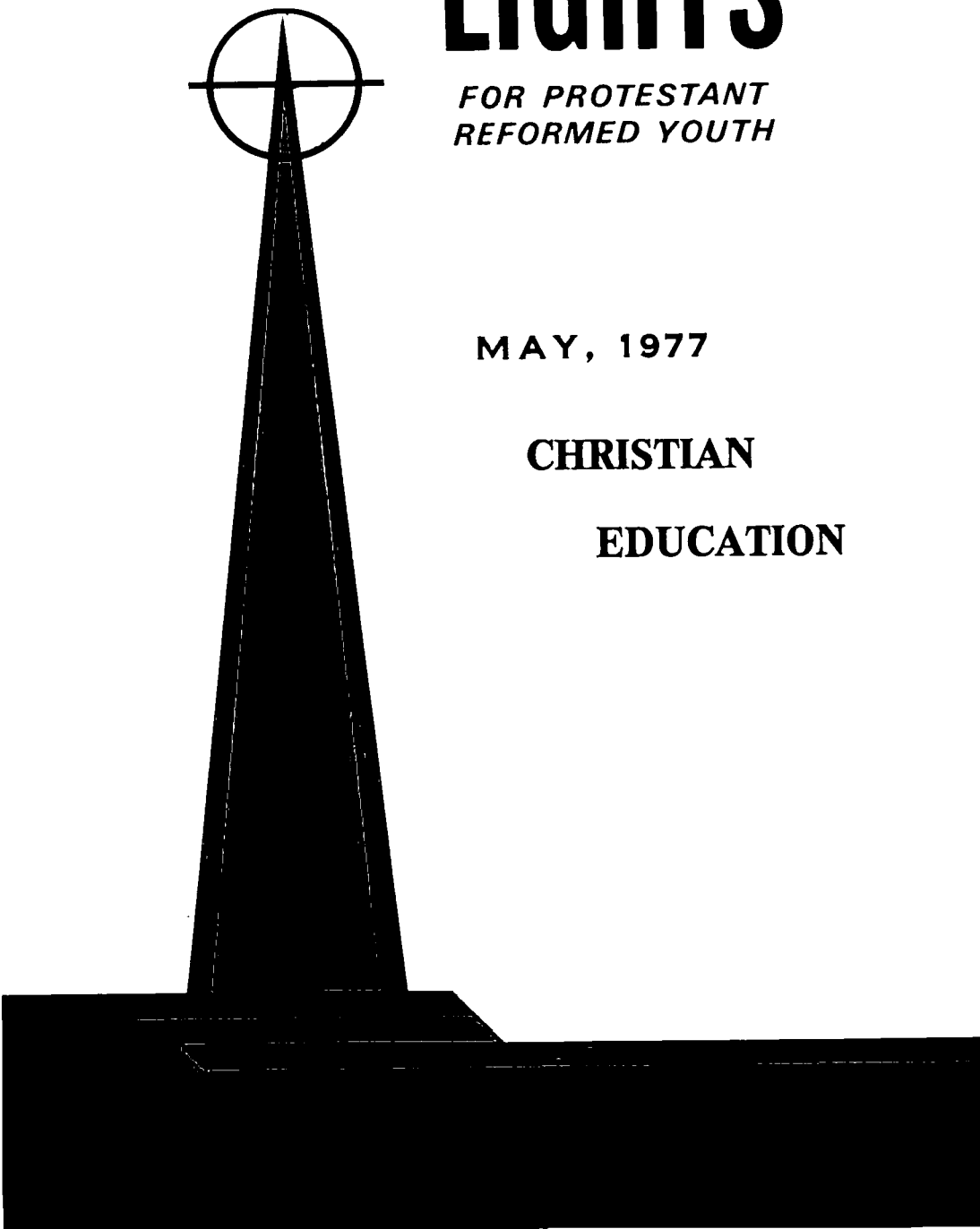
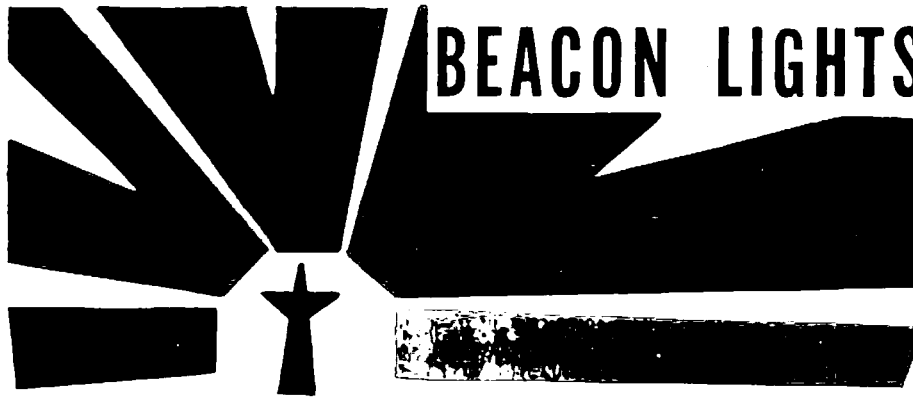
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH



MAY, 1977

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



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Editorial

PENTECOST

by Harry Langerak

Pentecost is the crowning day of the Church of Jesus Christ. Without it, Christmas and Easter would seem but hollow victories for the Church. I say this not to minimize their value, for undoubtedly they are indispensable to our salvation, yet without Pentecost they are meaningless to the Church. They are as the flower that never blooms.

Unlike Christmas and Easter, Pentecost is all but a forgotten day. Weeks before, one can detect a fervent activity building up to our celebration of Christmas and Easter, but Pentecost seems of no account. What a shame that we in the Church sometimes treat this most important day with such an indifference. It is like a farmer planting the grain but not harvesting it.

The importance of Pentecost lies in the fact that on Pentecost every saint received the fruits of Christ's labors, the blessings of His death and resurrection. On Christmas our mighty King entered the field of battle, a battle He waged throughout His life until he conquered death itself on Easter. With His ascension, we see Him as the exalted Lord of heaven and earth. On Pentecost, we became partakers of His blessed victory.

Historically Pentecost was a feast that was celebrated fifty days after the Passover or Feast of Unleavened Bread. It was the day of the "feast of harvest" when the firstfruits of that which was sown in the field was presented before the Lord signifying that it belonged to Him (Exodus 23:15-16). It was the Lord who gave the increase of the seed that was sown earlier. In its celebration Israel confessed that it was Jehovah who cared for His people. It was God alone to whom they owed their life.

The Feast of Pentecost as a type pointed to the reality of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon every believer whereby we, as members of Christ's body, are partakers of the firstfruits of His death and resurrection. The Spirit of Christ gives to each one of us the gracious benefits that Christ has merited for us. The resurrected Christ comes in us freely giving to us eternal life. No longer is the believer an orphan with the promise of a good home as Israel of old had the promise, but on Pentecost the Father brings us into His blessed fellowship. The Prince of Peace actually brings peace to the heart of the believer through the indwelling of His Spirit.

For even as the old Pentecostal Feast was the sign of God's blessing over His people in that He had prepared all that was necessary for life, so God in Christ Jesus prepared the whole of redemption for His own. As the first kernel was sown in His death, so the harvest is reaped in the outpouring of His Spirit. Christ became the firstfruit of them that slept. Salvation was an accomplished fact for the Church and each believer on Pentecost.

This priceless treasure of the Spirit becomes evident when one considers what the Scriptures have to say with respect to the fruits of the Spirit. In John 14:16 Christ calls the Spirit the Comforter who shall abide with us forever. In the Sermon on the Mount Christ said, "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted." On Pentecost He sends to us that Comforter. The Apostle Paul in Romans 8:14-16 tells us that the Spirit testifies within us that we are no more servants, but sons. The Spirit gives to us

the ability to shout "Abba Father" as adopted sons. Finally, the Spirit of Christ testifies to us that we are partakers of His resurrection. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you" Romans 8:11. One can only marvel at the blessings we receive through the Spirit.

Young people, you are sons and daughters of God through the Spirit of His Son. What a blessed truth. What a comfort. God our Father lives in our hearts through the outpouring of the Spirit. Thus, the day of Pentecost is the crowning day, is our day of victory in Christ. It is the day we celebrate the loosening from the curse of Babel's confusion and join the saints of all ages in one glad Hallelujah to our heavenly Father for the adoption He gave. He will never leave nor forsake us. Our salvation is complete. Thank Him from Whom all blessings flow.

THE WONDER OF IT ALL

by Sharon Bylsma

The fiery sun sets its film of light
Breaking through the feathery clouds,
Waking the grand, lofty pine,
Which stands in dedication and wisdom.

Deeply scented are the many miles of forest
Which shelter all its mysteries within,
And in its heart a new life is born
As a tiny fawn breathes the mellowed air.

Rippling up and over the hill's crest,
And beckoning timidly to God's creation,
The gurgling brook seems to smile,
And tell of the rich beauty, all its own.

The ripened fruit clusters together in the tree,
Yielding the precious color of perfectness,
Showing nothing artificial or rotten,
But giving sheer pleasure to the human eye.

A pure lily lifts its velvet, satin head,
Enchanting the air with sweet incense of loveliness,
In the silence of solitude, growing by God's handiwork,
And then gives itself to the world...innocently.

A peaceful meadow sways with the wind,
Far in the distance, all alone,
Wavering endlessly, crackling gently,
Shining tender and golden in the burning sunlight.

Earnestly this masterpiece gives itself
And tells of God's infinite wonders,
For all of the nature we see and feel,
Makes us see the grandeur of His power.

Encircling the heavenly sphere of His kingdom,
He lacks nothing in His noble Being,
Superior He reigns, highest in might,
Watching His children patiently below.

Feature

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

The parental thoughts on our Protestant Reformed Christian Schools are usually the ones most heard of. And because this is often the case, the student's thoughts on the benefits which such an education has on their lives are rarely publicly heard.

In this issue, we have a collection of articles written by various ninth grade students of Protestant Reformed Christian Schools from around the country.

As you read these articles, see in them the rich blessing which we have in our schools; the years of dedicated effort put forth by God-fearing teachers and school boards; the sacrifice of parents who are, by the grace of God, fulfilling their baptism vows to "see these children...brought up in the aforesaid doctrine," and knowing the command and the promise that a child so trained in the fear of the Lord will not depart from it.

We hope also that this may stimulate all our students to ask themselves the questions, "Why Protestant Reformed?" and "Where have I been and where am I going and why?"

If then our parents read these articles and see some of the fruits of their striving to fulfill their callings, and young people read them and are stirred to search their souls and rededicate themselves to their callings as students, then these articles will have served their purpose.

The Editor

by Linda Pastoor

Linda attends our First Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan, and is a student in our Adam's Christian School.

I have spent ten years in Adams Street Christian School. From kindergarten on I was taught in the ways of the Lord. Besides math, spelling, and many other subjects, I learned how to get along with children my own age and was taught respect for teachers and those in authority.

Every morning I was taught Bible stories and the many ways in which God cares for His people. This instruction has great importance, for the very foundation of my faith was built in those early years of my education. As a Christian, I am greatly privileged to have this. Children in a public school would never have this opportunity.

In junior high, I learned to take more responsibility, both for my daily assignments and my behavior. My classmates and I had special projects to plan and carry out: the Farewell Party in the eighth grade and the "Adams Spotlight" in the ninth grade.

And then there are the fun times of which I will always have fond memories: the kindergarten graduation, the trip to the Planetarium, the trip to Lansing, school programs, farewell parties, the ninth grade graduation and ninth grade class trip.

Now all this is in the past, but I will never forget Adams and all the many things I learned there. The instruction of dedicated teachers who taught me so diligently in the ways of our Lord shall always be remembered.

It hardly seems as though I am going to leave Adams. The furthering of my education still seems far in the future. I face going to Covenant Christian High School with mixed feelings of fear and anticipation, but I know I will receive and will be grateful for the fine instruction I will receive there. I am thankful to the parents and teachers who know the need for this Christian education, and above all, I give thanks to God who has made all this possible.

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by Duane Huisken

Duane attends our Hope Protestant Reformed Church, Redlands, California, and is a student in our Hope Christian School there.

There is quite a difference between a school with ten classrooms, kitchen, auditorium, library, art classroom, and faculty lounge and a school with two classrooms and utility room. These are the two schools that I attended. The latter is the Redlands Hope Christian School, which opened in 1975. From these two schools, we have received our elementary and junior high education—our first eight years from a view different from our own, and the past two years from our perspective. Our view has something to say about science, math, English, literature, and history, not merely on the subject of Bible or religious teachings.

Next year I will be attending Ontario Christian High School, which is about 30 miles away. Here I will again be taught from the Christian Reformed viewpoint. To me this is the best and only available high school which is close to our viewpoint. I, as an individual, do not think that 30 miles is too far to go for a Christian high school education when the only alternative is a public school. Some may think that the public school is good enough for them, or is better than instruction from a different view than our own. If worse comes to worse and we as

Christians cannot any longer send our children to a Christian school, then and only then will a public school suffice. It is my hope that the world will never cause us to do this, but it is doubtful that this will not come to pass. We can only hope that this will not come to pass in our lifetime or that of our parents.

A pure Christian education is the most precious gift that parents can give to their children. It is a gift that is without equal, because we as children (we all were) can be trained and molded to whatever shape and size that our parents wish us to be. As King Solomon told us in Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." How true this is. The instructor, then, must teach from and must share the same viewpoint as the parents who hired him. We must remember that the Christian parents establish the Christian schools, and that the school is an extension of the home, where we begin our education.

We can only be what we are taught to be. All of our instruction begins in the home, then the elementary schools, high schools, and on up through college. After college there is not much we can learn scholastically. I feel that as we go through school, we see God's sovereignty at work. God will also show us through men more and more of His wondrous world that He has put around us. In this world we can see God's hand in all the avenues of life. Then and only then can we truly have and appreciate receiving a Christian education.

Dale and Nathan are 9th grade students in the Protestant Reformed Christian School, South Holland, Illinois.

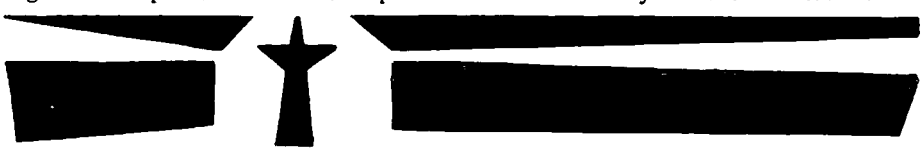
by Dale Van Baren

Protestant Reformed education has meant a lot to me, for many reasons. First of all, my classmates are Christians. God's Word teaches us to seek those who love the Lord. One can usually judge us by our friends. In a Christian school we have friends who trust the Lord. Friends who do not cheat or steal, but attend a Christian school because their parents want them instructed in the fear of God.

What has also helped in my Protestant Reformed education are the Christian teachers. Teachers who have prayed with us each day and have been an example to us of Christian life. But most of all, teachers who have taught us that God rules over all the world, over every living thing. Catastrophes, tornadoes, depressions, and death all take place by the will of God for the welfare of His church.

Subjects, too, have aided me in my Protestant Reformed education, for all our subjects are taught according to God's Word. This is a Christian education. Take biology for example. Some of the books teach evolution, that through the years, a single cell has developed into a bigger form of life, such as Man. But we are taught that God created all things in six days, as found in Genesis 1. We also study the history of the Church, how the Christians were persecuted, how God spread the Gospel, and how God's Church was established.

I am grateful to my parents and teachers for my Christian education.



by Nathan Lubbers

As a student in the ninth grade, I have not yet learned all the benefits of a Protestant Reformed education. However, there are a few that my teachers have taught me and that occur to me upon reflection.

School is one of the spheres of instruction. Among all the spheres there is one unifying factor—the Word of God.

That which makes our Christian education different from others is our different interpretation of Scripture. We are instructed that God does not love all men, that man is totally depraved, that God's grace is irresistable, and that the saints will perservere to the end. In short, God's sovereignty in all of life is stressed.

We are taught our place in this world by various subjects such as English, church and world history, civics, reading, and science. In English we study the form of a specific God-given language in which He reveals His Word, and we are taught to use this specific language. In civics we learn that God ordained powers over us. (Romans 13:1-5). Reading is a subject where we are taught to read the right literature: literature to the honor and glory of God. In church and world history we learn that the history of the church and the history of the world are influenced by each other. And in science we are taught that God created the world and upholds it day by day. As a result, we learn a world and life view.

By means of covenant instruction, we learn of God's greatness and power revealed in Himself and His doings. God's greatness and power is taught in the fact that He created the world and upholds it day by day. This teaching goes over against the teaching that God set the world in motion and watches it run.

We learn to resist the evil and do the good even though it is against our nature. We are taught to obey.

We are instructed to be children of God, to do this we must learn the Word of God.

So the fundamental benefits of a Protestant Reformed education are that we are taught to reject evil and follow righteousness.

COMMUNICATIONS

by Peter Koole

Mr. Koole is a member of our Hope Protestant Reformed Church, Walker, Michigan.

The high pitched cry of an infant nestled so tenderly and lovingly in its mother's arms breaks the stillness of the night. After but a short while, the cry is hushed and once again contentment and silence reigns.

Now the scene changes, and some years later that now greying son firmly but gently clasps the hand of that now aged bed-ridden mother. Her thin and weary face betrays an inner attitude of peace and contentment.

In both situations of life no words were spoken; nevertheless, communications were established in a meaningful manner.

Without a doubt, it is through the five senses man possesses that he is able to transmit and communicate something of himself to others. These natural gifts are not only common to man; but also in the creature world of fish, fowl, beast, and

insect. One can observe in them the divinely created wonder of touch, smell, sight, hearing, and taste.

Who can explain in depth how some birds fly uncharted courses from pole to pole? How the mother sheep know its young among untold hundreds of other sheep. All five senses, either alone or in combination, are vital in their existence and survival. To the hunter, it may be frustrating; but to the white tailed deer, the smell of danger is signaled by the white flag going up, and away they go.

But if we would stop there, we haven't said near enough. One distinct gift separates God's highest creature from all the rest of His creation.

This gift is **SPEECH.**

Man's ability to speak and form words not only makes him unique but also sets him apart as a moral rational creature accountable to his Creator. By speaking, he possesses an instrument sharper than a razor and sweeter than honey.

In James 3:5-12, the Holy Spirit through the writer presents a vivid and comprehensive description of that member...the tongue. Note chapter 3 of that Epistle begins by saying, "My brethren" etc. Verses 8 and 10 say the following:

> 8. "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.
> 9. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.
> 10. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."

Sad commentary of ourselves, is it not?

But you ask, "Is there no escape from this just judgment?" To be sure! The apostle Paul in the book of Romans has these words of consolation and victory. "For Christ has set us free from the law of sin that warreth in our members and has set us free from the law of sin and death. We are no longer to walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."

Let us now return to our heading, and attempt to define "communications." I would say in its broadest concept, it is that ability of expression in words and in deeds, whereupon we sincerely put forth every effort of our being to unite ourselves and promote our lives for the glory of God and for the well-being of our spiritual brother. We strive for this goal not by way of doctrinal compromise or by ignoring authority; but through faith with patience, understanding, and other spiritual virtues.

The basic make-up of society begins with the family. But a family is composed of individual members. All have their own personalities, characteristics, physical and mental abilities and limitations...even some peculiarities. To function properly and orderly, that family has to have complete communications and discipline amongst each other. When that breaks down, either between husband and wife, or between children and their parents, you can rest assured the ice is becoming mighty thin. If that situation becomes unresolved and sinful pride prevents reconciliation, you had better know the fruit will be thorns and thistles. Isn't it typical of us that with a very young child, we as parents urge and coax him or her to walk and to talk? From then on in, they have to be constantly reminded to sit down and be quiet.

As in the home, so in the school, you also have the necessity of proper communication being maintained. Teachers, pupils, School Boards, Societies, PTA's are involved in conveying and responding to the needs not only of the system, but also to the person. Difficult as it may be, sometimes this can only be gained on a person-to-person basis. To achieve respect, harmony, and unity either in the home or in the school, communication is vital. And it is a two way street.

Communication is not just a philosophy that says, "Don't do as I do, but do as I say"; nor a policy that says, "This is your school" and then fails to recognize the voice and responsibility of the membership.

In closing, I have this yet to say: What is the glue (bond) that holds things together and can make us function as we ought? Charity. No, not a wishy, washy Charlie Brown type of love, but rather let me refer you to the well-known chapter of I Corinthians 13.

Galatians 6:-12 is also very fitting and instructive. "Brethren if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ." (Revised Standard Version).

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

BY REV. M. KAMPS

CALLED INTO THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE SON OF GOD

Fellowship with the Son of God in Christ is a reality for believers. This fellowship exists on the basis of a common property between the believers and the Son of God. These two have something "in common." Strange, amazing, but true. The Church is one, a unity, a living, spiritual organism. The life of the Son of God in our flesh is the common property that unites the Church and its Head. The life of the Son of God in our flesh has been given us. The Christ by the Spirit given Him hath regenerated us. He hath made us alive spiritually and ethically. Christ hath given to us life eternal (John 10:28). This life is not that we share the essential attributes of God; but that we share the ethical attributes of God in a creaturely

measure. We are not infinite, independent, and almighty; but we are now holy, just, merciful, and possess true knowledge in a creaturely measure. Life eternal given to all the elect in Christ is that common principle which makes the Church and her Head a living spiritual organism.

We were dead to sin, but now we are alive unto God (Rom. 6:11). Formerly, we were guilty and under the curse of God, having no right to His fellowship. We were ethically unholy, wicked, children of our father the devil, enemies of God. But now we are in Christ's blood justified, and we know that we are justified through faith in Jesus. We are now regenerated and sanctified in heart, mind and will, and thus able to serve and love our God according to the dictates of His Word. Through faith in Christ we died unto sin once in order that we should live unto God forever. Christ's life hath been freely given us on the basis of His shed blood.

Fellowship presupposes this common principle of life. How can two walk together lest they be agreed? Our fellowship with the Son of God issues forth from a common likeness. We have been in principle made like unto the image of the Son of God.

What is fellowship? It is to share in a common activity. Persons who are ethically one perform the same ethical activity and share in this activity. The primary activity in fellowship is speech. The Son of God speaks to us the truth of His Word, and we receive it with joy. The sheep hear His voice...know Him and obey Him. The Son of God commands that we walk in the ways of God and we pray for the strength to do His will. We also speak to Him for we come in prayer with the "burden of our sin," and we receive the Word of the gospel that our sins are forgiven us...go and sin no more. We come to Him in prayer concerning all our physical and spiritual needs and the Son of God hears and provides. Fellowship is speech or a conversing of those ethically one. Our fellowship with God in Christ is only through His Word. This fellowship is initiated by God. He hath spoken almightily. We heard for He gave us ears to hear and minds to understand. The content of this speech or communication is the Word of God. Thus, where one does not receive the truth of the Word, there is no possibility of fellowship with the Son of God in our flesh.

Fellowship with the Son of God presupposes separation. Fellowship with God requires separation from sin through repentance. God calls the dead elect sinner "out of" spiritual death and out of the fellowship of sin and Satan. Doing so, God calls His own into the Fellowship of His Son. The believer leaves one sphere principally and enters another. One cannot live in sin and still have fellowship with the Son of God, for fellowship with the Son of God in our flesh is in holiness. Fellowship with the Son presupposes a faithful, upright walk. The friend of God is necessarily the enemy of the world. The friend of the world is necessarily an enemy of God. Fellowship with the risen Christ always implies and requires an anti-thetical walk. In fellowship with the Christ we say "yes" when God says yes, and "no" when God says no. In fellowship with the Son of God we are of the party of the living God. We love Him, we love His Word, we are, in short, one with Him ethically.

This fellowship with the Son of God occasions, though it does not cause, the scorn, ridicule and hatred of unbelieving persons. Wherever the life of the resurrected Christ becomes manifest in the activity of His people, there the children of darkness cry out, "away with Him." They in whom Christ dwells by His Spirit must bear the wrath and indignation of those who are at enmity with God. Thus, the believer has fellowship in the sufferings of Christ Jesus.

We have an ever blessed covenant fellowship with God through His Son, our

Lord Jesus Christ.

Because God calls a plurality of persons in the fellowship of His Son, these believers have fellowship one with another. They who receive the Word spoken by the Son have fellowship together. This fellowship of the saints is a most blessed reality. Believers have fellowship in the truth of the Word. Because the saints share the same spiritual calling, the same hope of glory, the same faith, the same sorrow for sin, the same love of God...thus they have fellowship together, personally sharing in this multifaceted spiritual activity.

The saints are an innumerable host, as many as the stars of heaven for multitude...but only as they are viewed from the perspective of the totality as they are finally gathered by the Son of God. In the world, at any one time, the saints are always "few in number." They always constitute a remnant according to election. Compared to the multitudes of unbelievers, the saints are as a little flock. But though they be few in number, they are never alone. God always preserves to Himself a remnant...the seven thousand. These saints seek one another, and having found each other, they rejoice in the common bond of faith and love towards God. They share "a common life principle," and thus have fellowship in their mutual love of and obedience to God's Word.

Through this fellowship, God's people strengthen one another spiritually. With God's Word they mutually rebuke, correct, encourage, comfort, and instruct themselves. Always it is a mutual commitment to God's Word that unites believers and characterizes their "uniform" walk.

However, sin unrepented of disrupts this fellowship among the saints. Sin works devastation and havoc. Sin in doctrinal matter, as well as sin on an inter-personal and private level, works this devastation. False doctrine is sin, and where persons hold to false doctrine of necessity complete fellowship is disrupted between themselves and those who are faithful to the Word. Until the unfaithful repent, full communion and fellowship is precluded. The love of the truth of the Word precludes full communion or fellowship with those who have corrupted the Word.

Inter-personal sins of lieing, deceit, pride, selfishness, etc., also disrupt the fellowship of saints. We often commit these sins against one another when we trample under foot the command of Christ to esteem the brother more highly than ourselves. Usually we place a great emphasis upon doctrinal purity as a basis for the fellowship of the saints. This emphasis is proper and necessary in these days of apostasy. But we often overlook the sins of pride and self-seeking which disrupt the fellowship and create offense in the church just as surely as doctrinal impurity. Theoretically, the inter-personal walk and conversation of God's people will reflect a faithfulness in doctrine. Doctrine is first...the walk follows. True doctrinal faithfulness requires that each individual saint consciously lives in the spirit of repentance and confession of his sins with respect to his brother or sister in the church. We must remember, however, that to live in sin over against the brother is itself a manifestation of doctrinal unfaithfulness. One cannot live in the sin of pride, let us say for example, and then claim to be doctrinally sound without making his doctrinal commitment only a hollow abstraction. This spiritual incongruity often characterizes our life. Let us not revel in being Reformed in doctrine unless we also strive in humility and repentance to remove the offenses our inter-personal sins cause.

Sin disrupts the fellowship of the saints. Sin creates an offense. The offense created by self-seeking and pride is not removed merely by praying, "Father forgive." We must learn also to say in the

humility of Christ, "brother, forgive me for the sin I committed against you." As fellow saints, who only in principle are partakers of the life of Christ Jesus, we must exercise a mutual watch and care over one another. In the love of our fellow believers, we are to demand of each other an upright walk. Without this mutual concern for the spiritual walk and well-being of one another, sin will live in the church unrebuked, creating untold dissension. But where saints in love exercise a mutual watch and care for each other, there the church spiritually blossoms and prospers. We need it. We must therefore perform this labor in love and kindness.

The fellowship of the saints in the truth of God's Word is delicate, beautiful, and remarkably strengthening; but it is preserved only by praying for one another and confessing our sins one to another. May God give us grace unto that end.

Heaven will be wondrously blessed in this regard. We will never sin against the Son nor against the brethren. In glory there will be most perfect fellowship issuing forth from a perfect oneness of ethical life and activity. God, who hath now called us into the fellowship of His Son, will then have perfected within us the marvelous work of His grace whereby He hath made us partakers of life everlasting as it is found in Christ alone.

George M. Ophoff (16)

by **Prof. H. Hanko**

With this article Prof. Hanko concludes his series on the life and ministry of Rev. George M. Ophoff.

In the last several issues of **Beacon Lights** we discussed the proceedings of Classis Grand Rapids West which led to the deposition of Rev. Ophoff and his Consistory. We do not intend to deal extensively with the doctrinal and church political issues which were involved in these proceedings of the Classis. All this has been done thoroughly by Rev. H. Hoeksema in his book, "The History of the Protestant Reformed Churches." But it is well that we pause here in our story to reflect a bit on what happened in the light of the importance of this event for the history of the denomination to which we belong.

If one reads the minutes of the Classis (even the brief excerpts which we quoted in our articles), one cannot help but be impressed with the total disregard on the part of the Classis for all truth and justice. Classis Grand Rapids East had deposed Rev. Hoeksema and his consistory, and had, by doing this, successfully squelched all opposition to the theory of common grace within that Classis. Classis Grand Rapids West had determined to follow in the path blazed by its sister Classis and to silence all opposition to common grace within its domain. This determination was clearly defined in the minds of many of the delegates before Classis ever met. There was no possibility on the floor of Classis for deliberation, for an impartial weighing of the issues, for a just treatment of Revs. Ophoff, Danhof, and their respective Consistories. Classis had not come together to weigh the whole

matter of common grace and to come to Scripturally grounded decisions on the question. In fact, Classis really had no business even discussing the whole question. Neither Hope's Consistory nor Kalamazoo I's Consistory had brought the matter to Classis. The overtures which did bring the matter to Classis were so identical in language that the only conclusion one can reach is that there was prior collusion on the part of certain men in the Classis to get the issue on the floor of this assembly in order to dispose as quickly as possible of those who did not agree with the theory of common grace. And Classis ruthlessly pushed ahead to accomplish this work and attain this goal.

The effects for the Christian Reformed Church were catastrophic. The denomination, by Synodical and Classical decision, had set itself upon a path of false doctrine, apostasy from the truth and deviation from the Scriptural teachings with respect to the central question of the sovereignty of God's grace. The first consequence of this was that doctrinal departure has developed in the Christian Reformed Church with startling rapidity. The many, many false doctrines which are thoroughly widespread within the Christian Reformed Church today all can be traced back to the error of common grace. In a way, the life of the Church of Christ can be compared with climbing a mountain. In the perpetual calling of the Church to develop the truth of the Scriptures, the Church finds herself on a very steep mountain. The development and enrichment of the truth is always a matter of strenuous labor and diligent and faithful study of God's Word. This development is slow and cautious as the Church finds her ways up the steep slopes of the mountain of the truth. But once the Church turns her back on the truth, she starts backwards downhill. And when she starts downhill, she soon looses all the ground she gained, and also the descent is characterized by increasing speed. While the slide backwards may be somewhat slow at first, it gets faster and faster until there is no stopping. She is on a toboggan slide and the speed she attains is startling and frightening. Just think: about one generation has passed since 1924, and already in the Christian Reformed Church there are those who deny fundamental and basic truths of the Scriptures. And the speed with which the truth is being lost is ever increasing, so that destruction for the Church is imminent.

Secondly, the Church lost her ability to produce worthwhile writings in the field of theology. This has always struck me forcibly. Since 1924 there have not been very many books published by the leading theologians in the Christian Reformed Church. The printing presses fell silent and the pens of the mighty were stilled. And what books have been published over the years, few in number though they be, have, for the most part, not been worth the paper on which they were printed. They have not made any significant contributions to Reformed theology. This too is a judgment of God.

For the Consistory and congregation of Hope, the consequences were momentous. The congregation had to face the fact that their minister and elders had been deposed by Classis. And they had to come to their own decision about the rightness or wrongness of these decisions of Classis. The result was a split in the congregation. The congregation was organized in 1916 with seven families. By 1924, the congregation numbered around thirty families. The split brought the number of families back again to seven or eight.

The congregation which had a parsonage and church building on the corner of Riverbend and Kenowa lost both buildings. And so it moved its meetings to an old schoolhouse across the road, less than a stone's throw from its old property.

But the congregation, under the leadership of Rev. Ophoff and its elders,

was determined to follow the path of truth. Whatever the cost, the issue was faithfulness to the Scriptures. And on this course of faithfulness the congregation set herself with firm faith in the care of God.

But we are primarily interested in Rev. Ophoff. There is a reference in the classical minutes to one of his speeches. It was at the time when Rev. Ophoff was asked on the floor of the Classis whether or not he would unequivocally abide by the decisions of the Synod of 1924. The minutes record that he answered, No. But the committee later reported as a ground for Rev. Ophoff's deposition that he had taken a "defiant stand" and had used "strong language." The speech itself was not preserved, and one could almost wish that he had been present to hear it. But the classical meetings were news of sufficient importance in those days to rate columns in the **Grand Rapids Press.** And the **Grand Rapids Press** carried a headline the next day which read: "OPHOFF PREFERS DEATH." Apparently he had made some such remark on the floor on the Classis as he had explained the reasons for the stand which he took.

In the mouth of anyone else, a statement such as this would have sounded pompous and airy, an overly sensational exaggeration of the situation. But if you knew Rev. Ophoff at all, you would also know that the statement was made by him with every ounce of conviction behind it. He meant what he said, and he would have indeed been prepared to die rather than submit to the three points. His life was not threatened, of course. The days of the Spanish inquisition were long since past; and the noble role of martyrs were not to be increased on the floor of Classis Grand Rapids West. But the fact remains that for Rev. Ophoff the issue was exactly that important. Common grace was an important enough heresy to stake one's life upon the issue.

A stand such as this can only be explained in the light of a deep and abiding conviction concerning the importance of the truth. It must be remembered that Rev. Ophoff took this stand practically alone as far as his own personal life was concerned. He understood full well that his congregation would be decimated by this decision. He knew that all his family would disagree. Not only his mother, brother and sisters, but also the influential members of his family who were themselves in the ministry, Rev. Schaap and Prof. Schultze, stood opposed to him. The future was very dark. Rev. Hoeksema stood with him and the congregation of Eastern Ave. Rev. Danhof and the congregation in Kalamazoo were agreed. But that was all. Whether these three groups could maintain the cause of the Church of Christ was, from every human viewpoint, a doubtful question. It could not but be that a certain loneliness stole over his soul as he stood against the might of Classis Grand Rapids West and the whole of the Christian Reformed Church. But the truth required it. Nothing could stand in the way of one's conviction concerning the truth.

For the Protestant Reformed Churches, it meant the beginning of their history. We exist today because of the courageous stand of a few men who feared not men because they feared God. It seems astounding. The churches and the truth which we love so dearly had their origin in the determination of a couple to sacrifice all for the sake of the truth of the Scriptures. From an emphatic "No" which rang through the councils of Classis Grand Rapids East and West have come the churches to which we belong.

God has done this. There is no other explanation. God gave these men the insight into the truth to see the wrong of common grace. God gave these men the courage to stand for that truth against insuperable odds. God gave these men the faith to believe that, when they stood for the truth, God would prosper their work

and never bring their cause to defeat.

We are the heirs of their courage and faith. We do well to ask ourselves the question whether we have the same courage and stedfastness of purpose today. This is important that we ask this question. We live in a time when doctrine is not considered so very important. Doctrine is a relative matter, it is said. One can take it or leave it. Important enough in its place, it has no real bearing on the issues of life. But there were men whom God used to begin our Churches who thought quite differently. To them the truth was a matter of life and death. And they were but echoing the sentiments of thousands of martyrs before them. Is the truth which we love that important to us? Would we give up all for it? Would we literally give our lives, rather than deny it? Would we? Would you...?

HONOR THE WEAKER VESSEL

by Esther Kamps

"...giving honor unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel." I Peter 3:7b

Esther is a member of our Hope Protestant Reformed Church, Walker, Michigan.

It's the season of the year for weddings. Spring is in the air, warmth in the smiling sun; after 'ages' of ice and dismal rain. The birds, the creatures of swamp and woods, all creation sings in joy—a picture of the Rainbow promise of new life shaking off the icy clutches of sterile death. Perhaps it is you yourself who looks forward to a wedding. Ah, but we all do, spiritually...the wedding of the Church and the Lamb; is it not so?

I'm asking you to visualize, in your mind's eye, some memorable wedding you have witnessed. Remember? The candles flicker; the flowers, arched in lush and colorful tribute, are poised ready to embrace the scene about to begin. The groom stands expectant. There is a pause. Then, with trumpet tones, the organ announces the triumphant entry of the bride. All turn to face her; the congregation rises. The groom beholds her stately approach. The bride is coming!

Now, the groom; what is going on in his heart as he gazes at the unexpected and astonishing beauty of his wife to be? At this precise moment, we glimpse that elusive something: honor. Here is his bride, the weaker vessel, arrayed in shimmering white apparel. In his heart he truly honors her. We, the congregation, witnessing her slow march to the altar, seeing past this to the eternal symbol, honor her also. For, in one brief moment, we catch a glimpse of all church history.

Obviously, however, all of life is not spent by flickering candle-light, in the solemn hush of the cathedral. Who is the creature, whom we have seen as an ideal symbol? She is, very simply, the "weaker vessel." But, we hastily add, not just any weaker vessel. **She** is a vessel of honor, a spiritual daughter of Abraham!! She is one of God's chosen saints, an elect child of God; placed by the Father, in a unique place in history, with a calling to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Furthermore, she is a delicate individual vessel, formed on God's wheel at a specific moment in time but conceived of

eternally! She is, therefore, beautiful. Every grain, every contour, every lustre, and every dull spot has been eternally in His mind. Moreover, He will continue to shape, lift, and polish her in accordance with His eternal decrees. At some time, also, He will put her in the intense heat of His ovens, burning away the dross and turning the dull clay into glittering crystal; and, finally, He will reach in and place her in her honored place in His eternal temple. She is an honored vessel.

She is the **weaker** vessel. That means that, mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually, she is weaker. She is more delicate. She is subject to fluctuations and cycles beyond her control. It is not her calling to be the bold spokesman of God's Church, or to go forth as a warrior of the Truth. And yet, paradoxically, she is the help meet, the prop as it were, for the man. She is one of those weak things which God has chosen "...to confound the wise."

As to weakness, certainly there have been exceptions—the Debora's. But they prove the rule. In the matchless wisdom of God, woman is not only the carrier of the unborn elect; but also, because of the very fact of her weakness, she is God's fitting picture of the Church in this world.

Woman's weakness typifies the sinner's utter dependence upon the Saviour! Yet, in this weakness, she is co-heir of the Kingdom and holder of the triple office of all believers. Though she may not be a spokesman of the Church, she is, nevertheless, called as Prophet. As Priest, she brings her petitions to the Father's throne. As King, she teaches her young, and, under her husband, rules over them. She opens and interprets to them. These children, warns Solomon, are **not** to despise the teaching of their mothers. Mothers, says Moses, speaking God's commandment, are to be honored.

What is honor? What does it mean to honor the woman? Is it the chivalrous code of the Crusaders which idealized womanhood above the station of man, and which nourished the worship of the virgin Mary? Think of the thousands who lived and died with this false concept! Think of the battles and histories changed because of this false concept. This was **not** honor as God demands it. It was idolatry.

Then, is honor the treatment of women as equals? Today's equal rights exponents would say so. But this opposite swing of the pendulum is an equally distorted notion. It does **not** honor women; it profanes her. Neither of these two extremes will do because they are man-made (person made?).

No!! True honor means a recognition and appreciation of God's office for any saint. We honor the elders because God has positioned them to rule the Church. We honor the minister because God has called and qualified him to bubble over with the spiritual food and drink for the Church. We honor a person because and when we recognize God's work in him or her.

How important is it to honor the woman? Moses sinned with his anger against God's people. Moses dishonored those sinful saints in his heart and showed it openly in his anger. He despised and belittled God's work. He failed at that moment to give honor to God's work in His people, His Bride. Be warned of that in your treatment of God's image bearers. The **command** for men to honor their wives is not casual, made in passing. It is a very important command! When dealing with God's children, beware. Handle with respect; handle with honor. Husbands, remember Moses.

Yes, it is husbands addressed here. And this is the hardest part for me to write, being a woman; for I am placed in the unenviable position of interpreting words addressed to men. Husbands, search your own souls subjectively. What did you mean when you promised to honor your wife? Face that question. I can't presume to think for you. I only point to

the Scripture and, perhaps, encourage you to examine your own life to see if you have attempted to fulfill your vows.

Did you honor your wife, in your soul, when you said those words? Have you learned more about honoring her as you have lived with her? Or, have you forgotten the vow? Some **do**; even in the Church.

Have you treated her as a mere convenient body-servant? Have you separated yourself, made yourself independent of her for your own private time of leisure and sport in this pleasure-obsessed world? Have you taught your children that you really don't hold her in very much respect? Yes; I did say, and I do mean, **taught** them! Have you belittled her in word, or in attitude? (Beware...dishonor is a catching disease.)*

On the other hand, have you treated her as Christ does His Church? That's really the touch-stone question. Have you cherished her? Valued her? Cultivated her? Appreciated her? Honored her? — This is the husband's calling. Difficult? Impossible! But, magnificent! And, how Christ-like!!!

Now, to the conclusion: the **why** of it. Why must the weaker vessel be honored?

We must honor the Godly wife because: First, she is co-heir of the Promise. Secondly, because she is mother in Israel. She is a vessel prepared in God's kiln to bear, to tend, and to nurture His little ones. To teach their lisping lips to pray. To inspire them to holiness. To teach them about repentance, forgiveness, obedience, and thankfulness. God has called her, and fits her for this labor. She is to serve, and, gladly wear herself out in that service for God's little children. What a Christ-like calling! Small wonder that she is to be **honored**!!!

Finally, the wife is to be honored because she is God's own chosen symbol of the Church in this world. Look at her! Imperfect. Blemished. Full of shortcomings. Weak. Fearful. But, "arrayed in the robe of Christ's own righteousness." God's handiwork! The gift of the Father to the Son. Christ's own object of Love. That is what the wife is a picture of; **your** wife. HONOR her.

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*We could well use an article written on the subject "Parents, Honor Teachers"; in this regard.

Current Events & Comments

THE SEARCH FOR LIFE

by David M. Harbach

Dave is a member of our Hope, Walker, Church. We welcome him to the rubric, "Current Events and Comments."

In this year's January issue of National Geographic there appeared the following title, "The Search for Life." The article dealt with the search for life on the planet Mars by the two Viking landers. Complex and intricate scientific experiments were carried out by the landers to determine if any life similar to that found on our planet Earth existed on Mars. But let us draw our attention to the title of that article and not the article itself.

Considering the title alone, one could write numerous articles, each with a different meaning. Therefore, we are limiting ourselves to one of them which today speaks to us as young people of

God, actively involved in the search for life. We will, in this article, hope to explain the search and the life that we hope to find. Obvious to us is that the search is performed to find something and that which we hope to find we call life.

To begin with, in the performance of the search for life, we as young people would fail completely and never reach our goal. That is, in ourselves, as young people we are unable to search for life. That may seem surprising because in our youth we have limitless energies to search for life. The truth is, though, that we would not even care to search for life. And if we did, that which we would call life would be no life at all, because we would not know what is life. Our need is to be taught how to search for life. We must learn through the instruction of a teacher. The teacher must know what is that life we hope to find and even more so, that teacher must possess in himself that life.

At this point, let us focus our attention on the young people of our churches who search for their own kind of life, a life of rebellion. We all willingly fall into this horrendously intolerable situation too frequently. Who **THEN** is our teacher? WE can begin by pinning the rap on a variety of teachers. For instance, television, radio, movies (which unfortunately some of us attend, not realizing that we are hardening our hearts against God), magazines, the world, establishments where we watch the world dance to the tune of the devil (and for some, joining with them in their sin), fellow saints caught in sin, and even the devil himself. We must truthfully say that all of these facts are no lie. But we are writing about we who search for our own kind of life, a life of rebellion. That means that we ourselves are our own best teacher and the life we seek is our own rebellion. Our rebellion is a ruthless, destructive, chaotic life in which we seek the pleasure of the flesh, our own self gain and the building up of ourselves at the cost of our friends. Therefore, although there are many who teach us a life of rebellion, we are to blame for our own terribly selfish, prideful rebellion.

Who then will teach us to perform the search for life that we need to do, in order that we as young people may live in obedience to our faithful covenant God? Now more clearly we are recognizing what the life is for which we are to search. In fact, our teacher and the life we seek are the same. Who else can we turn to but Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Dumb idols of wood and stone cannot teach us. Our own golden calves cannot teach us. The world and the devil cannot teach us. Besides there is no life in them. **Only** through Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, the Lamb of God, are we enabled to actively perform the search for life.

We must seek Jesus Christ, for He is our life. But, only by the Spirit of Christ within our hearts do we seek Him who is the possessor and giver of eternal life. We in ourselves cannot seek eternal life. We cannot seek Christ in our own strength. Christ seeks us. Christ seeks his own who are dead in sin and makes them dead to sin, through the blood of the cross. The Good Shepherd gives us his own life, for we are his sheep (John 10:14-16). Christ gives us eternal life in the kingdom of our God. Christ possesses both our body and soul (Heid. Cat. Q & A 1). We belong to Him and the life that we now live in the flesh, we live by the faith of the Son of God (Gal. 2:20). Christ has already given to us that which we seek for, for He has given Himself for us, that we might be heirs of eternal life.

When we know God gives us saving grace, faith to believe, good works to perform, and eternal life, then we get on our knees to pray to our Father in Heaven. In those prayers we will most assuredly thank Him for all the blessings of salvation wrought for us by the death of the Son of God. Then, too, we see that there is no need to search for something

which we have not found, because that which we are searching for has already been given to us. We no longer search with our earthly eyes, but search with our God-given spiritual eyes, exercising our faith. That is, we now seek to know, by faith, Him who has given us eternal life. Therefore, we must pray, pray, pray, pray without ceasing. Do we pray enough as young people? Do we know what true prayer consists of? An intellectual knowledge of our salvation is not enough. We must be active in our faith, we must pray alone and together for God's grace, mercy, and peace to be upon us. We must come under the preaching of God's word that we may know Christ crucified.

"READING MAKETH A FULL MAN..."

by Agatha Lubbers

Lying near the edge of my desk is a pile of thirty-seven church history tests covering such errors as Socinianism, Unitarianism, Modernism, and Methodism. Had I not taken time to read last night and this morning the stack of papers would be graded and would be filed away so that they could be returned to my students. But I took the time to read. Do you take the time to read?

This semester I am teaching Church History 3 at Covenant Christian High School. This is a church history course which attempts to cover the history of the church from the time of the Reformation near the end of the sixteenth century until the present. Much has happened and much continues to happen during the four centuries that a course of this kind is expected to investigate and to evaluate.

One of the goals of this course in church history is that the student develop a concern and interest in the current religious scene. This means that the student of church history must read contemporary writing in the religious journals. They must read "All Around Us" in the **Standard Bearer**, "Markings" in the **Banner**, religious news reportings in **Christianity Today**, **The Christian News**, a Missouri Lutheran publication, **The Outlook**, etc. Our young people do not read these magazines. Many of them do not read the **Beacon Lights**. They are available to them in the library of the school but they lie untouched. Only when special assignments are given which will demand that they consult these magazines, will they read **this kind** of literature.

It is important, however, for our young people to do this kind of reading. Such reading informs one. Reading tells one about his friends and his enemies. Reading helps the young person to know who he is. Reading develops his understanding of his relationship to other religious groups. Reading assists the young person to know that other Protestant denominations struggle with many of the same problems that we fight. There-

fore, reading gives the young person a point of contact and a point of comparison. (I recommend Professor Hanko's article in the April 1, 1977, issue of the **Standard Bearer**.)

* * * * *

One of those sets of papers that I neglected this morning was an essay based on "Fundamentalism and Our Reformed Heritage." This two-part series written by Rev. Arie den Hartog appeared in the January 1 and 15, 1977, issues of the **Standard Bearer**. I had assigned the reading of these articles and asked that an essay be written by each student. The following questions were to be answered in the essay.

1. What is fundamentalism?
2. What are the basic errors of fundamentalism?
3. How does fundamentalism compare with our Reformed heritage?

I also asked that the student briefly react or respond to the articles which served as a source for their essays.

Because I have always advocated as much writing as possible by adolescents in the **Beacon Lights**, I have chosen from the many fine essays on "Fundamentalism and Our Reformed Heritage" one written by Miss Terri Gleason. Terri is a senior at Covenant Christian High School and is a member of the Southeast Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

* * * * *

One of the most rapidly growing movements today is one called fundamentalism. The ideas of fundamentalism have become prominent in many churches today and are still spreading rapidly. While fundamentalism grows and flourishes in many churches, those churches who hold to the truly Reformed faith are often either declining or struggling to maintain an existence.

As members of the true Church of Christ, we must know what fundamentalism is. The name fundamentalism is usually used in connection with those who hold to the fundamental truths of the scripture, e.g., the infallibility of the Word of God, the truth of creation, the virgin birth, the divinity of Christ, the atonement of Christ, salvation through faith in Christ alone, the resurrection of the dead, life everlasting, and the personal second coming of Christ. In this sense we agree with the fundamentalists, but we would add many truths to these, such as that of sovereign predestination, the five points of Calvinism, and the truth of the Covenant.

We must, however, also know about the errors of fundamentalism. First of all, they disregard creeds and confessions in the church on the grounds that creeds only serve to cause separations in the churches and obstruct the free interpretation of the scriptures. Secondly, they de-emphasize the importance of the doctrines of the scriptures, deeming them irrelevant and insignificant in the everyday life of a Christian. They say that emphasis on particular doctrines causes unnecessary division in the Church. Thirdly, they place great emphasis on learning isolated texts of scripture, rather than trying to understand the scriptures as a whole. They don't really care what other people believe regarding certain passages of scripture, but they interpret them according to what the texts mean to them as individuals. Fourthly, they emphasize the New Testament and disregard the Old Testament as being for the Jews and as no longer applicable to our dispensation. In the fifth place, they ignore the doctrine of the church as taught in the scriptures and believe that a man may be a separate church in himself, and that he doesn't really need the rest of the church as an institution and doesn't feel any responsibility or obligation to such a church. In the

sixth place, they feel that the preaching of the Word is not the central means of grace, but rather they organize various Bible studies and fellowships which they seek as the source of their spiritual growth. Finally, they place a great emphasis on evangelism, saying that anyone can preach the gospel, thus disregarding the office of the minister in the Church.

In contrast to these erroneous beliefs of fundamentalism, we have other ideas incorporated into our Reformed heritage. We are a confessional church and hold to the three forms of unity: the Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dordt, and the Belgic Confession. In our interpretation of the scriptures there is continual reference being made to our confessions. Secondly, we insist very strongly on the great importance of maintaining sound doctrine in our preaching, our catechism classes, our seminaries, and the religious literature which is produced by our churches. Thirdly, in our interpretation of the scriptures we stress the importance of understanding the scriptures as a whole and of developing a complete understanding of the doctrines of scripture.

Furthermore, we teach that the Old Testament is just as important as the New Testament and that it truly contains the gospel of salvation. By diligently studying the Old Testament we develop an understanding of and appreciation for the unfolding and realization of God's covenant, as this is very important in the understanding of the Old Testament.

We believe that the earthly and institutional manifestation of the Church is of great importance for the life of the child of God, and that we are duty bound to join ourselves unto that church.

We also teach that the instituted Church is the spiritual mother of the saints of God here on earth and we consider the preaching of the Word to be of central importance as the primary means of grace. In connection with this, we regard evangelistic work as a very important thing, but evangelism must never be placed before the daily spiritual nurture of the Church of Christ that is already gathered. In regard to this church, we believe that it is not simply an aggregate of individuals but an organic whole of the body of Christ, chosen in Him before the foundations of the world.

By writing these articles on fundamentalism, Rev. den Hartog has supplied us with an invaluable means for distinguishing fundamentalist beliefs from our own. We should pay close attention to these articles and use them as a means for guarding against fundamentalism. We have an obligation to protect our Reformed heritage and to instruct our youth in the way that they must go. In order to do this, we must fully understand not only our own beliefs but also the error of false beliefs. In this way, we and our seed will always be equipped to fight against evil until Christ comes on the clouds of glory to gather all His faithful people unto Himself.

Terri Gleason
March 28, 1977

The Loveland Protestant Reformed Christian School is in need of two teachers for the 1977-78 school year. Those interested should contact the Loveland school board, c/o Leon Griess, 2281 N. Garfield, Loveland, Colo. 80537.

NEWS From, For, and About Our Churches

by Cindi Dykstra

BIRTHS:

Mr. & Mrs. Bill Klein of Doon rejoice in the birth of a son on January 19.

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur De Jong, Jr. of South Holland rejoice in the birth of a daughter.

Mr. & Mrs. Warren Boon of Doon rejoice in the birth of a daughter.

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Zandstra of South Holland rejoice in the birth of Lisa Michelle.

Mr. & Mrs. Joel Bruinooge of Southeast Church rejoice in the birth of Heather Anne, born March 14.

Mr. & Mrs. Gerald Schipper of Faith Church rejoice in the birth of Jason Alan on April 3.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

Marla De Jong's membership papers have been transferred from Hull to Loveland.

Hope Church, Grand Rapids, has received the membership papers of Mrs. Reinhold De Wald from Ebenezer Protestant Reformed Church in Forbes, North Dakota.

Doon has received the papers of Mr. & Mrs. Jay Driesen and their children.

South Holland has received Mr. Howard Hoekstra's membership papers from Grace Reformed Church.

Hudsonville Church has sent the membership papers of Henry Kamps to him upon his request.

Kalamazoo has received the papers of Mr. & Mrs. Tom Ver Beek and one child from Grace Christian Reformed Church.

CONFESSIONS OF FAITH:

Lori Gaastra, Gretine Meelker, Jana Ussery, Deb Van Uffelen, and Laura Van Uffelen publicly confessed their faith in Redlands on March 6.

Gary Faber publicly confessed his faith in Southeast Church on March 20.

Cari Sugg publicly confessed her faith in Trinity Protestant Reformed Church in Houston, Texas on March 27.

Ellen Hanko and Al Karsemeyer publicly confessed their faith on April 17 in Faith Church.

Gary Noorman publicly confessed his faith on April 17 in Southeast Church.

MARRIAGE:

Gary Holstege and DaVonna Miersma were united in marriage on March 3 in Doon Protestant Reformed Church.

LECTURES:

The first lecture in a series on the general theme "Recognizing the Signs of the Times" was held on March 17 in Edgerton. Rev. M. Kamps spoke on "The Old Creeds: Right for the Last Days?" The second lecture in this series, "Faithful Preaching: Do We Still Need It?", was given by Rev. J. Slopsema.

South Holland's Men's Society sponsored a lecture on March 21. Rev. B. Woudenberg spoke on "The Missionary Calling of the Local Church."

An Annual Spring Lecture was held on April 21 at Hudsonville Church. Rev. D. Engelsma spoke on "Reprobation—Is It Reformed?"

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES:

A Singspiration sponsored by Redland's Young People was held on February 20.

Hudsonville's Young People held a casserole supper in their church on March 17.

A Beacon Lights Singspiration was held in Southwest Church on March 20.

Both the Doon and Redlands Young

People sponsored a rollerskating party for their respective congregations on March 21.

Hull's Young People sponsored a soup supper on April 4 in the Community Building.

The Federation Basketball Game was held on April 7 at Grandville Jr. High School.

Edmonton's Young People held a Singspiration with a Resurrection Day theme at their church on Tuesday, April 12.

The Young People's Spring Mass Meeting was held in Hudsonville Church on May 1.

Kalamazoo's young people met recently to organize a Young People's Society.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

A Hostess Supper was held in Doon on January 28. Rev. Kamps spoke on "Discipline in a Covenant Home."

South Holland's Choral Society sang in the Holland Home on March 14.

Doon School's Ladies Circle sponsored a soup supper on March 18.

South Holland's Choral Society sponsored an Easter Singspiration on April 3. The choir, school choir, and a quartet provided special numbers.

Adams School Mother's Club sponsored a Spring Breakfast on April 13 at First Church in Grand Rapids.

Adams School's Spring Program was given in First Church on April 15.

The Ladies Auxiliary of South Holland sponsored a Salad Luncheon on April 20.

COMING EVENTS:

The date for the Young People's Spring Banquet has been changed to May 20.

Covenant's Choir and Alumni will present a program on May 22 in First Church.

CONVENTION NOTE

This is a reminder of the convention dates, August 22 - 26. We are hoping for a terrific turnout. We want **you** to be there.

Yours in the Lord,
Publicity Committee

JOHN ZANDSTRA, JR.
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