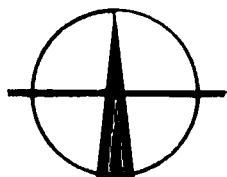


BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*

June July 1974

Graduation





BEACON LIGHTS

VOLUME XXXIII

JUNE-JULY 1974

NUMBER 4

Published monthly (except June, July, and August-September are combined) by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.

EXECUTIVE BOARD:

Ken Koole - President; Ron Hanko - Vice-President; Sue Terpstra - Secretary; Dawn De Jong - Assistant Secretary; Daryl Kuiper - Treasurer; Jon Bol - Assistant Treasurer; Linda Vander Vennen - Librarian; Jim Schipper - Youth Coordinator.

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF:

Jim Van Overloop - Editor-in-Chief; John M. Faber, Harry Langerak, Tom DeVries, Associate Editors; Tom VanOverloop - Finance Manager; Dawn De Jong, Kathy Koole, Betty Kuiper, Phyllis Bylsma, 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, Jan Hanko, Jeanne Gritters, Rev. G. Lubbers, Rev. M. Kamps, Rachel Lubbers, Vi Vanden Top and Bertha DenHartog.

All material for publication should be addressed to JIM VAN OVERLOOP
950 Coral, Jenison, Mich. 49428
News Editor: MRS. EDWARD KARSEMEYER
4602 Quebec, Wyoming, 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
PHYLLIS BYLSMA
516 Burke, N. E., Grand Rapids, Mich. 49506

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

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

In This Issue

EDITORIAL

The Firsty Pistle of Gramps to Jack and Jill - John M. Faber 1

FEATURES

The End of Thirteen Years - Skipper Hunter 3

Graduation - Carol Schimmel 3

Hypocrites - Gary Lanning 4

CONTRIBUTION

Steps - Gertrude Hoeksema 5

TRUTH VS. ERROR

Mr. Fearing - Rev. R. C. Harbach 6

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Where Do You Pitch Your Tent? - Rev. G. Lubbers 8

CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

Such A Worm As I - Bertha Den Hartog 10

News From, For, and About Our Churches - Jeanne Karsemeyer 11

THE FIRSTY PISTLE OF GRAMPS TO JACK AND JILL

by John M. Faber*

Dear Jack and Jill,

In this crazy, mixed-up world in which you kids are expected to grow up into mature, decision-making citizens, future fathers and mothers, feet-on-the-ground politicians and statesmen, preachers, teachers, lawyers, doctors, merchants and chiefs, it seemed good to me to write you this letter. I am no wiser than any other old grandfather around me. But you see, I am your gramps, not any old gramps. I am yours. I care for you. Admittedly I am an old fogey, but that's what you would expect of a grandfather. Old? Welllll, when I was a lad of your age we used to walk about four miles on a wintry evening just to hear, from tightly clamped ear-phones, "This is KDKA, Pittsburg." I guess that dates me pretty well.

Do you mind if I sound off on a pet peeve of mine? Did you read Ann Lander's this evening? (or Dear Abigail). Just tonight again I was disgusted with seeing a three-letter word in the paper. The word in its simplest meaning is: "the character of being either male or female." But that word is being used, abused, exploited so much now-a-days that I am getting mighty sick of seeing it. It has been twisted about until it now is a verb of action, synonymous with the eight-letter word forbidden in the Seventh Commandment of the Decalogue. And that word is synonymous with another three-letter word which is SIN! Young people, let's get this straight at the outset: whether you find it exploited in ads on T.V., in magazines, on billboards, or in the columns of the "dear sisters, Ann or Abbie," it is SIN!

The real word in its original sense was God-invented. He created all creatures in that dual role, that dual personality: male and female. From the creepy-crawly beasties to the four-footed animals, and finally the man, He created them in pairs, mates, if you will. To provide a mate for Adam God took one of Adam's ribs (from under the heart perhaps?) from which He

formed Eve. And in the statement found in Genesis 2:24 we find the basis for the argument on marriage and divorce which our Lord used to condemn the wicked Jews of His day. (Read Matthew 19.) This first pair were described as, "They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed."

But very soon, it may have even been the next day, the description was changed about. In Genesis 3:7 we read, "And the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons."

I suppose that you have tried to figure out just what happened. Did you think that they were so naive that they did not know before the Fall that they were naked? No, that is not the answer. They were not naive, nor prudish. They had been unashamed of their nakedness. After all, they had been created perfect, "good" in the sight of God. Well, what then really happened to their thinking to make them aware of their nakedness, and to be ashamed of it? I suggest that this is what happened.

As soon as they had eaten of the forbidden fruit, they had suffered the punishment of that heinous disobedience: the disbelieving of God and listening to the Serpent. They believed that God was keeping back from them what was their right to know; that God wanted to keep that for Himself, not wanting to share it with them. What was that punishment? You know: "The day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Death! That very moment Adam and Eve were spiritually dead, and began to die physically. Yes, now they knew good and evil: the good of fellowship with God in the cool of the day, and the evil of separation from God! And now they knew that this "evil" had polluted their body. Their body? Sure. They sinned in thought (brain), in word (tongue), and in deed (hand and mouth).

A great change has come over the man and

**The Beacon Lights staff welcomes Mr. John M. Faber as associate editor. He is a member of First Church.*

his wife, such a change that no other can compare with it. That great change is described in reverse in I Cor. 15. Now their eyes were open to know that they were naked: unclothed in the sight of God who had made them perfect, unclothed so that He could see that they had become vile and polluted. And, horrors! It was about time for them to meet God near the Tree of Life! That was a time that had been such a rich, rewarding experience, a time of fellowship and communion with their Maker. But now it loomed in their minds as a horrible time. They could not meet God unclothed! They needed a covering, and what a Covering they needed! But the only covering they could imagine was one of their own making: fig-leaf aprons.

Then, when they had dressed in the aprons, they heard the voice of God walking in the Garden. Did they go out to meet Him as before? Did they consider their fig-leaf aprons sufficient covering? You know better. They hid away from God in the underbrush. They hid because they were afraid: afraid of the awesome Holiness of God, afraid because they knew that their dressmaking job was unsuccessful, afraid because they were naked. Adam said so. They were now enemies of God. They were now polluted in sin, body and soul. Theirs was the nakedness spoken of in Revelation 3:8 which needs the white raiment of Christ's righteousness.

Ready for a little Reformed dogmatics? Here it is. Adam and Eve fell, but they fell into the arms of Christ. God maintained His Covenant, which in His Council was restored in Christ. But the man and his wife did not yet know this. All they knew at this point was that their attempt to cover themselves was a dismal failure. They had not yet heard the proclamation of the Gospel as it was about to be pronounced in the Protevangel. Thereupon God provided a coat of skins for their covering. An animal had to be offered and blood had to be shed: the typical blood of the Atonement, Christ's blood.

But I must go on or Gram will accuse me of rambling again. I want to take you back to the beginning of my letter. Natural man still wants nothing of the white raiment of Christ's righteousness. He still wants his own concoction of fig leaves. And in this year of our Lord, 1974, man wants less than that. He wants to go back to nakedness and all that rebellion that goes with it. That, in its very essence, is at the root of all modern-

day use of that three-letter word which is my pet peeve: rebellion against the God Who created them, rebellion against all his Word and Testimony. That also explains the Old Testament terminology of Israel's whoredoms and spiritual adultery when they turned their backs to God Who delivered them from the house of bondage; and turned to worship all the hosts of heaven, sun, moon, stars; and burned their children upon the arm of Molech. That is the same spiritual adultery of which natural man is guilty today. And he loves it. He trumpets it abroad. He and she fill the movie houses where this nakedness is exploited for entertainment. And, moreover, when they do wear clothes, they are of such a nature to incite lust, either by their scantiness or style.

But I must progress or this letter will be so long that I will have to put extra postage on the envelope. What has all this got to do with you? Much! We, by nature, are no better than they. We, too, are being tempted by the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. You must not get so accustomed to the vocabulary of the world so that you see no wrong in it. The worldly people who glory in their shame are those whom Paul wrote about to the Romans, (chapter 1, verse 28 ff) "God gave them over to a reprobate mind to do those things which are not convenient (notice how discreetly Paul describes their wicked actions?), being filled with all unrighteousness... who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."

I hope that you read "Dear Ann" or "Dear Abbie" with discretion. No doubt that you will receive a liberal education of the carrying on of the world; no doubt that some of their advice sounds reasonable. But weigh it in the balances of God's Word and be not deceived.

I had in mind to write to you about the fact that I heard that you were thinking of marriage. But that will have to wait until my next letter.

With Love, Gramps. (I will let Gram add a postscript.)

P.S. Dear Jack, flee also youthful lusts, but follow righteousness; and Jill, abstain from all appearance of evil. Love, Gram.

P.P.S. Now just look at that. That which took me three pages to say, Gram did in one terse sentence! Gramps

FEATURES

THE END OF THIRTEEN YEARS

by Skipper Hunter

The following two feature articles are on graduation and what it means to these two people: The first is by Skipper Hunter who is a senior at Covenant Christian High and a member of Hope (Walker) Church. Carol Schimmel writes the second feature article. Carol graduated in 1970 from Covenant Christian and also is a member of Hope Church.

The Ed.

A segment of 13 years of our lives is swiftly coming to a close. A time in which for 180 days out of each one of those 13 years we have attended kindergarten, grade school, junior high, and high school. In this time we have learned the basics of many things. We have learned the beginning of many ideas which will help us in our life's work. These years have not all been happy years, as we have had to undergo many hardships, and many other problems in attaining the final goal of a high school diploma.

We have been guided through these thirteen years by many talented teachers. These teachers have had the difficult task of being our parents for the day. School boards and many other individuals have given much of their time so we could have an education which was completely based on God. God has been with us and has guided us in his way, and through his word, the Bible. We must be very thankful for those teachers and others. But especially we must be thankful to God, who doeth all things well.

Now as we graduate we must begin a new segment in our lives. Some of us will go on to more school. Others will begin work in a factory or other places of business. In all of this graduation becomes a beginning or a commencement. But in this new segment of our lives the old must not be forgotten. All of the basics, which we have been taught must now be put together in order for us to do well in our life's work. It is like a jigsaw puzzle. We first put together the border so we can be guided as we put the rest of the puzzle together. The pre-graduation schooling is like this border, it guides us for the rest of our lives. The post-graduation work, schooling, etc., is the inside. Together we get the complete picture, or our whole life. So you can see that those thirteen years are very important. They serve as a guide for our whole life.

The most important part in the life of a Christian is Christ and through him God. As we have gone through these thirteen years God has been with us from the time we began until now and he will still be with us even to the end. "...And lo I am with you always even unto the end of the world. Amen" Matt. 28:20b. God has made for us the way he would have us to go.

So as we are called upon the platform to receive our diplomas, let us not forget those 13 years for they are the basis, the foundation for the rest of our lives. And let us constantly remember our faithful Saviour, and our Creator for without God we are nothing.

GRADUATION

by Carol Schimmel

In 1970, the word 'graduation' meant to me the end, the end of all the fun and excitement I was just beginning to have as a student. Fun? Excitement? Yes, that is exactly what I was beginning to have. With most of my more difficult courses satisfactorily accomplished, my curriculum ahead as a senior was filled with the less difficult courses. Be-

cause of my lighter schedule, I was able to become more acquainted with my classmates, but most important of all, my teachers. When I first began my high school career, I was, as most freshmen, scared to death! Since I spent my first year at East Christian it was even more difficult. Kids from such a small school as Adams Street

were not as well accepted as kids from the larger, more well known Christian schools. To add to the difficulty was the size of our classes. I firmly believe that the difference in size of high school classrooms has a great deal of impact on a student. In a smaller class with approximately 12-20 students, the teacher is able to spend more time with, and apply special attention to the slower learning student. On the other hand, the slow student in a class of 40-50 has hardly a chance of having his problems recognized, much less discussed on a one to one basis. The teacher is simply too busy.

After transferring to Covenant Christian and spending two years there I became more acquainted with my teachers. I was able to establish a sincere appreciation and respect for each one as my school days drew to a close. I finally began to realize that teachers, as inhuman as they may seem sometimes, have genuine feelings too. You may think it's easy for a teacher to discipline a student. Put yourself in your teachers' place, or better yet, ask your Church History teacher how it makes her feel to tell one of her students that his excuse wasn't valid and his grade will have to be lowered because his report wasn't in on time. How about that strict government teacher who absolutely will not tolerate note writing during class or that constant chattering from one corner of the room throughout one of his more boring lectures. How do you think he feels to discipline a student in front of his peers, especially when he discovers that the particular student was not even involved in the incident? And if you still have enough nerve, approach that cold, untouchable principal who seems to spend his whole day just looking for trouble makers, pushing students against the wall, and asking them to scrub the floor with a toothbrush. Ask him if he doesn't feel a bit fatigued when he finally reaches his easy chair at home. And ask him how it makes him feel to expel a student for

bad behavior, short skirts, or long hair. I'm sure, if your question is sincere, his answer will be also. This may sound very remote to some of you. However, if you simply take a little time to place yourself in your teachers' shoes, I'm sure you will begin to understand my line of reasoning, and you will also realize that teachers have feelings too.

Graduation was an experience I will never forget. And why on earth they referred to it as 'commencement exercises' was beyond me. It wasn't the beginning by any means, as far as I was concerned it was the absolute end. But little did I know at the time, it actually was the beginning; the beginning of a whole new life. Leaving behind many friends, sincere God fearing teachers and small classrooms, I embarked upon a whole new life, a life of strange new faces, critical self centered instructors, and classrooms of up to thirty students or more at G.R.J.C. Naturally I was filled with a mixture of fear and excitement not knowing what was in store for me, and not knowing what I really wanted to do in life. I was, as most seniors are, very hesitant to make any big decisions, always asking questions like 'would I do a better job majoring in Math, or how about Phys. Ed.'. 'Is there a great demand for Phys. Ed. teachers in our Christian schools today?'. Question after baffling question arose in my mind. Decisions, decisions.

Little did I realize at the time however, the decision was not mine at all. My whole life; grade school, high school and college, was planned before my days even began. My plans and decisions, no matter how definite, were futile without the almighty hand of God. That is quite a comfort.

Looking back on my high school career, I can be very thankful to God for allowing me to be one of the very fortunate people to have had a Christian education in a truly God-centered school, with sincere God-fearing teachers.

HYPOCRITES

*by Gary Lanning**

Friday: Went to a movie; checked out a new bar; not enough action, went home.

Saturday: Picked up a chick at the Grotto; went to a party and got bombed.

Sunday: Crashed till noon; went to Young People's Society, presented an after-recess program entitled "Living up to Our Christian Calling."

**Gary is a member of our Hudsonville Church*

The above could be a typical excerpt from a diary of many Protestant Reformed Young People. If you were to talk to some of these same people about religion, you would get the impression that they were very pious, God-fearing Christians. Maybe they are; but one could never tell it by their daily walk. And if fellow church members can't tell it, other people surely wouldn't say, "There's a God-fearing young man." This I know to be true. A friend from college and I were talking about religion one day and I asked him if he had ever heard of the Protestant Reformed denomination. He answered that he had not only heard of it but had also known some of the members. He added that judging from what he had seen, he would never want to become Protestant Reformed. This group of P.R.'s which he knew were some of the worst "Christians" he had ever seen. And this friend isn't someone who has been shut up in a monastery all his life either. He has been to Vietnam, been a regular of drugs, rode with motorcycle gangs, and demonstrated at the capital just to name a few highlights.

This life style of this group of P.R.'s is characterized by many of our young people. This type of witnessing we don't need. It is our calling to witness every day of our lives in everything we do. Especially we, who place a great deal of importance on daily

witness, should not be joining the world in all of its sins.

However, these aren't the only ways in which we are leading hypocritical lives. There are other less obvious ways in which we are not living up to our name or calling. These things are happening right inside the church itself. I am thinking primarily of the apathetic attitude in society meetings.

I cannot speak for other societies, but as far as my own Young People's Society is concerned, there was virtually no interest or motivation in either the Bible discussion or the after-recess program. No one came at all prepared, thereby creating no discussion. Neither did the members fulfill their responsibilities in the various other activities connected with a Young People's Society.

This kind of "sin that grace may abound" living seems to be becoming more and more prevalent in our Young People. It isn't the way we profess to live and it certainly isn't the way God demands us to live.

If we continue to live this way we are hypocrites. Job 8 says, "The hypocrites hope shall perish." "...he shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand..." Let's not live this way, but rather let us do all things to God's honor and glory for "... in Him we live, and move, and have our being."

STEPS

by Gertrude Hoeksema

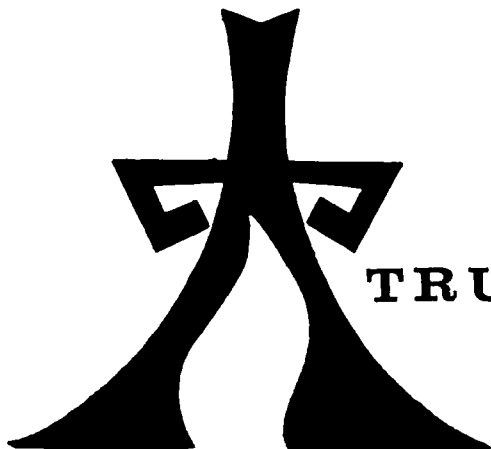
*Slow, syncopated, stumbling ones
By Tiny tot with tremulous pace;
In youthful strides, long, lusty ones
Rough, ruthless in their frenzied race...
Unto old age.*

*In days of sunshine, bouyant ones,
When blithe our mood and bright our gait;
Through days of pensive, ponderous ones,
When sore we feel some sorrow's weight...
Until they fail.*

*We pray, as steadily we climb
Life's ever steeper, rugged hill,
To order ev'ry step we take
In Thy most Holy Word... until
We rest in Thee.*

*Thou numberest all these steps, O God.
Mere mortal man who walks alone
Cannot direct his devious course.
The way of man is not his own...
It is all Thine.*

*When rough terrain appears, and we
Must circle boulders in our way,
Pursue a rough, harsh mountain path,
Our steps shall never slide... They stay
Secure in Thee.*



TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

MR. FEARING

In singleness of heart, Fearing God.

—Paul

That man is blest who Fearing God... (David). He was, originally, from the town of Stupidity, and many of his great concerns were stupid fears. He was always afraid he would never make it to where he planned to go. It took him a whole month to get up nerve to go over the Slough of Despond. Yet he could not think of going back. One day he suddenly determined to get over it, and so just as suddenly crossed over. He could hardly believe it. He was a man who had a Slough of Despond in his mind, carrying it around everywhere with him. He almost felt like taking the name of Magor-Missabib, Fear-On-Every-Side. David applied this language to himself once (Ps. 31:13), and it became a favorite expression of Jeremiah's (6:25; 20:3, 10: 46:5; 49:29). At the narrow gate he stood hanging back, shaking and shrinking, as he gave place to others. Finally, he reached up timidly to touch the heavy door knocker, to make a little tap about as loud as a mouse bumping its nose on a block of cheese. At Interpreter's House he would stand out in the cold long before he would call for entrance. He was so chicken-hearted! When Interpreter brought him to the place of a skull, where were three crosses, he cringed when he saw the gibbets, but was glad when he saw the Cross and sepulchre. Here he desired to stay a while, and seemed to become just a little cheery. At the Hill

Difficulty he had no trouble at all. He was not afraid of it, nor was he afraid of the lions! His trouble was not about such things. He was dumpish at the House Beautiful. There, withdrawn from the rest, he would sit off by himself behind a pillar, screened from the speaker, and listen to the good talk. He was pleasant in the Valley of Humiliation, the most agreeable place he'd yet come across. He was never better in all his pilgrimage than when in that valley. It was his favorite for taking a stroll. "Here he would lie down, embrace the ground, and kiss the very flowers that grew in the valley." At Vanity Fair he was fiery. There he was the very opposite of his name. He would have taken on all the men of the fair in a fight. He almost got his skull split, he was so hot against their fooleries. He would not allow them to impede his progress. He would have bit a blazing firebrand in half if it got in his way. Difficulties, lions or Vanity Fair he feared not at all. Only sin, death and hell were to him a terror.

Yet he was, for the most part, very low, making his life burdensome to himself and bothersome to others. "Thou hast put mine acquaintance (s) far from me," he would say, "Thou hast made me an abomination unto them. I am shut up, and I cannot come forth" (Ps. 88:8. The entire psalm describes Mr. Fearing.) More than most, he was afraid

of sin, afraid of doing injury to others. So he would often deny himself what was lawful, lest by it he should offend. One of Christiana's sons paid him tribute with, "No fears, no grace! Though there is not always grace where there is the fear of hell, yet there is no grace where there is no fear of God."

Godly fear is a fear of reverence, when the soul has a sense of God's majesty and greatness. "Fear ye not Me? saith the Lord. Will ye not tremble at my presence, who have placed the sand for a bound of the sea by a perpetual decree, that it can not pass it?" (Jer. 5:22). Yet they are a stupid people who fear God neither for His majesty and greatness, nor for His goodness in His providence. "Neither say they in their hearts, Let us now fear the Lord our God that giveth rain, the former and latter rain in its season; He reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest" (v.24). They are really stupid who do not see beyond mere providence to grace and realize that "there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared" (Ps. 130:4). "There is none like unto Thee, O Lord; Thou art great, and Thy name is great in might. Who would not fear Thee, O King of nations?" (Jer. 10:6,7). The fear of God is a fear of caution. Salvation is what we pursue. "Having a promise of rest left us, let us fear lest we come short of it" (Heb. 4:1). Since it is no easy pursuit, "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12). Here below, pursuing and fearing continue. "Pass the time of your sojourning here in fear" (I Pet. 1:17).

How do employees do their work when their bosses are absent? Many neglect their work. But if fearing God is the tenor of our hearts and lives, we will conscientiously carry out our responsibilities. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God" (Col. 3:22). A Christian is consistently Christian everywhere because God is consistently God everywhere. The God-fearing need no other stage than conscience, nor other audience than God and His angels (I Cor. 4:9; 11:10). Why is it that a Christian does not commit sin in secret, when others are not aware of it? He fears God! "Thou shalt not curse the deaf man, nor lay a stumbling-block before the blind, but shalt

fear the Lord thy God" (Lv. 19:14). How could the deaf man hear you, or the blind see you? But God sees and hears, and that is enough for the Christian when he could do evil and not be detected. Nehemiah refused bribes because he feared God (Neh. 5:15). This grace, when it is dangerous to cross men, makes us obey God rather than men. "The midwives feared God, and did not as the King of Egypt commanded them" (Ex. 1:17). That kept them from the fear of man, and from obeying man when God alone ought to have been feared and obeyed. Where men fear God, neither hope of gain, nor fear of loss will influence them to wrongdoing.

Fearing God is not contrary to happiness. "That man is blest who fearing God from sin restrains his feet." "Happy is the man that feareth alway." (Prov. 28:14) It is not contrary to joy in the Lord. Fear to offend God, and joy in His favor complement one another. "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling" (Ps. 2:10). It is not contrary to delighting in the Lord. "Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord and delighteth greatly in His commandments" (Ps. 112:1). It is not contrary to comfort. Then the Church will be found "walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit" (Ac. 9:31).

The Word of God condemns all stupid fears, but commends godly fear. The latter is evident in a hatred of sin. "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13). It reveals itself in a departure from evil: "By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil" (16:6). So Job feared God and eschewed (avoided) evil. Paul counsels us, "Avoid every appearance (or form!) of evil" (I Th. 5). It is seen in men in their yielding up all to God and withholding nothing from Him, whatever dear thing it may be, and whenever He may require it, as with Abraham when he offered up his son at God's command. "Now I know," the Lord had said, "that thou fearest God" (Gen. 22:14). But when, of that which God expects to be given to Him, a part is kept back from Him, as with Ananias and Sapphira, there is no fear of God before their eyes or in their hearts.

That blessed man fearing God does not allow himself to do what others do, nor what he himself formerly did. He claims no liberty or license to sin that others do. He does not walk as other Gentiles walk, in the

vanity of their minds, according to the course of this world. He is careful to offend neither God nor man, Jew, Gentile, nor church of God. He shows a godly fear in his constant attendance at the house of God. Where it is customary to forsake the assem-

bling together in divine worship, the fear of God is cast off. That blessed man who has the name of fearing God has a fearless fear, has no reason to fear anything. He may say, "The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?" (Ps. 27:1,3).



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

by REV. G. LUBBERS

Where Do You Pitch Your Tent?

"... and Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom. But the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly"

Gen. 13: 12, 13

It was truly a sad departure on the part of Lot. He separated himself, his house and all his servants and flocks and herds from Abram in the land of promise. This departure was a separating from the church of God and the hope of righteousness by faith. True, Abram had suggested that he and Lot separate from one another when their flocks became too many for the land and when the herdsmen of both Abram and Lot quarreled over the pasture and the water for the flocks. However, Abram did not say: you go out of the land, I will remain here and wait for the LORD'S promise. Not at all! He said:

you go west, I go east, you go north and I go south. It was to be a separation of their dwelling-place within the promised land of Canaan. But here is something indescribably sad. Lot left the land of promise, never to return. His posterity, Moab and Ammon would be with the inveterate enemies of the seed of Abraham throughout the history of Israel in the land of Canaan. And that is sad when we remember that Lot was basically a righteous man. (II Peter 2:8). Lot is a tragic example of a christian who is saved as a fire-brand plucked out of the fire, while his entire house perishes.

We read that Lot, after leaving Abram, pitched his tent toward Sodom. This was so appealing to the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. We read twice that there was a "lifting up of the eyes" in

Genesis 13. We read that the Lord tells Abraham, when He shows him all the land of Canaan, "Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward.. " (Vs. 14). On the other hand we read of Lot, " And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." In this "lifting up of" the eyes of Lot there was the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, it choked the word of God to him spoken by the prophets and patriarchs, so that it became unfruitful. The cares of life and the riches of the world were Lot's snare into which Satan tempted him to fall. Such is, indeed, the case with many a child of God, who lifts up his eyes, and sees the riches of this world and is ensnared. He fails to heed the word of Christ that it is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven. My dear youthful reader, give heed to this warning of the LORD. Lot did not heed, but "he pitched his tent toward Sodom." He moved from step to step till he was dwelling in the very vicinity of Sodom itself, yea, within the wicked city. All the while his soul was wretched, his conscience accused him, he had no rest, and vexing his soul he sank down deeper into the mire of Sodom's pattern of life. It was the sin of world-conformity.

Lot was like the man who was in the midst of the world; like the man who knows that things are going wrong with himself and with his family, but who became entangled so with the life of Sodom that he could not extricate himself. The trouble was that he had one thing in common with Sodom. That was the sin of "pride." He could see that his flocks would be fat there, the grass was green, the water plentiful in that beautiful Jordan delta. It would make him a great man of much riches. So his flesh reasoned. The land of Canaan had not proven to be such a boon after all. It really looked more like a questionable gift and blessing. Had he not accompanied Abram out of the land of Ur of the Chaldees to the land of Haran? And had he not then also once more accompanied him to Canaan, only after a short while to find himself in land of scarcity and famine, so that

they went down into Egypt to survive? Then they had returned with abundance of flocks, due to Pharaoh's gift and kingly generosity? But now they are back in Canaan once more, and again the land is not good enough to feed all the cattle of both Abraham and Lot. Lot had seen some real good pasture while in Egypt in the regions of Zoar. He had seen the Nile delta land. And now he lifts up his eyes and sees a similar sight, from the lofty heights of Canaan, in the Jordan delta near Sodom. And, lust conceived, bore sin, and, sin having been finished, bore death. And although his conscience accuses him, Lot goes to this rich plain near Sodom, never to return to the land of Promise!

What does he find here in Sodom. He finds here a people who were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly. What was the exceedingly sinfulness of their sin. It was their utter disregard of the LORD, who alone is great, Jehovah God they disregarded utterly. Their entire life was secularized; it was earthly, sensual, devilish. Man was the measure of all things. They would determine what is good and evil. They are a picture of our present world in which we live, young people. Know your times, both in the church and in the world.

First of all Sodom's sin was not limited to sexual depravity. The veil is lifted upon the night-life of Sodom, when the angels visit Sodom to take Lot, a righteous man, out of Sodom. It was the sin of homo-sexuality, the very sin which in Romans 1:26,27 is depicted as being a manifestation of the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of man. But this sin of Sodomy has a certain climate in which it thrives.

First of all man must be namelessly proud to thus live before the LORD, lifting and exalting one's self about all that is of God. We read in Ezekiel 16:49 "behold this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom, pride, fullness of bread, and abundance of idleness was in her and in her daughters, neither did they strengthen the hand of the poor and needy" (we underscore)

There was affluency of everything. The land was good, the cattle were sleek and fat, men could eat their steaks and drink their wine, and their work days were short and few. They lived sumptuously and cared not

for the poor.

In this kind of world we live too. We live in a world which is ripe for destruction, reserved in the power of God to be destroyed by fire. Where do you pitch your tent in this world? Are you of the world, laboring for abundance of riches? Or do you labor that you may have to give to the poor. Are you in the world, yet not of the world? Lot really was not of this world. He was known as that

stranger in their midst. But the Lord will deliver him. He will leave that world without men-servants, sheep and oxen; yea, he will leave without wife or sons. He will only leave with two daughters, who have imbibed the spirit of the prince of this world which works in Sodom. A sad ending. The world passeth away and the lusts thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. Where do you pitch your tent?

CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

SUCH A WORM AS I

by Bertha Den Hertog

Harry lay lazily on the outer edge of the sidewalk soaking up the dim warmth of the early morning sunshine. The dew gleamed in mirrored crystals on the thickly vegetated grass; Harry caught a glimpse of himself in one of the luminous beads and smiled with a trace of smugness. Harry had it made.

For a worm Harry was fashionably handsome: the early morning sun brought out the rich redness of his evenly segmented body. Naturally, Harry was not without a trace of vanity and he was wont to flex his neatly inostentatious muscles with understandable pride. But Harry had not wormed his way to the edge of the sidewalk on the sheer force of his physical attractions. There was more to Harry.

Harry was no pale, ordinary, self-effacing, run-of-the-ground worm. Harry dared to look life in the eye, because he intended to leave his mark on the earth. But by the same token Harry was no fanatic; he was broad-minded, but he tempered it with a strong dose of pragmatism and a touch of superstition thrown in for good measure. For example: Harry was no fool; he regarded the hazardous, self-defeating, daring of the middle-of-the-sidewalk worms as senseless recklessness and hardly worth the benefits it implied. On the other hand Harry felt an irritating condescension for his kin who seemed content to remain in Worm Haven. It seemed to him to be such an unglamorous, unenterprising earthy kind of existence. Yet Harry's touch of superstition urged him to remain in contact with the gritty, narrow-tunneled Worm Haven.

Harry had after all been brought up in Worm Haven. He had grown up in the midst of a wriggling multitude of moral fanatics and community-minded earthy worms. His life had been sharply curtailed and it had been a struggle to worm away from it. The Elders had never tired of warning him of the dangers of the sidewalk and the greenly grassed Hill-side. They solemnly warned him against; drying in the sun, predatory birds, but most of all against the Big Foot. The Big Foot was spoken of in hushed tones: his seemingly arbitrary footsteps often left a trail of death behind. But Harry had wormed away.

The superstitious visits to the Worm Haven continued even though Harry felt more alienated from his former life with each subsequent visit. Perhaps the Big Foot was real, but as long as one lived prudently with moderation... Harry wasn't particularly worried.

Harry opened his eyes; yawned; stretched and smugly surveyed his surroundings. Yes, this was indeed the good life here on the edge of the sidewalk; it, like a seat on the fifty-yard line, offered an advantageous view of what mattered with minimal costly involvement. Harry mentally patted himself on the back; he was not a grovelling fanatic, constantly worrying about safe tunnels; and yet he was not a morally decadent middle-of-the-sidewalker either. He had it made, Harry was safe!

The palely smiling sun retreated its face behind a weighty veil of clouds. Harry shivered. (The edge of the sidewalk didn't offer much protection for inclement con-

ditions.) The heavy drooping clouds began to wring their contents in heavy torrents upon the sidewalk. A lukewarm stream formed and began to industriously wash the sidewalk of its dirt and Harry. The Foot pondering

its way homeward 'inadvertently' pushed helpless Harry into the swirling contents of a drainhole... washing Harry away... from the edge of the sidewalk, the middle of the sidewalk and... the Worm Haven.

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

JEANNE KARSEMEYER

FROM OUR RANDOLPH CHURCH:

The membership papers of Mrs. Darlene Hoekstra and two baptized children have been received from the Emanuel Reformed Church in Waupun.

Mr. and Mrs. Maurice DeVries were blessed with the birth of a son, Darrel Herman.

The Young People's Society held an Arts and Crafts Sale to raise money for the new church building.

Mr. and Mrs. Don Able rejoice in the birth of a son, Robert David, born April 12.

The Young People's Society sponsored a singspiration on Easter Sunday, April 14, which included several special numbers. Proceeds were for the new church.

On Saturday, April 20, the Young People's Society held a car wash to raise money for the new church building.

FROM OUR DOON CHURCH:

The Young People's Society sponsored a basketball game (in which all members of the congregation participated) and baked goods sale on March 19 to raise money for the convention.

The membership papers of Mrs. Jim Jansma have been sent to our Hull Church at her request.

The Young People's Society held a Resurrection Day Program on Easter Sunday evening.

FROM OUR HUDSONVILLE CHURCH:

The Choral Society rendered an Easter program after the evening service of April 14.

The Young People held a submarine sandwich sale on April 13.

A casserole supper in the church basement was sponsored by the Young People's Society on April 25 to raise money for the convention.

FROM OUR HOPE, WALKER CHURCH:

The membership papers of Mr. Aaron Schwartz were sent to our Southwest Church at his request.

On Wednesday evening, May 8, a Divine Worship Service was held for the purpose of installing Rev. R. Harbach as home missionary.

On May 12 public confession of faith was made by Jonathan Englesma, Kurt Griffioen, Dann Heyboer, Janis Huizenga, Karla Kalsbeek, Lavonne Kamps, Henry Kamps, Bernard Kamps, James Koole, Robert Kuiper, Patsy Rau and Samuel Reitsma.

Mr. and Mrs. John Kuiper, Jr. rejoice in the birth of a girl, Pamela Sue, born on May 6.

Mr. and Mrs. Cal Kalsbeek were blessed with a son, Brian Lee, on May 9.

Membership papers of Mr. Carey Kamps have been sent to our Faith Church at his request.

FROM OUR SOUTH HOLLAND CHURCH:

On Sunday evening, April 21, the Choral Society sponsored a singspiration at which they gave a few special numbers.

The young people of our Randolph Church travelled to South Holland to join the Young People's Society there for a combined meeting on Friday, April 26.

Covenant Christian High School presented a concert in the church on May 2. Refreshments were served afterwards.

The membership papers of Alice Marie VanBaren were transferred to our Southeast Church at her request.

The Men's Society sponsored a public lecture on Monday evening, May 13, in the church. Rev. Englesma spoke on the subject "A Reformed Look at Pentecostalism."

FROM OUR FIRST CHURCH:

Mr. and Mrs. Eric Ophoff were blessed with the birth of a son, George Edward, on March 30.

The Consistory has been informed that Michael John, son of Mr. and Mrs. John ten-Haaf, has received the sacrament of baptism in our Redlands Church on January 13.

The Choral Society presented a cantata on the "Passion of Christ" after Good Friday services.

Professor H.C. Hoeksema spoke on "Why Are We Protestant Reformed?" at the annual spring lecture at First Church on April 18.

Mr. and Mrs. T. Osterhouse received from the Lord a daughter, Terri Rose, on April 17.

Public confession of faith was made by John Knoper on April 21.

Membership papers of Mrs. Edw. Smith and her baptized children, Dennis, Kenneth, Douglas, and Barbara have been received by the Consistory.

FROM OUR HULL CHURCH:

Mr. and Mrs. Art Flier gave thanks to God for a son, Duane John, born April 1.

Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Jansma are the grateful parents of a baby boy, Kelly Dennis, born April 10.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. George Hoekstra and their five baptized children have been sent to our Hudsonville church.

The Young People's Society held a Pancake Supper on April 30 to raise money for the convention.

FROM OUR SOUTHEAST CHURCH:

Mr. Carey Kamps and Miss Lois Hoeksema were united in marriage on April 4.

The annual church picnic was held at Townsend Park on Saturday, May 25.

A Potluck Supper was sponsored by the Young People's Society on April 27.

Upon their request, the membership papers of Mr. Eugene DeBoer were sent to our Hull Church, and of Edward Hoekstra to our Hudsonville Church.

John Flikkema and Ruthanne Englesma were joined in holy matrimony in First Church on May 16.

Requests for transfer of membership were granted to the Prof. H.C. Hoeksema family to Southwest Church, and to Lois (Hoeksema) Kamps to Faith Church.

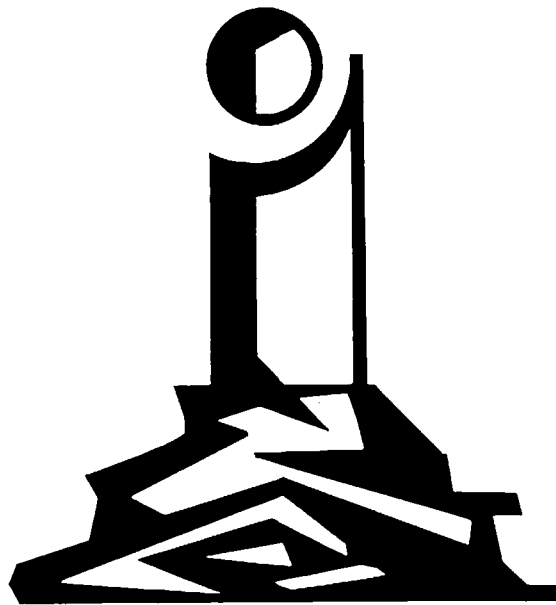
Mr. Joel Bruinooge has been received as a confessing member from the Christian Reformed Church in Bellflower, Calif.

FROM OUR FAITH CHURCH:

Mr. and Mrs. Jim Rau were blessed with a daughter, Kimberly Sue, on April 2. Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Schipper were blessed with a daughter, Rebecca Lynn, on May 23.

Rev. and Mrs. M. Joostens rejoice in the birth of a son, Timothy Christian, born on April 2. Mr. and Mrs. Gerrit VandenTop are the grateful parents of another daughter, Tamara June, born April 18.

Mr. and Mrs. Terry Velting received from the Lord a daughter, Elizabeth Ann, on April 2. The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. R. VanTil and three baptized children have been received from our Southwest Church.



MR & MRS JOHN ZANDSTRA JR.
492 GLENWOOD-LANSING RD.
GLENWOOD, ILLINOIS 60425