

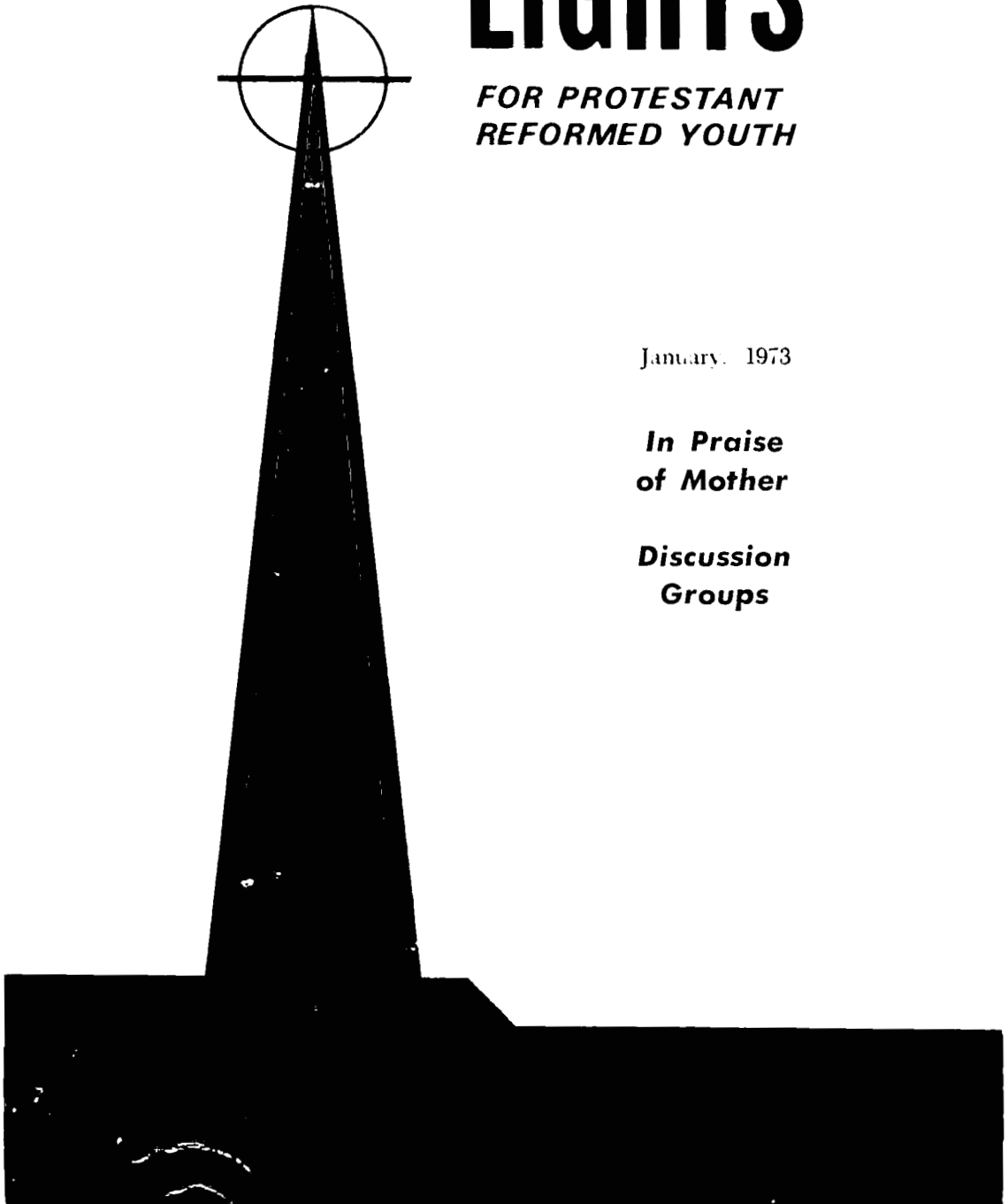
BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*

January, 1973

*In Praise
of Mother*

*Discussion
Groups*





BEACON LIGHTS

VOLUME XXXII

JANUARY 1973

NUMBER 9

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Ken Koole — President; Ed Karsmeyer — Vice-President; Sue Terpstra — Secretary; Nona Miersma — Assistant Secretary; Jim Schimmel — Treasurer; John Bol — Asst. Treasurer; Linda Vander Vennet — Librarian; Pete Miedema — Youth Coordinator.

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF:

Calvin Reitsma — Editor-in-Chief; John Kalsbeek — Associate Editor; Jon Huiskens — Associate Editor; Tom VanOverloop — Finance Manager; Dawn DeJong, Kathy Koole, Betty Kuiper, Ruth Maring, Mary Ophoff.

If any of the material of BEACON LIGHTS is reprinted by another periodical, we will appreciate your giving the source.

The articles of BEACON LIGHTS do not necessarily indicate the viewpoint of the Editorial Staff. Every author is solely responsible for the contents of his own article.

Contributions of general interest are very welcome.

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

Rev. Robert Harbach, Agatha Lubbers, Donna Van Uffelen, Jeanne Gritters, Rev. G. Lubbers, Kathy Bylsma, Rachel Lubbers, Vi Vanden Top.



All material for publication should be addressed to CALVIN REITSMA
3287 S. Canal, Grandville, Mich. 49418

News Editor: JEANNE GRITTERS
3530 Byron Center, S. W., Apt. No. 2
Grand Rapids, Mich. 49509

Grand Rapids subscribers please forward subscription dues to KATHY KOOLE
554 Kenowa Ave., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49504

Subscribers outside of Grand Rapids please forward subscription dues to
RUTH MARING
4129 Jenison St., Grandville, Mich. 49418

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

In This Issue

EDITORIAL	1
" In Praise of Mother " — J. Kalsbeek	
TRUTH vs. ERROR	2
" Atheist " — Rev. R. Harbach	
CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS	5
" The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away " — Kathy Bylsma	
FEATURE	6
" Discussion Groups " — Dr. Dwight Monsma	
OPEN FORUM	8
" Everyone Help or it will Die " — Rachel Lubbers	
QUIZ	8
CONTRIBUTION	9
" The Christian Faces War " — Sue Terpstra	
NEWS FROM, FOR, AND ABOUT OUR CHURCHES	11
Jeanne Gritters	

IN PRAISE OF MOTHER

Only since I've had children of my own, and observed their mother in her work as a mother, have I begun to appreciate what a mother really is and what a tremendously high calling a mother has. It is rather common to think of mother as "just mom." We take her pretty much for granted. Often we are very demanding of her time and energy, but very sparing in our praise. As we grow older, our demands grow more and more vehement and are often accompanied with a mouth full of spiteful back talk. Compliments, if any, are few and far between.

God has given us mothers to bare us and love us. A Christian mother is a fruitful vine that fills the home with good by bringing forth children who are the heritage of the Lord. They give life and sustenance to the unborn child. They travail in giving birth to this heritage of the Lord and "in sorrow bring forth children." Genesis 3:16. This sorrow is intensified by the realization that this life she is bringing forth was "conceived and born in sin." It is by nature dead and damnable. But she also brings forth children with joy and thanksgiving knowing that He who is the giver of life is also He who gives rebirth to that new life. She rejoices in the promise that God establishes His covenant with believers and their seed in their generations. What a privilege to be a Christian mother!

Her entire life is wrapped up in her family and many of her own desires must be denied. From an everyday practical point of view, mothers eat cold oatmeal and toast for breakfast, cold soup and coffee for lunch, and cold meat, potatoes and vegetables for supper while the toddler's impatient demands to be fed are patiently met. Mothers sew, knit, or bake with many other hands trying to help her. Mothers begin their working day when they arise in the morning and it continues on far into the night. Mothers never get a holiday or time and a half for overtime and yet they are generally cheerful and self sacrificing.

As the children become older, the

mother's work becomes more rigorous and demanding. Not only must she provide for physical needs but she must also concern herself with the spiritual needs of God's heritage. She must often be a judge with the wisdom of a Solomon to settle petty disputes and quarrels. She must be prepared to love in the way of discipline. Indeed her calling as a mother is a high and glorious one. It is a full time calling as is that of a minister and teacher. They have more than enough work in the home and should not sacrifice their home in doing outside work. Raising God's heritage must not be intrusted to the care of a substitute.

A mother in the church is a singing mother. She sings the songs of the Lord and His church. Her singing encourages the children to want to learn these songs and sing along with her. By her example, God's children learn to love the songs of Zion as they learn to sing them.

A mother of God's covenant seed is a praying mother. Daily she comes with boldness before the throne of grace requesting Divine wisdom to aid her in her difficult work. Daily she leads the little ones in prayer at lunch time. As her children increase in years she prays for their spiritual welfare, oftentimes with tears, as sins of youth become her increasing concern.

A Christian mother is a teaching mother. She teaches her children not only by her example, but also by actually instructing them about the heroes of faith. She teaches them to be obedient, to respect authority, to be reverent. She teaches her children about the promises of Jehovah. She teaches her children to memorize passages of God's Word.

A mother of true believing Israel is diligent in administering discipline. She is firm in the use of the rod and in love punishes her children when the need arises. Oftentimes the punishment, when properly carried out, is much greater for mother than child. Just the idea that punishment was needed and that the sin of the child demanded judgment saddens a believing

mother and makes the work of a mother that much more difficult.

Young people, some day some of you will be mothers and the rest of you will marry one. Would you want your children to treat you or your wife the way you treat your mothers? God, in love, gave you Christian mothers. So often a kind word from you would really brighten her day and yet so often you let these opportunities slip by. I'm afraid that a mother's rewards on this earth are often severely limited by the thoughtlessness of her children.

St. Augustine in later life finally became aware of the profound influence exerted by his mother on his own life. In his *Confessions* he writes,

"My God, I pray you to accept my confessions and also the gratitude I bear you for all the many things which I pass over in silence. But I will omit not a word . . . concerning your servant, my mother. In the flesh she brought me to birth in this world: in her heart she brought me to birth in your eternal light. It is not of her gifts that I shall speak, but of the gifts you gave to her. For she was neither her own maker nor her own

teacher. It was you who made her It was you who taught her to obey her parents. And yet, O God, who made us both, how could there be any comparison between the honour which I showed to her and the devoted service she had given me? Then little by little, my old feelings about your handmaid came back to me. I thought of her devoted love for you and the tenderness and patience she had shown to me For this was the mother, now dead and hidden awhile from my sight, who had wept over me for many years so that I might live in your sight."

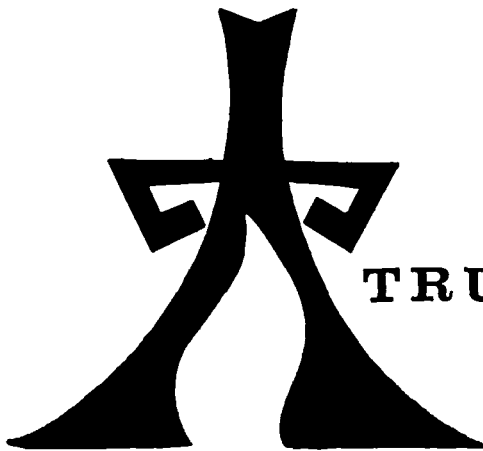
Augustine's Confessions, Book IX

On his deathbed Augustine remembered his mother with sorrow and regret. "Yes, little Mother, and you are there (in the New Jerusalem, J.K.), you whose heart I ruptured ten thousand times, you who watered your pallet with rivers of tears . . ."

Son of Tears by Henry Coray, p. 314

More consideration for mother and her difficult work would make her life much more pleasant. She deserves all the praise and love you can possibly give her.

J.K.



TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBT. C. HARBACH

Atheist

“ . . . without God (Gk.: atheists) in the world.” — Paul

He laughed when the reply came, “We are going to Mt. Zion.” This, indeed, convulsed Atheist with laughter. To him Zion is nothing but a dream; “there is no such

place in all the world.” No, not in this world, but, insisted Christian, in the world to come. Atheist's argument was that he had been searching, but now no longer,

being the wiser, for twenty years, and had never found it. To this Hopeful answered, What! No Mt. Zion? Why, we have seen it from the top of Mt. Clear! With that they turned away from this fellow, "one of the flatterers." We last see Atheist re-summing his backward way, laughing to himself, and, turning to snap his fingers at them, with one foot poised in mid-air over an empty abyss.

Paul's teaching is that all men are by nature atheists. That is, atheism is natural to men; not natural by created, but by corrupted nature. Atheism, in Paul's meaning: without God, is against created nature, but a very natural outgrowth of sophisticated nature. Atheism is human nature infected with the serpent's breath.

All sin is crypto-atheism. The main principle of every sin is atheism. The cup of iniquity fills at the fountain of atheism. Sin breaks out into the world through the sluice-gate of atheism. "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God!" Then he says, "Who is lord over us?" (Ps. 12:4). "We are lords; we will come no more unto Thee" (Jer. 2:31). From there on, a legion of demons streams out of man. He drinks iniquity like water. Lurking denial of God eases the sludge of licentiousness down the open sepulcher of his throat. Where there is no sense of God, lust and vileness go glibly down. Hardly less than naked horror will now satisfy the dark sucking passion of his heart. Lust becomes dearer than self, until the desires of the flesh become as "milk and water, toys for children . . . That serpent, faced with the true dragon, became a fangless worm . . . It is idle to point out to the perverted man the horror of his perversion: while the fierce fit is on, that horror is the very spice of his craving. It is ugliness itself that becomes, in the end, the goal of his lechery; beauty has long since grown too weak a stimulant." (*That Hideous Strength*, C. S. Lewis, 268-9.)

The very thought of sin is sin. Rebel against God and you deny His sovereignty. You disgrace His holiness when you throw your filth in His face. (You have never done that?) You insult His wisdom when you set up a rule of your own as a guide in place of His law. You show a contempt for God when you can find satisfaction in

any sin in preference to happiness in Him alone. You loathe His goodness when you live as though it is not strong enough to attract to Him. By sin you deny God of all right, rob Him of His attributes, make God not God, as though He did not create you, or your being does not come from Him; as though the air you breathe, the food you live by, are your own by innate right and self-supremacy, and not by His gift.

Atheism is still worse. For sin implies that God is not worthy of Being. For every sin is a kind of secret cursing of God, an aim at the annihilation of His being. This may not be the self-conscious intention of every sinner, but it is the nature of every sin. What is it which brings a man to break God's law? It is the love of sin. That same perverted love would incite him to murder God, if he could. Sin is the setting up of self-will and self-rule and self-glorification as man's chief end, against the will and glory of God. If the sinner could have his way, God would have to go. Your sin, then, is a turning your back on God (Jer. 32:33), a kicking out against Him (Deut. 32:15), as if He were no more than a dog, unfit for so much as a word, unworthy of even a thought, nothing but a cast-off. "Israel hath cast off the thing that is good" (Hos. 8:3), a blank refusal of God. "As for the Word which Thou hast spoken to us in the name of the Lord, we will not hearken" (Jer. 44:16). By your sin you turn from God and so naturally turn to your sin. There is no neutral zone. God is the one turned from; sin the thing turned to. The implication is that there is more excellency in the nature of sin than in the nature of God. The sinner does not like to retain God in his knowledge (Rom. 1:28). Ignorance of God is wilful. It is a banishing of God, a hatred of God. That the world knew Him not is parallel to Jesus' word to the reprobate, "I never knew you." The world through its wisdom knew not God (1 Cor. 1:21), never loved God. The world, like Cain, "went out from the presence of the Lord." To abhor the presence of a man implies an utter carelessness whether he continue in the world. It is to treat him as if he had no being, as though we have no concern in it. (Drive your car in that spirit and you prove yourself an

inherent murderer.) All men, like the prodigal, left the Father's house and went into a far country, there to forget God, to enjoy and love anything but God. The Russian atheist is not the worst kind of atheist because the Russian or Communist atheist continually has God in his mind. He has to. His ideology is always ranting and raving in denial of God. It is unscientific to believe in God—he keeps saying and telling himself. But there is the man whose soul is not tormented with the ridiculous communist ideology, who simply blanks God out of his mind, to think and live as if there were no such Being. Neither of them believe in God or devil, but both of them, in effect, own the devil to be worthy more of notice than God.

I ask you, I ask myself, Did you ever please yourself, at any time, with the thought of how happy you'd be, how free to enjoy your pleasures, if there were no God? Such thoughts have occurred to me. You get it all the time now out of women's "lib." Such women say, We are lords of our ourselves, subject to no law but our own to be led by no will but that of our own flesh. We are the uncontrolled and the uncontrollable. Did you, as they do, never so rage against God as to wish Him stripped of His own holy and sovereign will to command, and His righteous will to punish? That is the very thought of the natural man. You are not a member of a feminist or atheist movement. But you have secretly wished the Bible never went on record with certain principles, or that some of them were blotted out of the Bible, because they stand against your conscience, condemning lusts and pleasures you would rather enjoy with carefree abandon and delight. Some young people think this way perfectly openly. I know this because I have talked to such, and they have opened their heart to the extent of admitting all the above to be exactly their thoughts concerning God. What do they do with the Bible? They do not take it as the Word of God; but if they take it at all, they mythologize it, make a humorous and crazy fantasy (the ape ancestor idea) the interpreter of it, in place of the Spirit speaking in His own Word. Then they try to demythologize it by distilling out of it their own imaginations as the interpreter of God's

Word, and so they depose God's law from being the rule of reason. There are students, within the Christian school system, sad to say, who cannot imagine any other rule than the rule of their own reason. When you do this, you deny such a thing as truth, and rifle it of its true mind and content. You then rip it from its context of divine revelation. It becomes, then, whatever comes out of man's discovery. Whatever God may say in His Word, the Bible, means whatever the varieties of men's imaginings make it to mean, and every man's opinions are a law to himself. This is telling God He wasted His time producing that divine revelation. Man has an inborn unwillingness to acquaint himself with the mind of God as expressed in His own revelation, the Bible, so disowning God as his rule, and so takes to an idolatrous enthronement of self-rule instead.

Adam became the first "atheist" of the human race. For he revolted from God, sought shelter among some flimsy bushes of error, and hid behind his own fig-leaf, spider-web righteousness. When he ate the fruit from the forbidden tree, he in effect said, I may do anything I please with my own body, my own mind, my own soul! Today, man thinks he may do just as he pleases with the material creation. Man kow-tows before the Shrine of Self. For him that is the highest court of appeal. Adam came to have hard thoughts against God because he had such high thoughts of himself. The command, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, and thy neighbor, as thyself" became an insult to his "dignity," or at least to his self-complaisance. The rich young ruler imagined that he had kept all the things of the law of God from his youth up. Quite a record! Then why did he turn his back on the law of Christ? You have no claim of bowing to the law of God when you ignore the law of Christ. Why did this man do that? because it interfered with the law of self. He felt that Christ had made truth a vulture to pluck out right eyes and gnaw off right hands. Why did the Pharisees, such strict hewers to the line of Scripture, mock and reject Christ's stringent interpretation of the law of God? because it dethroned self.

This is all terrible truth, isn't it? Atheism is really terrible! The atheist is such not

only, as the term itself implies, because of distance from God, but because of defiance of Him. What we should do about our own natural and practical atheism we will have

to take up next time, God willing. But if we do not see and lament this evil in us, we do not have the character of a Christian.

CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

The Lord Giveth and the Lord Taketh Away

KATHY BYLSMA

Let us imagine for a minute that one of your parents was a victim of an automobile accident in which he or she suffered severe permanent brain damage and would never be able to breathe or have his heart beat spontaneously ever again. Would you tell the doctor to put he or she on a respirator and cardiac pacemaker to keep him "alive" as a vegetable, or would you tell the doctor to turn off the sustaining machines and let the heart and lungs stop operating "naturally"?

What would you do if your 89-year old grandmother had a terminal illness and was in much pain and suffering? Would you tell the doctor to keep her alive as long as possible or just make her comfortable and not prolong her misery by giving her medication?

These, and instances similar to these may have to be faced by us sometime in our future years. What complicates matters more these days is that there is no clear definition of physical death. Death had been traditionally defined before as the permanent cessation of a spontaneous heart beat and respiration. But medical science has rendered this definition almost meaningless now with the development and perfection of artificial sustainers, such as the respirator and cardiac pacemaker. Vital body functions may now be prolonged almost indefinitely by the use of artificial means.

Science had to think of a more correct definition for physical death. It was decided that death actually occurs in steps and follows a specific pattern. The first step is said to be clinical death. Clinical death takes place when the body's vital functions of respiration and heartbeat cease. Unlike any of the other steps in the sequence of

physical death, clinical death can be reversed. An example of this would be a drowning child. He could be pulled out of the water with all signs of respiration and heartbeat gone, but with the help of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and/or external cardiac compression be revived with no damage. But if clinical death occurs for too long a time, the next step sets in. This is brain death. When the brain dies, the body becomes a vegetable; inactive, passive, and unthinking. Before the age of machinery, even partial destruction of the brain meant certain death, but now man can be kept alive by having a machine or other artificial device take over the function that the destroyed part of the brain was responsible for. I know a man who is not able to breathe at all on his own; and if his respirator was ever turned off, it would only be a matter of minutes before he would die. Partial brain impairment no longer means death.

If the entire brain is destroyed through the lack of oxygen, biological and cellular death follow close behind, thus completing the entire death sequence. Man, through his own inventions, has complicated physical death so much that he even has difficulty in defining it and is now caught up in many relating moral problems. It is easy for us to become so involved in these problems and questions that arise that we completely lose sight of the real giver and taker of life — GOD. Man has become so powerful, or so he thinks, that he now has the strength to control life and death. We must never fall in the trap of trusting in man instead of God. Job spoke a profound truth when he confessed, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

DISCUSSION GROUPS

DR. DWIGHT MONSMA

We live in a changing society in a changing world. Change is good but it must be channeled so that it becomes development toward a goal rather than a haphazard progression. Change is one of the chief characteristics of human life. From conception until death and even after death, our bodies are engaged in anabolism and catabolism, being built up and broken down. Our minds, ideas, outlook, and values are constantly changing and developing so that at no two points in time are we exactly the same person.

Thus it is only natural that we observe change on the church scene too. Discussion Groups are a fairly recent development in our churches and it is to this particular subject that we should address ourselves in this article. Discussion Groups can bear a variety of names but are essentially groups of people of all ages from a congregation who meet on Sunday evening after the service to discuss a pre-announced topic. They meet either at church or in homes and are composed of eight to twenty people. Each group should contain a cross-section of the congregation so that there can be a real exchange of ideas and all ages can get acquainted.

Such groups were organized at First Church about five years ago and met in church for a couple of years. A specific Sunday evening was reserved each month so that people could plan their date books accordingly. All participants met in the auditorium where we opened with prayer, sang a few songs, and heard a brief introduction to the subject. The chairman for the evening then divided the people into four to six groups and assigned them and their leader to specific rooms in the church. After an hour of discussion, they reassembled in the auditorium to hear a brief synopsis of the subject by a reporter from each group, sing a closing song, and pray.

When Discussion Groups use homes instead of the church building, members are assigned to a group for three months; though they meet in a different home each

month and have a different leader also. Homes provide a more relaxed atmosphere which seems to promote spontaneous discussion on the part of each individual. In fact, during the past year and a half, I have never been in a group where anyone has remained silent during the discussion. A committee serves to select subjects, place bulletin announcements, appoint leaders and hosts, and keep records for the Discussion Groups.

Some of you may ask at this point, "but why do you have discussion groups?" "We already have societies, catechism classes, choir and other activities . . . why add another?" "Besides, we already have dates scheduled for most Sunday evenings." Discussion Groups provide opportunity to discuss a Bible related topic on a Sunday evening with people from your own church. Subjects can include the evening sermon, a doctrine such as infant baptism and something of current interest like abortion. These groups do not take the place of regular societies in the church but they are a good substitute for a Sunday evening date each month. Certainly no one can dispute the fact that it is better to meet with fellow Christians around God's Word on the Sabbath than to sit around and just "kletz."

But it is hard to disrupt established patterns in a congregation and still more difficult to convince many people of the value of something "new." One of the greatest obstacles to wider participation is the Sunday "date book." Many of us are so tied up with that book that we do not have a free Sunday evening for six to nine months ahead! Some have objected to holding discussions in their homes and would rather use the church building and the format suggested in the third paragraph of this article. I'm sure that both the church and homes could be used on the same night and with the same subject without difficulty. Other people have said that they prefer that the minister lead, since he could prevent the discussion from going astray. Many of these same people feel that the

groups should reach a conclusion at the end of their discussion and that ideally these conclusions should be unified so that there is an "official" united opinion on a particular subject that has been discussed. However, though this might be ideal, the purpose of discussion is not to come to an agreement so much as it is to stimulate thought on the subject and thus provide basis for more discussion . . . only in that way will we grow and develop in our understanding of many facets of our Christian life. All too often we look for conclusions without thinking of how and why they were reached.

I hope none of us fail to participate in Discussion Groups because we do not want to discuss anything worthwhile. I hope that none of us fail to participate because we do not want to meet with certain persons of our congregation. I hope none of us fail to participate because we are afraid to express an opinion before others. I hope none of us fail to participate because we cannot spare the time. Let's be willing to change our habit patterns and try something new and worthwhile.

Just how worthwhile are Discussion Groups? What should be our goals? What are the advantages of such a "forum"? The first objective should be to discuss the Bible and Bible related topics. A second is to meet around God's Word with other members of your congregation and thus have an opportunity to meet the old, young, and middle aged people who share the same blessed heritage of our Protestant Reformed beliefs. Another goal should be to improve the caliber of our Sunday evening visits. Perhaps some of the discussion in our groups will carry over into our social visits. By means of our Discussion Groups, many of us can develop talents which may have lain dormant for years. You may find that you really can lead an informal discussion in your own home, or that you do enjoy meeting new people, or that you make an excellent host. One of the great benefits many of us have realized from discussion groups is the formation of new friendships within the church. This is important for all of us as well as for the congregation as a whole. Such results can inject new life into the social structure of a church and serve to unite the

congregation. A great advantage that home meetings have over those in church is that the atmosphere is more relaxed, informal, and comfortable. The groups are quite unstructured, having no officers and no business to conduct, and thus can function unhindered for their primary purpose . . . discussion around God's Word. These conditions have promoted better discussion than I have ever witnessed in a society meeting in church.

And what of the future? I hope that more of our churches will try this forum as an effective means of spiritual contact. To get started takes a bit of organization at first, but willing hands make this easy. There is work involved because topics must be chosen, leaders selected, hosts volunteered, outlines prepared and these must be duplicated and distributed. But we all have one or more of these talents and can surely help in this work. Only one other ingredient is necessary . . . that is the participation of a vast majority of the congregation. Only those who are active will benefit. Those who do not join in are the losers.

Answer to puzzle in last issue:

Little Children and Christ

W	I	S	E	S	P	E	E	C	H	M
S	U	F	F	E	R	T	H	E	I	
Z	C	T	L	A	S	I	R	A	D	
O	A	K	L	I	T	T	L	E	S	
I	L	O	W	S	A	I	D	T		
C	H	I	L	D	R	E	N	T	O	
E	N	D	I	C	S	A	U	L		
T	A	G	C	O	M	E	U	N	T	O
E	V	D	A	Y	Y	E	U			
M	E	A	N	D	F	O	R	B	I	D
P	N	N	I	A	U	A	T	E		
L	T	H	E	M	N	O	T	S		
E	N	T	E	R	T	G	R	E	A	T

Everyone Help or it will Die

Young people, please read this bit of information and take some truly deep concern.

Our BEACON LIGHTS requires *much* work not only from the staff but from *all* of our young people, which we are not receiving. Presently we have a distinct lack of interest and participation in our magazine which is extremely sad. Considering that the BEACON LIGHTS is the only magazine that we publish and considering the number of young people within our Protestant Reformed churches we should hide our faces in shame. In the past few years we have had an extremely small amount of contributed articles. Also we receive very *few* volunteers for writing articles. Almost our entire work is done by appointing and even then many refuse. This is pathetic! Where young people, are all of our thoughts and questions hidden? The possibilities of having an excuse for creating this kind of situation for us is simply all together impossible! It is unexcusable and even more, it is a sin. We cannot function if we do not have a great improvement and much cooperation immediately. If we cannot show any

more concern than this, then what can we expect from the generations to follow? We must realize the importance of communication among each other and those around us. The means of sharing is almost endless: yet we do not see it. If we can find our spare time so easily used by that which is not required of us and let our magazine die then there is something very wrong – wrong enough so that we better reevaluate ourselves quickly. We definitely *can* expand the size of our magazine and realize that it calls for no talent or challenge whatsoever for it to become sickly forgotten. For all those interested in attending our meetings you are welcomed. Our meetings are open.

The BEACON LIGHTS needs more support in everything, from the making of the magazine to the attendance of the BEACON LIGHTS singspirations. The BEACON LIGHTS needs *you!* Your Christian duty is never to be left for the next person to fulfill.

Young people, please do consider the seriousness of this problem because time is not something which returns to its author to be relived or revised. Thank you. R.L.

QUIZ

FROM ACTS*

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did the Apostles, in a meeting described in the first chapter of Acts, hold a sort of election? 2. When Peter and John were "Straightly threatened" by the council, why did they refuse to heed the warning? 3. Why did Gamaliel advise that Peter and John should be allowed to continue preaching? 4. Why did Paul set out from Jerusalem to go to Damascus? 5. Until Barnabas went bond for him, the church at Jerusalem refused to accept Paul. Why? 6. After Herod had "killed James the brother of John with the sword," he arrested Peter also. Why? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. In Lystra, Paul and Barnabas were taken for gods and the local priests tried to offer a sacrifice to them. Why? 8. Shortly afterward, in the same city, Paul was stoned. Why? 9. Why were Paul and Silas imprisoned in Philippi? 10. Why did Paul make his last journey to Jerusalem, when (Acts 20, 23) he knew it to be very dangerous? |
|---|---|

See answers on page 10

*Taken from *The Bible Quiz Book* by F. Hall and used by permission of Baker Book House.

"The Christian Faces War"

SUE TERPSTRA

The most basic causes for reoccurring of war and rumors of war are man's willing denials and disdain for God's law. The last of the Ten Commandments, "Thou shalt not covet," is the basis for the violation of any other of God's laws. So also covetousness is the basis for the preliminary causes of war and for war itself. Almost inevitably in every war, at least four other commandments are violated, especially the fifth, "Honor thy Father and thy Mother," the sixth, "Thou shalt not kill," the eighth, "Thou shalt not steal," and the ninth, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." All the causes for continuous waging of war as listed by Will and Ariel Durant in *The Lessons of History*, i.e., acquisitiveness, pugnacity, pride, and desire, serve as proof that the causes for war in any form is sin — sin against the law of God.

But why is there war? Obviously there is war because God willed that there would be war. But why does God "Make peace and create evil"? The answer to this question can only lie "God does it for the good of His people." We know that all things, war and all other manifestations of sin included, work for the gathering of God's People into His Eternal Kingdom. As long as the kingdoms of this world war with one another, they are thus prevented from concentrating upon the Church. In this way God builds His Church without worldly "interruption" as He had planned. We must notice that God does not just simply let war happen. His hand is in the midst of warring nations, controlling the ultimate victory to satisfy His plan. We know this because God has revealed unto us this truth in many places of Scripture. John 16:33 is an especially comforting passage regarding the why of war. We read, "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

It would be foolish for men of any belief to think that there could ever be a true and lasting peace upon earth. If men can-

not tell by now that the friction between themselves is increasing and has ever been increasing, their powers of logic must be severely lacking. The truth is they are not ignorant, but stubborn. They refuse to recognize their totally depraved nature as such, and they stubbornly turn their faces from a God whose Words they despise. There can be no peace where there is not peace with God.

But yet, a world without hope still hangs on to their faith in mankind. Some men speak of peace accomplished by the realization of a "brotherhood" of man. Some speak of peace as a worldwide turn to faith in God's existence. Some speak of peace on earth only when interplanetary warfare necessitates a limiting of earthly forces of power. And still more speak of peace accomplished through war itself. In the *Lessons of History*, Will and Ariel Durant say, "A world order will not come by a gentlemen's agreement, but through so decisive a victory by one of the great powers that it will be able to dictate and enforce international law, as Rome did from Augustus to Aurelius."

For the Christian, the above statement may not seem so far-fetched. We know from the book of Revelation that the Kingdom of the Antichrist will indeed control the entire world. The Beast, to whom John refers in Revelation will have so much power over men, that in order to carry out their various daily tasks, they will be required to bear his mark. For the world, this will mean peace — peace, for their warfare among themselves will be at an end. But for the elect child of God, it will be a time of war and greatest tribulation as the world of reprobate men turn their faces to the Church and lash out in wild fury against it. This tribulation and persecution will be so intense that were not the days shortened by God, the elect themselves would be completely destroyed from off the face of the earth.

Thus, when the Child of God prays for peace on earth, he prays for wicked men and not for the Church and himself. Pray-

ing for the peace of worldly men is against God and against His Word. Instead of praying that the wars God has sent as signs of His Coming to judge all nations, the Christian should pray that God will build and strengthen His Church that they may withstand the persecution worldly peace

implies and hold fast the Word of Truth. A prayer for peace within the Church is much more important, for only if the Church holds fast to her foundation, Christ, will she gain her crown of righteousness and have eternal peace, peace with God.

Answers to Quiz on page 8

1. To choose a successor for Judas.
2. They said, "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." Acts 4:19.
3. His argument was: "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but, if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it." Acts 5.
4. To arrest any Christians whom he might find there. Acts 9.
5. They feared (and naturally) that he might be a spy. Acts 9:26-27.
6. "Because he saw it pleased the Jews." Acts 12:2-3.
7. Because of their healing of a lifelong cripple. Acts 14.
8. "Certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium" came to the city and grossly slandered him. Acts 14. (How violently changeable people can be!)
9. Because of the healing of a slave girl, whose "spirit of divination" had been a source of profit to her owners. Acts 16.
10. He went to see old friends and also, and especially, to take a gift from new converts to the mother church at Jerusalem. Acts 24:17.

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

JEANNE GRITTERS

From our First Church

Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Reitsma rejoice in the birth of a son, Peter Calvin, born to them on December 20.

From our Southwest Church:

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Slopsma and their daughter have been received from our Southeast Church.

The membership papers of Rev. and Mrs. Wayne Bekkering and baptized children have been transferred to our Randolph Church.

The membership papers of Mrs. Peter (Ruth) Noble and four baptized children have been received from the Orthodox Reformed Church.

Dr. and Mrs. Richard Kreuzer were blessed with the birth of a daughter.

A certificate of dismissal was sent to Mr. and Mrs. D. Kruisenga at their request.

From our Holland Church:

Mr. Robert Windemuller and Miss Mary Wiersma were united in marriage on Friday, December 1, in the Byron Center First Reformed Church.

From our Hope, Walker Church:

New addresses of servicemen:
Sp 4 Dick Eerdmans, 379-56-3060
HB 32nd AADCOM (ag)
APO, New York 09227

Pvt. Jack A. Huizinga, 362-60-3282
Class 21-73 A-3-5
Fort Dix, New Jersey 08640

E.T.R.S.R. Harry Allen Petroelje
371-629-359, O.E. Division
U.S.S. Hancock, C.V.A. — 19
F.P.O. San Francisco, California 96601

Mr. and Mrs. J. Eldersveld rejoice in the birth of a daughter, Emily Anne, born Monday, December 11.

From our Hudsonville Church:

Mr. and Mrs. Roger Berens rejoice in the birth of a daughter, Kimberly Faye, born November 28.

On December 17, public confession of faith was made by Henry Jay Kuiper, Janice Lubbers, and Edwin Spoelma (from the Hope Christian Reformed Church).

The Choral Society rendered their Christmas cantata, entitled "Chimes of the Holy Night," after the evening service on Christmas Eve. A collection was taken for the Music Department of Hope School.

From our South Holland Church:

New address:
Pfc. George De Jong
34-442-3223, Box No. 60
USASA, FS Korea
APO San Francisco, California 96271

The Young People's Society sponsored a singspiration after the evening service of December 17. The Choral Society gave a few special numbers at that time.

From our Randolph Church:

Public confession of faith was made by Kathy Tamminga on December 17.

Mr. and Mrs. Ted De Vries are the thankful parents of a baby girl, Amanda Sue, born on December 5.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry De Vries were blessed with a baby boy, Paul Cornelius, on December 20.

On Wednesday evening, December 27, Rev. Lubbers spoke to the congregation and showed them pictures of his labors in Jamaica. A time of fellowship and food followed.

From our Hull Church:

The baptism certificate of Mr. Allen Driesen was received from the First Christian Reformed Church of Rock Valley.

The marriage of Ron Boote and Miss Jane Van Maanen was solemnized in our church on December 15.

Mr. and Mrs. Egbert Gritters were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Valerie Kay, born on Tuesday, November 28.



Extra copies of this and other issues

are available from the editor at

30¢ a copy while supply lasts.



MOVING? Please fill out form and mail to subscription manager (see inside cover for address).

(cut here)



Old Address:

name

.....

street

.....

city

state

zip code

New Address:

street

.....

city

state

zip code

MR & MRS JOHN ZANDTRA JR.
49 GLENWOOD-LANSING RD.
GLENWOOD, ILLINOIS 60425

