sorrow of heart and repentance before Him. But we are rather seeking to excuse ourselves and our sinfulness to continue in the way of the transgressor. We are already caught in the snares of temptation.

Besides that, it is impossible that we should be tempted of God. God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man. God is the light, in Whom is no darkness whatsoever; He is righteousness, and hates all unrighteousness; holiness, and holds Himself aloof from evil. Evil cannot arise in the heart of God nor penetrate into His thoughts, for evil is strange to Him. He cannot lure anyone into ways of wickedness with the intent of seeking his downfall. The holy God never tempts any man with evil.

Let the thought not enter our minds, nor the word pass our lips.

Let us not blame the circumstances we are in for the temptations that beset us and the sins we commit.

How easy it often seems to excuse ourselves and to lay the blame somewhere else.

We cannot help it that we are thrown into the company of sinful men every day. They will laugh at us if we profess our faith among them, sneer at us if we refuse to make light of holy things in their presence. They may take our jobs from us if we do not organize or in some other way compromise with them. It happens to be the kind of a world we are living in, and there is little we can do about it.

Or, again, we simply have a sinful nature that is attracted to the things of this world. The pleasures and treasures of the world appeal to us. We know that this is not as it should be, but it happens to be the case. Not that we live extremely godless and sinful lives, far be it from us that we should allow ourselves to sink so low, but when

a person is young he must have some good times.

And the young man in service, far from home and friends and Church, finds himself in the midst of the world at its worst. If he does not go along with the others he is an outcast, the laughing stock of the group. Besides, he is lonely and sick at heart. Fears and dread of what lie before him crowd upon all his thoughts. What is the use of always being on his guard against temptations? Who would ever be the wiser, if he did drown his grief by an occasional departure from the way? How can he help it if he finds himself in such a position that he cannot resist the wrong? He does not actually seek the evil, but circumstances have brought it upon him.

And all the time we are saying: I am tempted of God.

Never say that.

Rather say: The fault lies with me. The reason that I am tempted to sin is because of my own sinfulness. I am evil, born in sin. My sins rise up against me, prevailing day by day. If it were not for the lusts of my flesh sin would have no appeal, the attractions of the world would not draw me, the sneers of the foolish, sinful men would not disturb me, and Satan could never lure me into his snares.

If I yield to temptation I am following the lusts of my heart. I am giving place to the devil and inviting him to do his evil work in my heart. I am walking the way of sin, even while I know that the way of the transgressor shall perish.

Because we are aware of the sinfulness that dwells in us we must jealously guard our souls, fighting the battle of faith against sin which so easily besets us.

Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.





# CRITIQUE

DONNA VAN UFFELEN

## A WORLD OF INIQUITY

How many different ideas have come to mind since reading those words, "A World of Iniquity"? Just think about them for a few minutes.

No doubt most of our thoughts have strayed along the lines of the evil world in which we are living today, the "world" as it is in its literal meaning. But let us now look at a different type of "world." This is a type of world which we do not often think about, one which is contained in each one of us, the "world" of which James speaks. If we turn to the third chapter of his epistle, we will see that this "world of iniquity" is "the tongue."

The first thoughts of these strong, severe words would probably be that James was exaggerating; or that, at least, he was speaking of an exception to the rule. But all it takes is a little self-examination of our sins and weaknesses to find that the words of the apostle are actually not too strong at all. The tongue can cause more happiness or more pain than all other human instrumentalities. Throughout a lifetime, a single tongue can cause a world of happiness or a world of sorrow, one of pleasure or one of pain.

James mentions, in particular, a few of the evils of the tongue. But before he mentions these sins, he speaks, in verse 13, of a wise tongue. A wise tongue is one which usually says little because there is a greater amount of thought put into the words which *are* spoken. To be able to say the right thing, in the right way, and at just the right time is an extremely difficult thing to do, and very few people have this talent. It is an easy thing, for even one who seems to be a wise man, to make a slip of the tongue and fall from

the high pedestal on which he has probably placed himself.

There are many types of sinful tongues, far too many to mention. But there are a few which especially stand out in our minds. First of all, there is that boastful tongue. The human ego can grow to a tremendous size. That big "I" has found its glory in many a mouth, and it is actually a very silly and irritating thing. We like to see a boaster fall and then are quick to say "That's what he gets."

Of all the evil tongues, it is the tongue of profanity that has the least excuse. Yet, it has many users and its use seems to be increasing rapidly these days. And we, as children of God, are not innocent of this profane tongue. How many times haven't we, too, used profanity or even taken God's name in vain, if not on the lips, at least in the mind?

Another type of evil that comes from the mouth is gossip. A bit of gossip starts out small, but often grows to hurt a reputation. The tongue of strife also is a "little fire which kindleth a great matter," even as a small street quarrel can incite a riot.

Last, and meanest, is the tongue of the liar. A lie is never justifiable, no matter what the occasion. Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord (Proverbs 12:22). These "lying lips" were among the objects of divine hate in the Old Testament.

Yes, the tongue is indeed a "world of iniquity." It is a little thing but the instrument of a great evil. Control of the tongue should be learned early in life; and, all through life, it must be by God's help that we can master the tongue and speak or be silent. We must watch that tongue, that "world of iniquity."

## PUZZLE\*

### Little Children and Christ

#### ACROSS

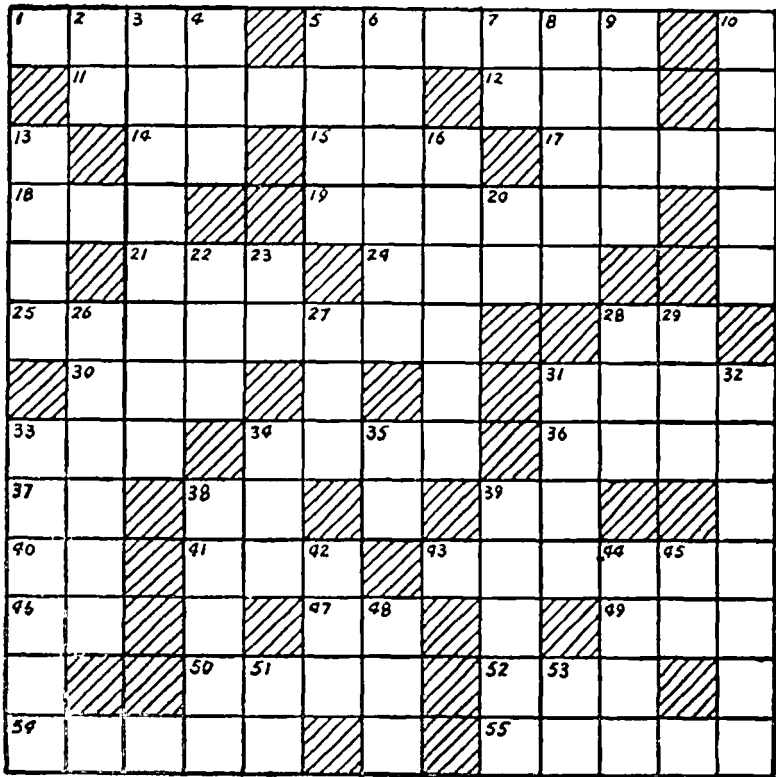
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 "shall in no . . . enter therein" Luke 18:17                   | 34 "Blessed is he that . . . th in the name of the Lord" Matt. 21:9                |
| 5 Oration  | 36 "And Jesus called a little child . . . him" Matt. 18:2                          |
| 11 ". . . little children" Matt. 19:14                           | 37 English Version (abbr.)   |
| 12 "Who is . . . greatest in . . . kingdom of heaven" Matt. 18:1 | 38 District Attorney (abbr.)   |
| 14 Cent (abbr.)  | 39 "Except . . . be converted" Matt. 18:3  |
| 15 Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries (abbr.)             | 40 "receiveth him that sent . . ." Luke 9:48                                       |
| 17 Son of Enoch and grandson of Cain Gen. 4:18                   | 41 "should put his hands on them, . . . pray" Matt. 19:13                          |
| 18 Kind of tree  | 43 "and . . . them not" Luke 18:16   |
| 19 "shall humble himself as this . . . child" Matt. 18:4         | 46 Promissory note (abbr.)   |
| 21 Not high  | 47 Northcentral State (abbr.)  |
| 24 "had taken him in his arms, he . . . unto them" Mark 9:36     | 49 Dined   |
| 25 "and become as little . . ." Matt. 18:3                       | 50 "And he took . . . up in his arms" Mark 10:16                                   |
| 28 "and saying, Hosanna . . . the Son of David" Matt. 21:15      | 52 "Whosoever shall . . . receive the kingdom of God as a little child" Mark 10:15 |
| 30 Finish  | 54 "ye shall not . . . into the kingdom of heaven" Matt. 18:3                      |
| 31 First king of Israel  | 55 "least among you all, the same shall be . . ." Luke 9:48                        |
| 33 Label   |  |

Our text is 11, 12, 19, 25, 28, 34, 36, 40, 41, 43, 50 and 52 combined

#### DOWN

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 2 "for of such . . . the kingdom of God" Mark 10:14          | 29 and 3 down ". . . of the mouth of babes and . . . s" Matt. 21:16 |
| 3 See 29 down  | 31 Prosecutor   |
| 4 Kind of lizard   | 32 Most boisterous  |
| 5 Trade for money  | 33 "children crying in the . . . , and saying" Matt. 21:15          |
| 6 "thou hast perfected . . ." Matt. 21:16                    | 34 Is able to   |
| 7 And (Lat.)   | 35 "Whosoever shall receive this child in . . . name" Luke 9:48     |
| 8 "And he took a . . ." Mark 9:36                            | 38 Italian poet   |
| 9 At this place  | 39 "And they brought . . . children to him" Mark 10:13              |
| 10 "and set him in the . . . of them" Mark 9:36              | 42 Cease to live  |
| 13 Pertaining to animals                                     | 44 Lessen   |
| 16 Posture   | 45 "when his disciples saw . . . , they rebuked them" Luke 18:15    |
| 20 Seventh tone of the scale                                 | 48 Amount (abbr.)   |
| 22 Aged  | 51 Part of the day (abbr.)  |
| 23 Works Department (abbr.)                                  | 53 Word marking an alternative                                      |
| 26 "the same is greatest in the kingdom of . . ." Matt. 18:4 |   |
| 27 River (Sp.)   |   |
| 28 Light brown   |   |

\*Taken from "The New Testament in Crossword Puzzles" and used by permission of Baker Book House.



“Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.” Mark 10:15

Answer: Next issue.

# CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

## *Not Only a Season*

RACHEL LUBBERS

Far beyond from where I stand, the morning sun rises gloriously over my favorite snow covered hill. The peace and quiet of early morning is what I call "beauty" and the sun rise alone is enough to put a smile upon my face. Later, as the world is awakened the peace and quiet will become disturbed, but as for now, my imagination will allow me to hear the echo of a snow fall! All around, there beams forth the silent excitement of Christmas joy and such a delicate greeting cannot be forgotten.

This day is so completely important that no one really forgets it. For weeks now we have seen the hustle and bustle of Christmas; street walks cluttered with people, a smile upon faces and packages under arms; colored lights hiding under a snow covered blanket, red and white bells blowing from street light posts, glowing trees peeking out from the windows of many houses, decorated cookies in cookie jars, mistletoes to create a little laughter, friendly mail boxes sending out greetings, music floating *everywhere*, Santa Claus' faithfulness impressing thousands of wide-eyed children, and adults messing up their calendars with a schedule of big parties. Excitement, enthusiasm, joy, wishes, and love, have you ever seen one day filled with so many symbols?

Christmas is the most joyful time of all year. It is the most widely celebrated of all events. It is a time when you feel an amount of quiet peace, and a time you feel you could sing out forever. We enjoy filling the hours of the night listening to a choir and being more inspired with Christmas. The beauty and thankfulness of life is emphasized and one is inspired to give of himself and express his appreciation for what others have given to him. Many strive to show kindness and give an atmosphere of happiness in his surroundings. And the concept of charity is exercised more completely by many.

But somehow, my mind is pressed with another question. "What, oh what happens after December 25 — to Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday?" Does it not make you want to cry in desperation to see how suddenly everyone can forget. Oh, I do not mean only those who so generously accept Christmas as a holiday and some fun, but I also mean even those who understand so differently. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isn't that so impressive that it carries a meaning that far outlives a season? Isn't this wonderment that bewilders anew each day? How very unreal is the birth of Christ when in days past it has been forgotten just as a dream that was born and then faded away. As we are now approaching a new year that must be lived in the midst of a world which is being torn and ripped apart more forcefully by the sin of man each day, we need Christmas every day! It holds a mountain of meaning for the future of smiles, fears, sadness, or tears. If we forget Christmas we have no Christ! Is not Christ too important to celebrate for only a season? After today has passed the music will be gone, but yet in all happiness we should have the song of praise in our hearts. "I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

Yes, Christmas day does appear to live on just a bit longer than yesterday, for the town's lights are very gradually being put out. People are walking stairs to complete their day with a night of rest. Stars are twinkling away the last few precious hours of the day and again passing my window are gentle snow flakes, filling the footprints of today and giving to us a freshly unmarked and unscarred tomorrow.



# NEWS

## from, for, and about our churches

JEANNE GRITTERS

### From our Hudsonville Church:

The return of Rev. and Mrs. Lubbers to Grand Rapids for the Thanksgiving holiday made it possible for Rev. Lubbers to take the pulpit for the evening service of November 26. After the service he spoke of his and his wife's labors on the island of Jamaica. The Lord willing, Rev. Heys will be going down there to assist them for a short time after the first of the year.

### From our Kalamazoo Church:

Dismissal papers were sent to Mrs. Ron (Joyce) Moerman at her request.

### From our South Holland Church:

Steven K. Bultema was received as a member in full communion from the Bethany Christian Reformed Church of South Holland.

George De Jong left for service in Korea on Saturday, November 11.

A combined meeting of the Men and Ladies' Societies took place on Wednesday, November 8. A Bible discussion was held, and after that Agatha Lubbers showed her pictures of Jamaica.

On Friday evening, November 10, Rev. D. Engelsma gave a lecture in our South Holland Church. The topic was "How does the Protestant Church of today stand in relation to the church and doctrine of the Reformation era?"

### From our Loveland Church:

A talent program, sponsored by the Ladies' Circle, was held on Friday evening, November 17, in the church. A collection was taken for the school.

The following "Thought for Contemplation" was found in Loveland's bulletin: "I have made a covenant with my Lord God that He send me neither visions nor dreams, nor even angels. For I am well satisfied with the gift of Holy Scriptures, which gives me abundant instruction and all that

I need to know both for this life and for that which is to come." Martin Luther.

The Ladies' Circle held a sale of baked goods and homemade items in the home of one of their members on December 1. Proceeds went to the building fund of our school.

The Young People's Society had an outing at Washington gym on Thursday evening, November 30.

### From our Hope, Walker Church:

The marriage ceremony of Mark Scholten and Linda Captain took place on Thursday, October 26, in our church.

Membership papers of Mr. Gerald Schipper have been transferred to our church in Hudsonville.

Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ondersma were given a son, Mark Simon, on November 11.

The young people went on a hayride on Thursday night, November 16. Purpose was to raise money for the coming convention.

New address of one of our servicemen:  
R M F A John Kamphuis 377-62-5542  
COMOCEANSYSLANT Box 100  
Norfolk, Virginia 23511

A Beacon Lights Thanksgiving singspiration was held after the evening service on November 19, and was led by Harry Langerak. The special number was a cornet solo by Jerry Vander Kolk.

### From our Holland Church:

Mark Scholten made public confession of faith during the evening service of November 19.

### From our Randolph Church:

Mr. and Mrs. Jim De Vries were blessed with a son, James Martin, born on November 16.

Mr. and Mrs. Ron Huizenga rejoice in the birth of a baby girl, born on Sunday, November 19.



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