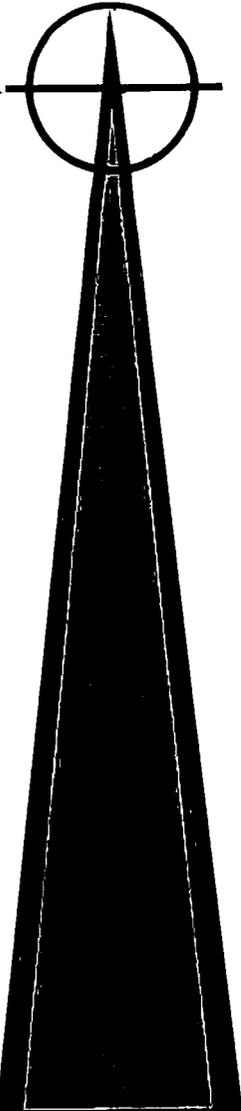


# BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH*



OCTOBER, 1977

**DO YOU KNOW  
YOUR BIBLE?**

JOHN LANDSTRA, JR.  
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GLENWOOD, ILLINOIS 60425



# BEACON LIGHTS

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# EDITORIAL COMMENTS

For the benefit of all those who could not attend this year's Convention at Camp Geneva, we have included a Convention Review and the speech given there by Rev. Mark Hoeksema. In the November issue we plan to print the speeches of Rev. Moore and Rev. Woudenberg whose speeches were not received in time for this issue.

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The Acts of Synod for 1977 are now available. As young people who are concerned with their church, it would be worth your while to pick one up and look it over. You will see what the broadest assembly of our Churches deals with at these gatherings. It's not only interesting but very informative!

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## Editorial

# REFORMATION..... 1977

by Dave Moelker

This month, we remember the Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his ninety-five thesis on the church door at Wittenberg. You all know much of the history of that event and those events which followed. We all know right away that the sale of indulgences was one of the issues; that a monk named Tetzal was selling them to enrich the coffers of Rome; that Luther was called by the Church and State in 1521 before the Diet of Worms to recant, and that there he said "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen." Luther could do nothing else for he was standing for the gospel of grace proclaimed so richly by the infallible Scriptures.

He saw that the church had compromised the truth, had trampled under foot the Word of God. He did not fully realize that God would use this event in history, which He had planned in His counsel, for the preservation of His Church and truth in the centuries to come. But he knew in his heart that Rome was wrong and that he was right, come what may.

Luther died and others arose like him. John Calvin was probably the most notable of these. You see, the Reformation did not die with Martin Luther or any of the others. It advanced through the centuries. It manifested itself in Synods and assemblies. Heresies and all sorts of attacks on Scripture were rooted out

because of the spirit of the Reformation. The Church wrote her expressions of the truth in her confessions, often in the blood of martyrs who were filled with this reformatory spirit. The Reformation caused the truth to cross oceans with the immigrants to America, here once again to be stood for at all costs.

Now in the 20th century, 1977, the spirit of the Reformation is still with us, still alive as much as it was in 1517. It is living still because the Reformation stood for the truth that man is saved by grace and that the Bible is the only authority in the Church. This stand is God's stand and should be our stand also in this troubled church world of today.

The Reformation gave the Church the pure preaching of the gospel, the proper administration of the sacraments and the exercise of Christian discipline. Look about you and judge for yourselves. How many churches (even Reformed churches) manifest the unadulterated marks of the true Church? The Church that God cleansed by bringing her through the Reformation. So much of Protestantism flies the banner of true Church yet is lost in the maze of the social gospel, which is really no gospel at all. They are busy curing the problems of the world, seeking all kinds of church union at the cost of the faith of the fathers. So many trample the precious confessions the men of centuries ago died to defend. Many members are ignorant of the very doctrines on which the Church is built, finding themselves there only because parents and grandparents were members there. They have become luke-warm, not willing to take a stand on the basis of Scripture for fear that some may be offended. If we are

honest with ourselves, we will see all around us as time goes on that the marks of the true Church are fewer and farther between.

But keep looking. Do you see a Church where the principles of the Reformation still stand? Is there a church where the Gospel is preached as purely as is possible on this side of the grave? A gospel of "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God. Not of works...."? Does she properly administer the Sacraments and exercise christian discipline? You see that this, by God's grace, is your heritage as Protestant Reformed youth. A Reformation heritage. Yes, it's as old as 1517 but it's also as new as 1977. A heritage that has been kept because godly men were raised up by God at the proper time to defend the truth of the sovereign grace of God. They were willing to take a stand along with Luther and Calvin and the others saying "I can do no other". It was not their own strength that caused them to say that, but God's strength who was preserving the truth to His own glory.

One generation passes and you as church of tomorrow must take its place. Be ready for that place. Study to show yourselves approved. Be concerned with what your church does, always using the Scriptures as your rule and guide. Insist upon hearing the full counsel of God preached. Seek for the administration of the sacraments. Defend christian discipline. Be ready to defend the truth which you have at all costs, and know that the King of the Church will preserve her and will strengthen you as you stand in the spirit of the Reformation.

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The *Beacon Lights* Staff would like to thank Vicky Brower for her time and effort in proofreading *Beacon Lights* after the typesetting. Ellen Hanko is taking over the responsibilities. We wish both of these girls God's blessings.

# DO YOU KNOW YOUR BIBLE?

by Carolyn Van Baren

More copies of the Bible are sold every year than any other book. For this to be true, every home can have at least one Bible in it. Although many homes don't have Bibles many which do do not always use them. The Bible is quoted and misquoted more then any other book in the world. More people have studied and learned the Bible then any other book. Our whole purpose in life is written in the Bible, yet how well do you know your Bible?

In the homes in which we are brought up, table devotions are a normal way of life. We have had many years of Sunday School, catechism, church services twice every Sunday. Bible teachers in school and society-yet how well is the Bible really learned? We often forget that our Bible is our armor and guide in life. How much stronger armor we could have if we would follow in reading at the table! Each member of the family could take turns reading a verse. When you leave the table you would remember what was just read. If we used our personal Bibles for church services and society we could mark texts that were important for easy reference later. On Sunday take your own

Bible to church and follow the sermon in it. When church is finished, mark the text with your bulletin. Later study the text again. You will find your armor is strengthened daily with study. What good is an empty armor?

For young people age seems a slow process. As you grow older you will find time seems to fly by. Have the privilege of working with the aged. People are deaf in many cases and some are blind. These people sit in a chair all day with nothing to do. They love to talk of days gone by and memories go to the family and God's grace to them through the years. Because of these problems of seeing and hearing, they find comfort in scriptures they learned when they were younger. Devotions are spoken out loud from memory. When I hear these devotions that are filled with meaning and comfort, I feel I know so little. I begin to wonder: how well do I really know my Bible? Will I be prepared when I don't have a Bible to page through?

As you go back to school to learn facts that astound the world, try to remember what you know of the book you hold dear. How well do you know the Bible?

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## Current Events & Comments

### Stop and Smell the Roses on the Way

by Jessica Poortinga

Giving thanks for little things, not only for major things, like health and strength and being alive, but also for little things like trees and grass and clear, fresh air.

Stopping and noticing the little things in life that we so often take for granted. And then, not only for sunshine and good times, beautiful meadows and cute, little

ladybugs, but also for rainy days and unhappy moments, dry, hot deserts and spiders.

Imagine what it would be like if for some reason you were confined indoors for about two years. When you finally would be able to go outside, it would be like rediscovering everything you had discovered in your very early childhood. Things like the feeling of grass tickling the bottom of your feet as you walk through a meadow, and the smell of a spring morning. The sound of the wind whistling through the trees and the beauty and awesomeness of an electrical storm. The feeling of mud oozing between your toes or the wind blowing your hair and at your back, and even the smell of that skunk who made his presence known a while back. Or, watching an ant walk to a potato chip that fell to the ground during a picnic and struggling to carry a remarkably large piece of it back with him to the tunnel. Too often we just mark it off as incidental and rush about in our hurry-up world.

How often have you stopped to think about the intricate details of your body? It's interesting how God created the cells with the genes, chromosomes, nucleus, etc. and how those little microscopic things control your looks, the color of your

skin, eyes, and hair, control everything about you. Or how perfectly God created you to perform almost any task. That He created you with hands to carry things, feet to walk on, eyes to see, ears to hear, and the ability to communicate.

Yet, this also applies to our spiritual life. We take a lot of things for granted, things that God has given us in His mercy and love. We really have it pretty good: we can go to church unmolested, attend catechism and Young People's Society, go to Christian schools, own and read our own Bibles and learn more about God. Still, we complain, skip catechism and miss society because "We don't have enough time" or for some other reason.

And as we go through life we must realize that everything that happens, even down to the minutest detail is done according to God's plan. For, not a hair can fall from our head unless God wills it. All things are done with an end goal in mind — our eternal salvation. So, when things go our way and when they don't we must remember in all things to give thanks to God. We must give thanks to Him for caring for us and remember that all things work together for good for them that love God, that are called according to His purpose.

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## CONVENTION SPEECHES

### Seeking the Lord

### In Our Spiritual Activities

by Rev. M. Hoeksema

The choice of this text (Is. 55:6) and the theme is an appropriate, though unusual one. It is unusual, negatively, because it is taken from the Old Testament, which many churches, even those which are

supposed to be Reformed, today ignore. And it is not man-centered. It is common to read of many religious conventions and their themes, particularly in the summer months; and most of them emphasize

what man is, what he can do, his talents and abilities to change the world for the better and help his fellow man. Against this sort of background the text and theme stand out, for they are not man-centered and man-glorifying, but God-centered and God-glorifying. It speaks well for you as young people that you choose such a theme. Also from a positive viewpoint this choice of text and theme is appropriate, for all properly Reformed theology, and especially Protestant Reformed theology, is God-centered as it is faithful to the Scriptures, which are God-centered. This theme demonstrates a consciousness of that God-centeredness. Moreover, this theme is appropriate because it is of practical value for you as young people. We must bear in mind that it is one thing to say the words of the text, but to do them is quite another because of the power of sin and the old man that is still within us. The words of Isaiah are an admonition, a calling, which speaks to us directly and practically, for the text calls us not merely to say something, but to **do** something, that is, to live as the people of God in the midst of the world, and to live in a certain way, which is to seek Jehovah and call upon him.

We must also understand that the words of this text and of your theme are addressed to all the people of God. Historically they were addressed by God through the prophet Isaiah to elect Israel as manifested in the nation of Judah. In a certain sense, of course, these words came to all who hear them or read them in the Scriptures. But they are meant centrally and primarily for believing Judah, which alone could spiritually hear and obey them. Therefore they are also addressed to us as the Israel of the New Dispensation, the people of God in the age of reality. And they are meant for us just as emphatically as for Israel, for the words of God here are timeless, calling us to seek the Lord, and specifically, to do so in our spiritual activities. In understanding this

idea we ask and answer three questions: First, Seeking whom? Second, Seeking when? And finally, Seeking how?

### **I. Seeking whom?**

According to Isaiah we are called to seek Jehovah; the prophet does not say Lord, but Jehovah, which is the covenant name of God. It indicates not only that He is the unchangeable God who is forever the same, the I Am, but also that as the unchangeable One He is the God who loves His covenant people. He is thus the God of all our salvation as He reveals Himself in Christ our Savior, the One to whom we owe all our redemption and in whom we have all our hope. This is brought out in the verse following the text, where Isaiah pictures God as the merciful and forgiving God to those who seek Him. All of this implies that Jehovah is a desirable object of our seeking; for if, according to the text, we are called to seek Him, it is presupposed that He is worth such seeking. And considering who and what He is, nothing could be more true, for there is nothing and no one in the world that could be more worthy of being sought. To seek Him in faith is to seek the highest possible good and blessedness, and to find Him in Christ is to enjoy eternal life and all covenant blessings.

This Jehovah we are commanded to seek. The word used by the prophet means literally to beat a path with one's feet, to walk repeatedly along the same path. The idea is thus to do something frequently, to go to the same place repeatedly. Here, the meaning is to go to Jehovah's house of prayer, His temple, the place where God dwelt with His people, which means to come into the presence of God. The significance is that we desire to know Jehovah, to speak with Him, to have communion and fellowship with Him, to enjoy His grace and favor. For us, this means to seek God as He is revealed in Christ, to believe with the experiential knowledge of faith. Nor is this

seeking optional, a take-it-or-leave-it proposition. But this is a command of God Himself through Isaiah, something which is urgent and which must be obeyed. Historically this command was directed at believing Judah; many in Judah had forsaken the ways of Jehovah and especially the temple and its service, so that it was necessary for the prophet to voice this command of Jehovah to seek Him. And no less urgent is this command for us today.

The reason for this urgency is the fact that we are not inclined of ourselves to seek Him. Because of our natural depravity we seek the devil and his ways, not Jehovah and His ways. Of ourselves we cannot even hear or heed this command, which means, by the way, that this command does not and cannot come to the natural man nor be heeded by Him. But to us, saved by grace, the command still comes, because of our natural inclination not to seek Him. Added to this is the influence and strength of the old man of sin within us. We live in the midst of a very sinful world and are faced with all sorts of temptations to seek all sorts of sinful things, such as money, position, fun, pleasure, and so on. And because we are sinful, we are inclined to do just that. Thus the necessary command comes also to us.

All of this is true both historically and today. Historically Israel was not seeking Jehovah, but the gods of the heathen nations surrounding the land of Canaan, along with all the wickedness that accompanied such idolatry, and even imitated in the way of repentance. And He calls us to seek Him by way of reminder and warning. If there is one thing that characterizes the world in which we live today, it is that the Lord is not sought; God is not in all the thoughts of the wicked as they busily engage in all sorts of sinful activities and pursuits. Indeed, the world seeks everything **but** Jehovah—money, pleasure, fun, honor, fame, a good

time, etc. And we, especially we who are young people, are often inclined to follow their example and their seeking because of our weakness. We need to be reminded constantly: Seek Jehovah first and above all else!

## II. Seeking when?

The answer of the text is: "While He may be found and while He is near." This is not to be understood in the Arminian sense, as is often done. The text does not mean, as is often asserted, that God is near to His people and therefore can be found only at certain times, but not at others. The idea then becomes that of seeking Him before it is too late, implying that it is up to man to take advantage according to his own will of God's offer of mercy and salvation. But this cannot be the case at all, for we have already said that God is the faithful covenant Jehovah who is always near to His people in His love and favor. Nor is the promise of divine forgiveness found in verse 7 limited only to certain times or places; we do not have that kind of God.

Rather, the prophet means that God is always near, and always can be found. It is true that the Scriptures speak of Jehovah's hiding his face for a time in disfavor towards sin and apostasy and wickedness; but the Scriptures also reveal that He promises mercy and forgiveness to all those who seek Him in spirit and truth. Because God is always near and always can be found, the emphasis falls upon the present time as the time to seek him. This is not something to be put off or postponed; if we procrastinate, then we continue to walk in the ways of sin, which is, after all, the only alternative to the seeking of Jehovah. The significance is that **now** is the time of salvation. Christ Himself says in John 12:35: "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you." And in II Corinthians 6:2 we read, "Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation." Our calling is thus

to seek Jehovah always. Seeking Him is not a part-time activity, something we do just on Sundays, or something that must characterize only some of our activities. We are called to seek him **always and in all things.**

But we must focus on just one aspect of this seeking, that is, that calling to seek Him in our spiritual activities. But what are they? All activities should in a general sense be spiritual, of course; they must be God-glorifying. But the plain fact is that not all activities have primarily a spiritual purpose. We have many other purposes as well, such as working or having fun. And there is nothing wrong with these, either. But we are concerned with spiritual activities, which are those activities in which we concentrate our minds and efforts and purposes only toward spiritual ends and goals. They are activities in which we devote ourselves to seeking Jehovah to the exclusion of all else, those in which we praise God, seek our needs from Him, learn about Him and from His Word, go to Him in repentance or in thanksgiving, those in which we seek to grow in the grace and knowledge of Him. Practically, these are activities such as divine worship, prayer, catechism, Young Peoples' Society, or other church or school functions, and even conventions and convention speeches. In these activities we are called to seek Jehovah.

That means that when we engage in these spiritual activities that we seek Him. We are not concerned first of all with what we can get out of a spiritual activity, are not worried first of all about our own good or benefit. This is too much the attitude today. The attitude is usually, "What's in it for me?" But we are concerned first of all with praising Jehovah. That means that we ask the question, "How can I best glorify Jehovah in this spiritual activity?" If we do that, then we truly seek the Lord.

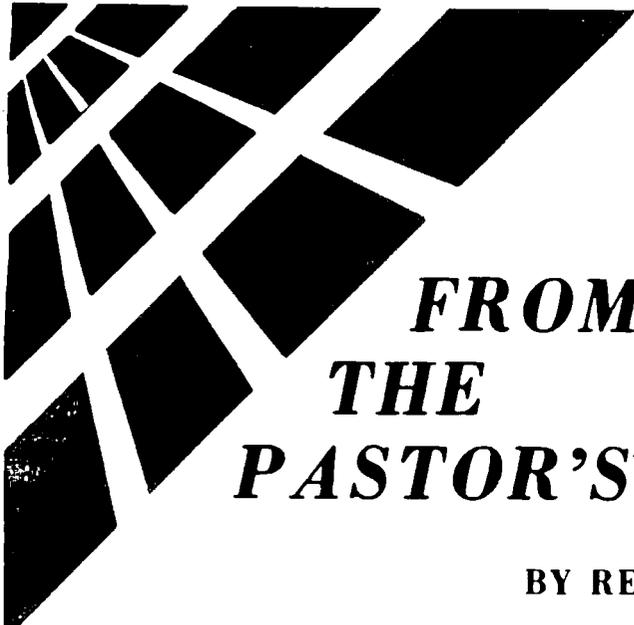
This means also that spiritual activities must be the center of our lives. It is not enough to say that when we engage in

them we must seek the Lord; we must engage in them in such a way that they are the very heat of our existence. And that, all too often, is not the case. As pointed out before, it certainly characterizes the world that they have no time for spiritual activities or seeking Jehovah, though there seems to be time for everything else under the sun. And we, especially as young people, are susceptible to that thinking also. So often we have no time for spiritual things, or at least think that we have no time. Catechism preparation, young peoples preparation—it all goes by the board. Church and speeches are dull, boring, not really worth the time and effort they require. But such an attitude is sinful, for it is a case of not putting first things first. Our calling is to make our spiritual activities the center of our lives. We have gotten away from that far too much in our modern world, because the church is not nearly the center of all life that it used to be; no one seems to have time for church-related functions anymore, so deeply are we involved in our busy everyday lives. But it remains our calling to seek Jehovah first. That means that there is nothing that is more important than truly spiritual activities, and that there is for the Christian no such thing as not having time for them or not being interested in them. Remember that principle in your lives, especially in the coming catechism and society season—seek Jehovah first and foremost in all things—that is your calling now and always.

### **III. Seeking how?**

The answer of the text is by calling upon Him. That means prayer first of all. Prayer is communication with our covenant God; it means that we as His covenant servants call upon him as our covenant Father in heaven. In that prayer we call upon Jehovah; literally, we call Him, that is, call Him by His name. We do so in order not only to thank Him for all





# ***FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY***

**BY REV. M. KAMPS**

## **CHRIST DIED FOR THE UNGODLY**

### **ROMANS 5:6-8**

In these verses the apostle Paul is setting forth the uniqueness of the love of God in Christ to us. Paul contrasts the love of God with the love of man for another man. God's love for his own is completely different from any manifestation of love among mere men.

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die." It is possible, and at times even happens, that a man will die for another man who is accounted righteous. By "righteous" is meant free from guilt before the state or civil government. Under consideration is not the subject of being righteous before God. A man is not worthy of death being without guilt for he kept the law of the land. Now, Paul says, only very rarely will one with great difficulty be willing to die for this man who is just. Paul certainly accurately depicts our experience. Not many would be willing to die for a man who happens to

be merely free of guilt yet is condemned.

"Yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die." Paul takes up a second comparison to the love of God. What is meant by a "good man?" This man is not merely innocent of any wrong doing but he is a loving, kind, and honorable man. This is the man we admire and like very much. With respect to this good man some people would without hesitation be willing to die for him. There have been men who with courage died for another who in their estimation was a good man. This act of "love" is commendable and honorable. Men stand in stunned admiration before such a spectacle.

By these two examples Paul has set forth the "kind of love" to be found among men. He does not applaud nor condemn. He just states the facts. When men die for others, they do so because

they find some worthiness in the person for whom they died. He is either just or good.

In verse eight Paul turns to the second element of this comparison....“But God”. In contrast to the actions of all men of all ages there is the one historical act of God. God has revealed His love. A unique kind of love is God’s.

What has God in love done? The Son of God in our flesh died for the ungodly. God loved those who hated him. God in love sent the Christ, his only begotten Son in our flesh, to atone for our sin and guilt. This love comes to concrete, visible expression. Christ died for sinners. Paul is teaching here by implication of course the eternal divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; for only if Jesus be God eternally can God’s love be commended to us by Jesus’ death.

Christ died for the ungodly. For when we were without strength in due time Christ died for the ungodly. Of such a kind is the love of God in Christ. God’s love finds no corresponding love in the actions of mere men. A man will die for a good man; but no one loves his enemies and will die for them. This alone is the activity of God. God in Christ loved the ungodly, his enemies, and died for them.

We should note here that Paul uses several terms to describe the spiritual ethical condition and activity of those for whom Christ died. Paul is not discussing at this point whether Christ died for all or only some, the elect. In these verses Paul is simply stating the uniqueness of the love of God. Four different terms are used to express the spiritual character and activity of those for whom Christ died. First, they are those who were “without strength.” (verse 6) That is without any power or ability to do or even to will the good or be well pleasing unto God. The Heidelberg Catechism takes this up with the confession that the fallen sinner is wholly incapable of any good and inclined toward all evil. Secondly, Paul describes

them as ungodly. The term “ungodly” emphasizes the rebellious and haughty activity of the depraved sinner as is plain from Jude 14-16: Enoch prophesied against the ungodly of his day saying, “Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” Thirdly Paul says that they for whom Christ died were “sinners” This is probably the most common term in the new testament to describe from an ethical viewpoint the being and activity of man. He is a sinner. That is he deliberately refuses to live to God’s glory even though he knows it to be his calling. But refusing to serve God the sinner seeks self ultimately. Man sees himself as the worthy object of all praise and his own well-being as the highest good. He is a sinner. In verse ten Paul writes that those for whom Christ died were God’s “enemies.” Hatred toward God filled our breasts. All four of these terms view the fallen sinner from different perspectives. But the emphasis undoubtedly is placed upon the willful rebelliousness and animosity of the sinner fallen in Adam. Spiritually fallen mankind bears the image of the Devil. The sinner is God’s adversary. Such we were.

God commandeth His love to us! He makes us to know the character and depth of his love towards us through the historical, visible event of the suffering and death of Christ Jesus. In love Christ took all our sin and guilt upon himself, he stood in our stead, and emptied the cup of God’s wrath against all our sin. Christ died for the ungodly. In the midst of our hatred, our rebellion, our depravity...God revealed his love for us in Christ Jesus. This historical event, the death of the Son of God, is centrally the manifestation of the love of God. All other manifestations

of God's love have their legal ground and center in the cross.

The ungodly who by God's grace according to his purpose of election believe in Christ crucified have the assurance that they are justified. Before the Judge of heaven and earth they stand...possessing all peace in His presence. They have been justified through faith in Christ Jesus, who died for the ungodly. All who are justified in Christ's blood learn to confess "that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

I would like to point out that only the Reformed faith truly honors the uniqueness of the love of God. Pelagianism and Arminianism or so called free willism, principally deny the uniqueness of the love of God. Free-willism's sinner, historically, is basically good and not totally depraved. Arminianism's sinner is one who wills the good but only does the evil.

We know that when the Arminian speaks of the free will of the fallen sinner he is addressing the question of the possibility of the natural man to believe and accept the salvation God allegedly offers him in the preaching of the gospel. The Arminian claims that only by maintaining that man by nature has a free will unto the good is it possible to maintain the truth of human responsibility.

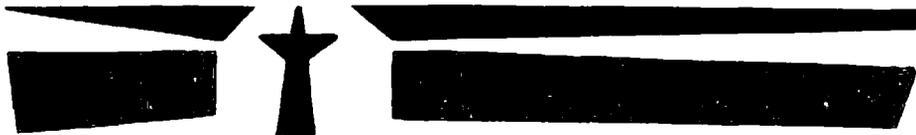
There are good answers to all these arguments of the Arminians but that is not our point now. We only want to point out that by denying total depravity of the fallen sinners one alters the spiritual ethical character of the ones for whom Christ died and thereby alters the uniqueness of God's love. Serious business. By this heresy of free-willism all

Pelagians of any and all stripes minimize if not deny the uniqueness of the love of God. This touches upon the very heart of the gospel... the love of God. Oh, the Arminian can prattle on and on about God's love but, when their theology is analyzed, the kind of people that Christ died to save are people who by nature will the good, who will not to do the evil, who do much good, who are only spiritually sick and are not dead in sins and trespasses. Plainly, Arminianism's sinner does not hate God with the whole of his being nor are they consciously and deliberately His enemies, for Arminianism depicts the fallen man as one who is groping in darkness to find God. The pagan basically wanted to serve the true God but because of the darkness of sin he cannot find The Light.

All this stands condemned by Paul when he declares that Christ died for the ungodly...for God's enemies.

Once again, only the Reformed faith faithfully maintains the true character of the love of God. We were his enemies. We hated the Holy and Just One; but He loved all the elect in Christ, who of God was sent to die for God's enemies in order that the infinite depths of God's love may be revealed.

This unique love of God the Holy Spirit hath "shed abroad in our hearts." (verse 5) Hence, we know and believe that God is love. We know and believe that, because our God loved us unto death even when we were his enemies, our hope of glory shall never prove unfounded. "Hope maketh not ashamed." "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life."





## *Truth vs. Error*

**REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH**

### Modern Speech Versions of the Bible **GOOD NEWS FOR MODERN MAN**

This Bible is also known as **Today's English Version (TEV)**. There are some places in it which read well. In fact, on the whole this is so. But this is not enough in itself to recommend it. One of those places is at 1 Cor. 7:1-5. "Now to deal with the matters you wrote about. A man does well not to marry. But because there is so much immorality, every man should have his own wife, and every woman should have her own husband. A man should fulfil his duty as a husband, and a woman should fulfil her duty as a wife, and each should satisfy the other's needs. The wife is not the master of her own body, but the husband is; in the same way the husband is not the master of his own body, but the wife is. Do not deny yourselves to each other, unless you first agree to do so for a while, in order to spend your time in prayer; but then resume normal marital relations, so that your lack of self-control will not make you give in to Satan's temptations." At this point, TEV (or GNMM) reads better than any other version. However, the use of this modern version requires most judicious handling, because, on almost every page, it keeps

slipping over on you corrupted material which cannot be borne out by the inspired text of scripture.

Anyone really interested in learning what TEV contains should make a study of the little 80 page book entitled, **Good News for Modern Man — The Devil's Masterpiece**, by M. L. Moser, Jr. The book, referring to the many names given TEV, mentions one entitled, "the Swinger's Bible." According to the Dictionary of American Slang, a swinger is "a person who inhabits a socially fashionable world and whose taste in dress, music, entertainment and places of entertainment, resorts, etc., reflects what is considered modern, stylish, youthful and sophisticated," one who is fashionably lively, modern and exciting. The modern "swinger" is also graphically illustrated in Esau, as described in Heb. 12:16, KJV. (TEV does not bring this out at all well.) Today, all kinds of Bibles are out on the market—"the hippies' Bible" (which TEV is also said to be), "the Cotton Patch Bible" (a take-off on Georgia patois), "inner city slang Bible" (now as ancient as TEV: 1966) and "the Nigger Bible."

All these Bibles, to use a modern "rock" expression, are so much **Dust and Ashes** (or rust and hashes) which will soon be 'Gone With the Wind,' while the Bible which is really the Bible lasts and outlasts all the others. The real Bible is for every man, whether a pitiful, miserable hippy, a Georgian red-neck, a city slicker, a country bumpkin, a honey "whitey" or a burn-baby-burn "blackie."

"This version is aimed to the average American of seventh grade education..." Not far from the truth is the saying that the "average American" is of seventh grade mentality. It would seem then that such a Bible as TEV is much needed. (Pity our poor semi-literates!) But it should be understood that the language of the Old Testament Hebrew and of the New Testament Greek is on alpine level and not down in the mediocrity of a seventh grade slot. Also it is better to have a Bible (as is the KJV) which is calculated to raise men above a juvenile level, than to lower the Bible to the comic strip vocabulary. Not that TEV does this, although it sometimes gives that impression, especially with its generous sprinklings with "little jots" type of cartoon illustrations. These are said to "help to make" this Bible "speak to modern man." To do that, it seems to be necessary to intersperse the text with seventh grade level (or lower) cartooning. It could be objected that these illustrations are not, strictly, cartoons, but are line drawings which are imaginative and artistic. If so, we'd probably think nothing of it if such inkings appeared in a seventh grade Sunday School lesson paper. But in a Bible —?! Bible translators must not get trapped into such stunts as teaching chickens to fly, dogs to walk and apes to read.

The translator of TEV knows what a **virgin** is, which is evident from his text at Matt. 1:23, 25, where he shows that Joseph "had no sexual relations with her before she gave birth to her ("firstborn" is omitted) son. No, nor as per Talmudic

slander, did any other man. Why, then, does the translator render **parthenos** as **girl, young girl** and "unmarried"? In other places TEV obscures the meaning of this word, for it is omitted from eleven (11) verses: Matt. 25:1, 7, 11; Lk. 1:27 (twice); 2:36. "virginity" (omitted); Acts 21:9; 1 Cor. 7:25, 28, 36, 37; Rev. 14:4. It appears in 2 Cor. 11:2 and in 1 Cor. 7:34. In Lk. 1:34 it is inserted where it does not exist in the Greek text. So the Bible's doctrinal basis of the virgin birth is weakened. Appeal cannot be made and support cannot be found where the essential term is lacking because omitted.

Close to the "virgin" text, our eye falls on Matt. 2:1 where we read of "some men", to which is added extra-biblically, "who studied the stars." But "some men"? How does this language make plainer "to modern man" the Christmas story? "Wise men" is most certainly internationally understood. In fact, "wise men" is more evidently understood in any language before it will be in weak, infantile modern American jargon. On the next page, "some men" is made to mean three men by one of those puerile drawings. But where does Matthew specify **three** wise men?

As Moser points out in his book, there are very serious criticisms to be made of this version. For example, sixteen references to **the blood** are omitted, substituting the word **death**. The whole gospel is based on the shed blood; but there could be death, many kinds and forms of it, without any shed blood. Further, the word **begotten** is eliminated from ten verses. The word **miracle** is entirely omitted from the Gospel According to John, and rendered "mighty work" (something less than a miracle); the word **redemption** from 17 out of 22 verses, and expressions like "set free" are employed instead. This is further denuding of the gospel content of scripture. The idea of **reconciliation** is also to a great extent omitted. These disturbing facts greatly annoy any real student of

the Word. The TEV may generally read well, but is terribly unfit for Bible study use. How could you, with it, e.g., study the doctrine of reconciliation? This also goes for the concepts **perdition** (omitted), **hell** (Modern notions of are far out beyond Bible truth), **worship**, **repentance** and **adoption**. Don't modern people understand these terms? If not, must we then drop them? Wouldn't adopted people understand the term **adoption**? Then why pare it down to "made God's sons"? Doesn't anybody any more in this modern world understand the simple term **worship**? Who would raise an eyebrow if we affirmed that for most in modern society the word has lost its meaning? Is that why "and he worshiped Him" in TEV is rendered "knelt down before Jesus" (Jn. 9:38)? The latter action could certainly be done without any worship at all. Why is worship in this way denied the Son of God? Is this that damnable Socinianism raising its ugly head in the churches? There isn't even a trace of **that** in the King James Bible!

A good test of any modern Bible would be to check it at Rom. 9:5. TEV there has: "...Christ, as a human being, belongs to (their race). (May) God, (who rules) over all (be) praised for ever! Amen." The words in parentheses (mine-RCH) indicate words not in the original. But this wording flatly and literally makes Christ a mere human being, denying to Him the statement that He is God over all. What all this amounts to is expressed in 2 Pet. 2:3, TEV. It is to "speak evil of the Way of truth. In their greed these false teachers will make a profit out of telling you made-up stories."

With so much of the true gospel disguised in or omitted from TEV, how can it be called "Good News for Modern Man"? Good news, is it, with "the blood" eliminated? with "repentance" dropped?

This is the way modern religious liberals talk of the good news. They have a "good news", a gospel which is not a gospel, humanistically neutral so that it offends neither Jews, Romanists, Neo-evangelicals, neo-orthodox or whatever.

With all these fundamental concepts of the gospel (the good news!) blurred, slurred, changed or omitted, what in the world then is left? Surely not **good news**! What a subtle title this book has when you become conscious of what has been done to the book! I would not want a bottle of high potency vitamins under such labeling. Then what do you think of this book's being stamped with the imprint, "God's Word for a New Age"? The implication is that **this** book (TEV), in preference to the Bible of 1611, is God's Word for today. That latter Bible **was** God's Word for long gone ages past, but is no longer good news for today! By the sleight of hand of an insane, putrid egotism the KJV disappears from before your eyes, and—presto! **now** look at what you got!—a book stripped of much of such terms as "adoption," "blood", "deacons", "justify", "miracle", "only begotten", "propitiation", "reconciled", "reconciling", "reconciliation", "redemption", "repentance", "resurrection" and "worship." These terms naturally then do not even appear in the appended Word List.

There are other Bible versions you may become interested in. Right now the NIV and NASB are very popular, the latter, probably being the better of the two. But use these tools with extreme care! Remember, sharp tools are not for babes or fools. Remember too, the more a modern version we get the smaller a Bible we get. But don't be so anti-intellectual as to give up on or seldom use the King James Version of the Bible!

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During this society year, take interest, study, participate, return thanks to God Who gives you this opportunity.

# NEWS From, For, and About Our Churches

by Cindi Dykstra

## **BIRTHS:**

Mr. & Mrs. D. Boone of Southwest were blessed in the birth of a daughter on July 8.

Mr. & Mrs. Lew Bruinsma of Redlands were blessed in the birth of Steven John and Dale Alan on July 10.

Mr. & Mrs. David Hoekstra of Hull were blessed in the birth of Laura Jo on July 10.

Mr. & Mrs. M. De Vries of Southwest were blessed in the birth of a daughter.

Mr. & Mrs. John Wynia of Doon were blessed in the birth of a daughter.

Mr. & Mrs. Art Tolsma of Edmonton were blessed in the birth of Tracy Joanne on July 19.

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Van Baren of South Holland were blessed in the birth of Mary Beth on July 24.

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Tolsma of Edmonton were blessed in the birth of a son on July 30.

Mr. & Mrs. Randy Miedema of Hudsonville were blessed in the birth of Rick Allen on August 14.

Mr. & Mrs. W. Haveman of Hudsonville were blessed in the birth of Derek Christopher on August 26.

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Schimmel of Hope were blessed in the birth of James Alan II on August 30.

## **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP:**

Doon has sent the membership papers of Mrs. John Blankespoor and five baptized children to her at her request.

First Church in Holland has received Rancy Cammenga's membership papers from Kalamazoo.

Hudsonville has received Mark Clawson's membership papers from Southwest.

Hope Church has sent the membership papers of Mrs. Ron Corson (nee Linda Kuiper) to First Church in Grand Rapids and this of Mr. & Mrs. Dann Heyboer to Faith Church.

Hull has received the membership papers of Mrs. Hofman (nee Alvina Van Maanen) from South Holland.

First Church in Holland has received the membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hoven and six baptized children from Loveland.

Hope has received the membership papers of Caroline Kaptein from Monroe, Washington Chr. Ref. Church and those of Mr. Peter De Young from First Church in Grand Rapids.

Hudsonville has received the membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Vander Veen. Ralph comes from First Church and Cindy comes from Hope Church.

The membership papers of Mrs. Bob Ver Meer (nee Mary Lou Hoekstra) have been transferred from Hudsonville to Hope Church.

## **CONFESSIONS OF FAITH:**

Brian Kamminga, Gord Lubbers, and Mr. & Mrs. Randy Miedema made public confession of their faith in Hudsonville Church on June 19.

Sheryl Van Dyke made public confession of her faith in Southwest Church on July 31.

## **MARRIAGES:**

Deane Wassink and Donna Haveman were united in marriage on July 14 in Hudsonville Church.

Peter Kamps and Mary Koerner were united in marriage on August 14 in Hudsonville Church.

Don Van Dyke and Linda Pastoor were married on August 5 in First Church.

#### **YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES:**

The Federation Board sponsored a beach outing for area young people on July 16 at Muskegon State Park.

South Holland's young people sponsored a rollerskating party on July 18.

Hull's young people had an outing at the Boyden Sand Pits on July 27.



#### **OTHER ACTIVITIES:**

South Holland's Mr. & Mrs. Society sponsored a swimming party at Willowbrook Pool on August 25.

Seminary Convocation was held at Southwest Church on September 7. Prof. Decker spoke on "Buying the Truth."

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## **TEST YOUR MEMORY**

1. Who was dropped while fleeing with his nurse and became lame? II Sam. 5:4
2. To whom did Joseph's brothers sell him for twenty pieces of silver? Gen. 37:28
3. What man was put to death so that King Ahab could seize his vineyard? I Kings 21:1-16
4. After the Ark had come to rest on the mountains of Ararat, how many birds did Noah send out of the Ark? Genesis 8:7,8.
5. Who replaced Judas as one of the twelve? Acts 1:21-26
6. What slave returned to his master with a letter from Paul? Philemon vss. 10-18
7. What was the name of Timothy's grandmother? II Tim. 1:5
8. On what day did John see all that is recorded in Revelation? Revelation 1:10
9. Who caused an axe head to float? II Kings 6:1-6

## CONVENTION REVIEW

by Debra Mledema

For many of us the 1977 Y. P. Convention brings back many fond memories. It was another week to be remembered by the great times we had as well as by the interesting and edifying speeches we heard and discussed. Once again we greeted friends whom we had said goodbye to last summer and became acquainted with the new faces.

The pre-convention singspiration again proved to be greatly enjoyed by everyone as our new Hudsonville Church auditorium was filled to its capacity, forcing latecomers to set up chairs in the fellowship room.

This year the convention officially began Monday afternoon with registration (giving us one extra night), arriving at Camp Geneva and settling down on time for a hamburger-fry outside. It was no problem this year deciding on which cabin to stay in, the grounds were familiar and many knew which way to head for the cabin with the bathrooms... and then of course, the braver ones, for the cabin by the hole in the fence.

A well-attended bonfire was held that night, with left-overs from registration lunch for refreshments after singing. Everyone enjoyed the free time until curfew, mingling and reminiscing about old times (also planning new and exciting adventures).

After breakfast Tuesday morning Rev. Hanko gave an introductory speech and everyone split into groups for an interesting discussion on "Prayer". We were once again taught that prayer is the most necessary means for us as Christian young people, to have true communication with God. We must pray to Him in faith and humility and also with the confidence that He will hear our prayers.

Coed volleyball teams were posted outside and tournaments began after lunch. In the afternoon there was free time including swimming, softball, tennis, etc. for those not participating in the tournaments.

After having filled up once again Tuesday evening with an excellent meal

prepared by our caterers, we cleaned up and met in the Chapel to hear a speech by Rev. Hoeksema. He spoke to us on our first point, "Seeking the Lord in Our Spiritual Activities". Sue Besselsen, Lori Dykstra, Joyce Kuiper and Mary Pastoor sang a couple songs for us and Rev. Hoeksema closed with prayer.

After the mass meeting the drizzling rain took over most of our outside activities so games were started in the fellowship hall for those who were interested. The refreshments from registration were offered once again to the conventioners.

The next morning turned out to be the day that everyone was waiting for. Although some knew the secret behind "Wonderful Wednesday" there were still some of those to whom it came as a surprise. TWIRP -(The Woman Is Required To Pay) was announced at breakfast and the rules were as follows: 1) anyone from 6 to 60 years old was allowed to twirp or to be twirped 2) every girl was required to twirp (sad to say, some didn't obey this rule) & 3) once the "twirpee" said yes to the "twirper", he could not back out. Twirp could begin at any time during the day that the girl wished, and then along with it she also had to perform the duties required of her such as, holding doors and buying her mate pop, candy and what-not whenever he desired to have it.

After the excitement of the announcement we calmed ourselves and headed to the Chapel for the second introductory speech by Rev. Joostens on "Christian Stewardship". We discussed the topic with the idea in mind that we are not our own but belong to our Savior Jesus Christ; hence we must live as a faithful steward using the talents He has given us to the best of our ability and to the glorifying of His name.

After lunch we finished volleyball tournaments and had free time the rest of the day to do what we wanted. When supper time came around most of the girls could breathe easy again... the hardest part was accomplished. For some it came

easy, but for others it was a "tough and frightening task" to twirl a guy.

After picking up the guys from their cabins, we all met again for an inspiring speech by Rev. Moore on our second point "Seeking the Lord in Our Decisions in Life". A flute-piano duet was given by Christie Peters with the flute and Mary Pastoor accompanied her at the piano. After audience singing and closing prayer the visitors were invited to the dinner room for coffee and goodies, while the conventioners had fresh popcorn and donuts. After the snack we all gathered in the fellowship room for activities prepared specially for "Wonderful Wednesday". Prizes were given to qualifying couples such as a telephone for the couple with the closest matching telephone numbers, a stationary for the couple who lived the farthest apart, a calendar for those with the closest birthdays, a ruler for the couple who lived the closest together and more. Following the special activities free time was given again for swimming, strolling around, getting a little more acquainted and possibly for some, just staring at the stars and listening to the waves roll in off Lake Michigan. Much too soon for many, it was time to escort the man back to his cabin.

After three very short nights of sleep, we all managed to make it to the breakfast hall once again the next morning to make the best of our last day. Prof. Hanko introduced to us the practical topic on "Dating" and discussion groups followed. These were probably the most active discussion groups of the week since the young people and leaders had various opinions on dating and on "playing the field" as was mentioned in the introductory speech. Realizing that not one of us has any good in us at all, we must remember what we discussed the first morning that by seeking the Lord we must pray, and therefore we must also use prayer as our means to ask God to teach us to seek Him also in our dating.

The final business meeting was held the latter part of the morning followed by a hotdog lunch outside. Tug-of-war started immediately after lunch down on the beach, with ten people from each cabin

pulling against each other. The competition was tough but the farmer girls from Iowa deserved the winning credit in the girls match and after a second pull between the two final guys teams, the Michigan cabin of older guys came out on top.

There was free time again and many girls took this opportunity to get a comfortable and warm shower early in the afternoon, while the others had to be satisfied with a cold shower before the banquet. The punchbowl was at 6:00 with a delicious ham and chicken dinner at 6:30. After eating Sid and Todd Miedema favored us with a cornet duet. After the banquet we met to hear our last speech of the week by Rev. Woudenberg on our third point, "Seeking the Lord in Our Daily Walk". Presentation of the new Federation Board members was made by our new president Barry Gritters, and a special thank-you was given to Cal Kalsbeek for all his time and effort put forth into the past two conventions as our youth co-ordinator. Parting remarks were made and the convention theme song (Psalter No. 164) was sung. After closing prayer we once again felt the closeness and love for each other as we sang together the familiar convention parting song "God Be With You Till We Meet Again", knowing and trusting that God will lead each of us faithfully and safely through the days that lie ahead of us.

Friday morning we saw ourselves packing our suitcases and belongings to board the buses to go back to Hudsonville Church. Once again we would like to thank all parents, chaperones, ministers and donors in any way, who helped us to make this convention one of the greatest yet, and mostly above all else, our God who has again given us the opportunity of spending this week together.

Young people, may we always remember that Seeking the Lord must be the first and most important part of all we do in every sphere of our lives and doing all to the glorifying of His name. Remember then, "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near", and God will reward each one of us accordingly in that Eternal Day.