

# BEACON LIGHTS

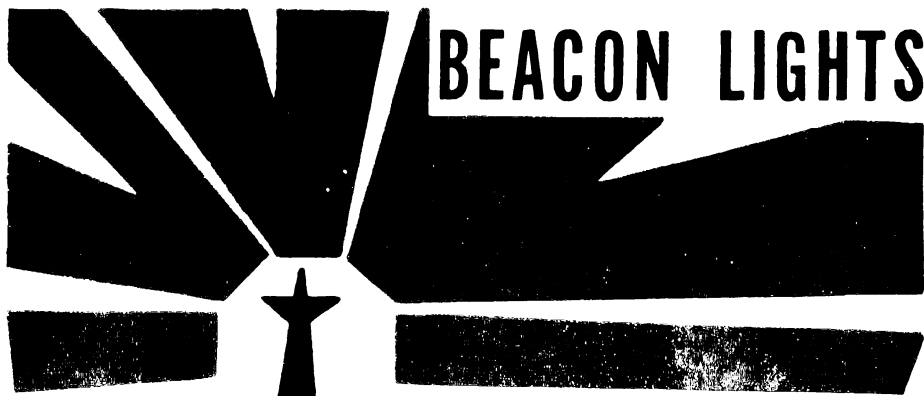
*FOR PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH*



**APRIL, 1979**

**FAITH NOT OF MAN,  
BUT OF GOD**

**THE DEAD SEA  
VIDEO TAPES**



# BEACON LIGHTS

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# EDITORIAL COMMENTS

In this April issue of *Beacon Lights* we wish to point out some additions to our staff and list of Contributing Editors. David Harbach has moved from Contributing Editor to Associate Editor, while Rev. Michael DeVries, pastor of Southwest Protestant Reformed Church, Grand Rapids, and David Kregel of our Hope Church, Walker, Michigan have become Contributing Editors in the "Current Events and Comments" department. The first of Rev. DeVries' articles appears in this issue under the title of "The Dead Sea Video Tapes".

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## SINGSPARATION DATES

For Greater Grand Rapids Area.

April 15

May 6

July 22

August 26

September 23

October 21

November 18

December 23

# **I AM JOE'S FOOT**

*by J.M. Faber*

I am Joe's right foot. I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I consist of many bones, strong muscles, and have an arch which separates the heel from the toes. My bones have strange names: tarsus, metatarsus, and phlanges. Joe is a heavy man, weighing over two hundred pounds; but when he walks, each of us carry that weight alone. When he wants to reach a high shelf in the closet, I can raise that hulk another few inches with ease. When Joe jumps down from a chair, I touch my toe end first to take up the jolt, thus protecting my heel from injury. I am a physical mechanism of many functions, the chief being locomotion. When Joe was a baby, he crept on hands and knees, but soon learned to stand upright and to take a few faltering steps. How proud he was when I learned to keep him in balance, to take steps from chair to chair to mother's outstretched arms! I also led him into mischief by giving him opportunity to reach up to table tops, but by then it was taken for granted: little Joe could walk! So breakable things had to be put out of reach.

I am quite an important part of Joe's anatomy. My name has been taken up into Joe's language as metaphors. When one is near death, he is said to have one foot in the grave; he speaks of a new movement being on foot; he makes a good impression by putting his best foot forward; when he takes a firm stand on any issue, he puts his foot down. When he or his friends make an embarrassing blunder, it is said that he puts his foot in it. He foots a column of figures; when he gets a secure position he has a foothold; and when his relationship is well established, it is said to be on good footing. The young man who is free to travel without responsibilities is said that he is footloose; and when Joe wants to proceed quietly, he goes on tip-toe.

I and my left partner are somewhat like the front wheels of a car-the way we point, so goes the rest. We determine whether or not to remain on the pavement, or swerve into the ditch. The way I point, that is where Joe goes. We get the blame for his waywardness: "His little

feet get him into more trouble!”

When Joe was a lad, I led him to the Sunday School, to church, to catechism class, to the Christian day school. But when he grew up to young manhood, this became harder and harder to do. He occasionally skipped classes; and he even steered me past the church entrance to indulge in some “free time”. I and my left partner began to realize that we were not steering Joe at all; he was “at the wheel” and directed our steps. Joe did not always “keep sound wisdom” and therefore would cause me to stumble. He sometimes turned right, and then left from the straight and narrow path and did not remove me from evil. He would sometimes be guilty of doing what the Lord hates, causing me to “be swift in running to mischief”. Sometimes we took him into places of wickedness: movie theaters, bars and other low dives. Instead of walking to the bookcase to pick up a good book to read, he would direct me to the T.V. corner and switch it on to be connected with and surrounded by the world of evil. Instead of studying for school or church activities, he would steep his thoughts in the way of his entertainers who do not like to “retain God in their knowledge”, and whom “God gave over to a reprobate mind to do things that are not convenient”. Joe became a slave to the wiles of the devil as they were portrayed by wicked men and women; all the while “knowing the judgment of God that they which commit such sins are worthy of death”. Joe, sad to say, also “had pleasure in them that do them”!

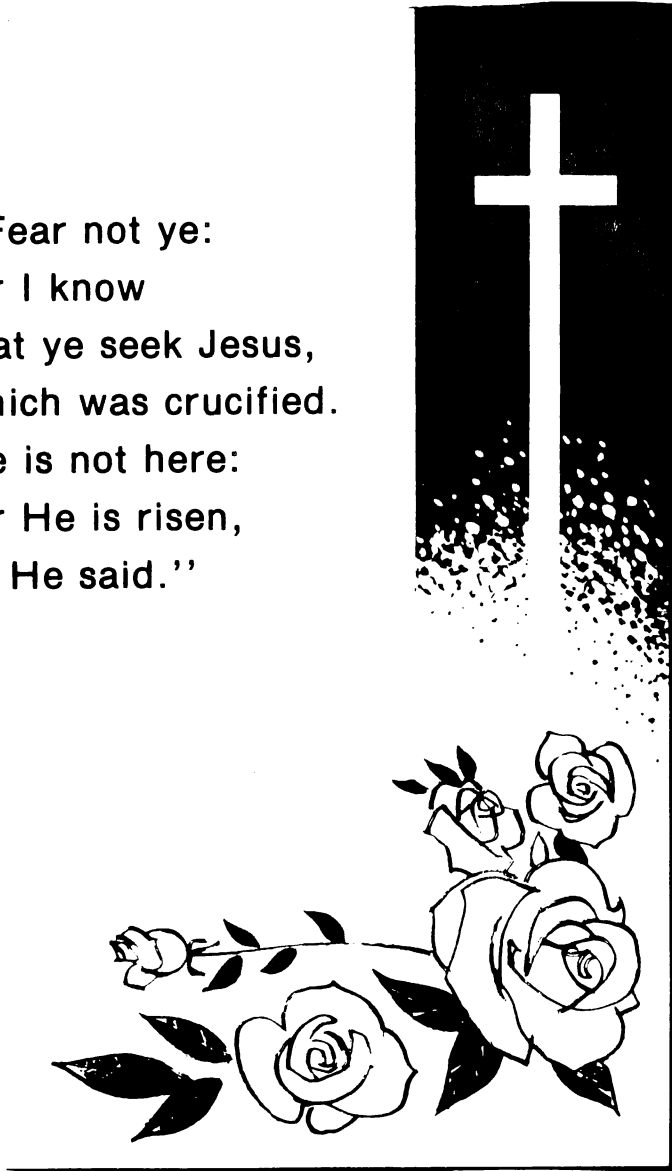
Then I came to realize that Joe wasn't really “at the wheel”, but Satan, the arch-enemy of God was driving him. Poor devil-driven Joe!

Now Hear This! The pastor of the church in which Joe was member by baptism invited Joe to come to his study for a talk. The evening that my partner and I took him into the presence of the pastor was the beginning of a new walk for us! The man of God opened the Scriptures to Joe, applying them to his deviant walk; prayed with him - and was heard! Joe was turned completely around! Our steps “were enlarged under him” so that we did not slip. Joe began guarding us so that he did not “dash us against a stone”. Joe set us “in a large room” so that we were “delivered from falling”. Now Joe can walk before God in the land of the living! Joe has been renewed so that his soul is holden in life that he “suffereth us not to be moved”. Now Joe sings with the church: “I have refrained my feet from every evil way that I might keep thy word”. And, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light upon my path”. The almost un-noticed signs at stairways in public places, “Watch your step” has found a new meaning to Joe.

What a radical change in the duty of directing Joe! We left and right partners took Joe to the consistory room to make confession of

faith. We took him to the front of church to make that confession public. We took him to the Communion Table, and we are confident that, in our resurrected state, we will take him along the "Streets of Gold" in the New Jerusalem! Thrice happy Joe!

"Fear not ye:  
for I know  
that ye seek Jesus,  
which was crucified.  
He is not here:  
for He is risen,  
as He said."



# PALM SUNDAY

by Char Van Den Top

## The Arrival of the Lamb

The Jews were once again preparing for the celebration of the Passover. Jesus and His disciples also journey to Jerusalem to keep the Passover Feast. It was a time of great joy and excitement for the Jews, but how heavy the burden must have been upon the heart of our Lord, as He contemplated the terrible suffering He would bear in the few days to follow.

Under the careful instruction of His parents, Jesus grew in the knowledge of the Old Testament scriptures. As He grew older, Jesus saw more and more clearly what His work was as the Messiah, the Anointed One. His frequent journeys to the mountain to pray for strength and guidance from His Father reveal to us how awesome and almost overwhelming His responsibility was to Him. Throughout His life on earth, Jesus was preparing for the suffering and death He would have to bear in order to save His people from their sins. The Lamb of God was now ready to sacrifice Himself in the Passover to which all the other Passovers had pointed.

On the first day of the week, which we now call Palm Sunday, the Lamb of God arrived in Jerusalem as King. In Luke 19:28-48, we read of three incidents in which Christ displays His authority as the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. These three incidents are His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, His foretelling of the destruction of Jerusalem, and His cleansing of the temple. In each of these acts, Christ refers to the Old Testament to show that He was the fulfillment of all the law and the prophets.

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass,” Zechariah 9:9. Five hundred years after Zechariah’s prophecy, Christ enters Jerusalem surrounded with the multitude crying, “Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord!” Many of the people had heard of and seen the mighty works which He had done and are filled with awe and admiration. When the Pharisees from among the multitude tell Jesus to quiet the people, Jesus answers them with prophecy found in Habakkuk 2:11, “For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.” Even the very rocks would testify of the salvation from God which the King had come to bring for His people.

The people are filled with anticipation of once again having their own king. But, they do not understand the true meaning of Christ’s Kingship. Even His disciples fail to understand that He comes to Jerusalem not to rule an earthly kingdom but to sacrifice Himself on the cross as the Saviour of His people (John 12:16). This explains how the people were to change so quickly within a few days to cry, “Crucify him! Crucify him!” Christ shows to them that His Kingship was not the type which they desired. He once again refers to Old Testament prophecy to show them that He came not to restore the glory of the Jerusalem on earth. Christ uses the prophecy of Jeremiah 6:3, 6 to describe

the terrible destruction of Jerusalem; "They shall pitch their tents against her round about; they shall feed every one in his place....cast a mount against Jerusalem: this is the city to be visited; she is wholly oppression in the midst of her." How Christ must have stunned the people with these words of their coming ruin instead of promises of a glorious Jerusalem on earth!

After entering Jerusalem, the King goes not to the palace but to the temple where He immediately casts out the buyers and the sellers. He would not allow His Father's house to be corrupted. He uses the Old Testament prophecy of

Jeremiah 7:11 to show that He possessed the authority of God, "Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it saith the Lord." The temple of the Old Dispensation was a type of Christ, the Lamb of God, who is the Mediator between God and His people; "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father."

The time was at hand for the Lamb to be slain. In a week, the Old Testament law and prophets were to be fulfilled at last. The Messiah had arrived in Jerusalem for the final Passover sacrifice.

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## TEST YOUR MEMORY

1. What authority was given to the man whose pound had gained ten pounds? Luke 19:16-27
2. Who was Dagon? I Samuel 8:7
3. The life of Abraham is told in which book of the Bible?
4. Who carrying what, first stepped into the Jordan River as the Israelites crossed? Joshua 3:14-15
5. In the battle in which the sun stood still, what caused most of the enemy to be slain? Joshua 10:11-13
6. How old was Noah when the flood came? Genesis 7:6
7. In the parable of the talents, what did the man do who was given one talent? Matthew 25:18
8. Who was Timothy's mother? II Timothy 1:5
9. Who said, "The half of my goods I give to the poor?" Luke 19:8
10. Complete the verse "I can do all things...." Philipians 4:13

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## ATTENTION!!

The Federation Board is still in need of chaperones for the California convention, July 23 - 27, 1979. If you are interested or would like more information, contact Janine Jabaay in Redlands at 714-792-0656.



## Current Events & Comments

### “THE DEAD SEA VIDEO TAPES”

by Rev. Michael De Vrie

The above title is not original with this writer. “The Dead Sea Video Tapes” was the title of a lecture given in 1976 by a certain Malcolm Muggeridge. His series of three lectures, given at the London Lectures in Contemporary Christianity, was published in this country by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. under the title **Christ and the Media**. (cf. a review of this little book in the October 1, 1978 issue of the **Standard Bearer**.) In this lecture, and the entire book, the author maintains that the media and especially television have an evil influence upon our society. He raises many thought-provoking and, very frankly, frightening questions, as is evident from the following excerpt from this lecture:

“Let us imagine that, somehow or other, a whole lot of contemporary pabulum-video tape and film of television programmes with accompanying news footage and advertisements, copies of newspapers and magazines, tapes of pop groups and other cacophonies, best-selling novels, a selection of successful films,

recordings of political speeches, exhortations, comedies and talk shows, and other recordings of the diversions, interests, and entertainments of our time gets preserved, like the Dead Sea Scrolls, in some remote salt cave. Then, centuries, or maybe millennia, later, when our civilization can only be patiently reconstructed out of dusty ruins, incomprehensible hieroglyphics and other residuary relics, archaeologists discover the cave and set about sorting out its contents, trying to deduce from them the sort of people we were and how we lived.

“What, we may wonder, would the archaeologists make of us? Materially so rich and so powerful, spiritually so impoverished and so fear-ridden, having made such remarkable inroads into discovering the secrets of nature and into unravelling the mechanisms of our material environment, beginning to explore, and perhaps to colonise, the universe itself, developing the means to

produce in more or less unlimited quantities everything we could possibly need or desire, to transmit swifter than light every thought, smile or word that could possibly entertain, instruct or delight us, disposing of treasure beyond calculation, opening up possibilities beyond envisaging, yet seemingly haunted by a panic fear of becoming too numerous, to the point that there would be no room on the earth for its inhabitants and an insufficiency of food to sustain them. On the one hand, a neurotic passion to increase consumption, promoted by every sort of fatuous persuasion among the technologically advanced people of the Western world; on the other, ever-increasing hunger and want among the rest of mankind. Never, the archaeologists will surely conclude, was any generation of men, ostensibly intent upon the pursuit of happiness and plenty, more advantageously placed to attain it, who yet, with apparent deliberation, took the opposite course, towards chaos, not order, towards breakdown, not stability, towards death, destruction and darkness, not life, creativity and light. An ascent that ran downhill, plenty that turned into a wasteland, a cornucopia whose abundance made hungry, a deathwish inexorably unfolded. This, as it seems to me, cannot but be the archaeologists' general conclusion from the material available to them.

"All those preposterous advertisements, technically speaking the best camera work of all, beautifully produced, in the magazines, on the glossiest of glossy paper, on film or video tape, flawless, commending this or that cigarette as conducive to romantic encounters by a waterfall, some potion or cosmetic sure to endow any face, hands, or limbs with irresistible loveliness, or medicament

which will give sleep, cure depression, remove headaches, acidity, body odour and other ills—can it have been, the archaeologists will ask themselves, in the light of the almost inconceivable credulity required, and apparently forthcoming, some long since forgotten religious cult? A cult of consumption; the supermarkets with soft music playing, its temples; the so-persuasive voices, 'Buy this! Eat this! Wear this! Drink this!' of priests and priestesses; the transformation wrought by adopting such a diet, using such gadgets, stretching out on such a bed, the miracles; with **Muzak** for plainsong, computers for oracles, cash-registers ringing in the offertory—so, they will conclude, the worship of the great god Consumption was conducted, with seemly reverence and dedication. There were even religious orders, with prodigies in the way of asceticism being performed in the interest of slimming and otherwise beautifying the male and female person.

"Contrasting with this apparently flourishing cult, the archaeologists would detect vestigial traces of an earlier faith called Christianity, which had become, it seemed, largely associated with social and political causes. Thus, the prevailing Christian ethic, in so far as one could be detected at all, was based on the concept that human beings were victims of their circumstances; in the nomenclature used by some moralists, 'situational'. In the folk stories, plentifully represented in the film and video footage, misbehaviour was almost invariably shown as being due to adverse living conditions, or to mental and moral states beyond the control of the individuals concerned; never to deliberate wrongdoing, so that the notion of sin seemed to have largely disappeared, and virtue, in so

far as the concept still existed, to have found expression exclusively in social acts and attitudes. If any of the archaeologists were interested enough, they could trace the adjustments and distortions of the original Christian texts-always, it goes without saying, ostensibly in the interests of clarification-to conform with the concept of Jesus as a revolutionary leader and reformer, a superior Barabbas or Che Guevara, whose kingdom indubitably was of this world, finding in this textual and doctrinal adjustment an example of the infinite ingenuity of the human mind in shaping everlasting truths to conform with temporal exigencies. It might amuse one or other of the archaeologists with a Gibbonian turn of mind to note how easily hallowed sayings were turned round to signify their opposites; as, that it is absolutely essential to lay up treasure on earth, in the shape of an ever-increasing Gross National Product; that the flesh lusts with the spirit, and the spirit with the flesh, so that we can do whatever we have a mind to, and that he that loveth his life in this world will keep it unto life eternal, and so on.

"There being nothing in the material at their disposal to suggest to the archaeologists that Christianity had any survival possibilities, especially after coming across the announcement, as they inevitably would, that God had died, their assumption that a consumption cult had replaced it as a popular faith would be reinforced."

According to Muggeridge, the basic doctrine of this cult is belief in progress, all change representing progress. But our archaeologists will discover innumerable instances of the deplorable consequences of the application of this fallacious proposition. For instance, they would see

"wars, each more ferocious than the last" which were confidently expected to bring a lasting peace, "liberations that enslaved, revolutions that created worse tyrannies than those they replaced, divorce reform that undermined the institution of marriage and abortions reforms that resulted in ever more abortions being performed."

The mystical content in this cult of consumption would obviously be sex. Writes Muggeridge: "Sex is the mysticism of materialism, a proposition that would have been borne in upon the archaeologists when they found themselves confronted with a superabundance of erotica of every sort and description, in periodicals and books and newspapers, as in films, television programmes, plays and entertainments..."

As for the necessary redemptive process to substitute for the traditional Christian conversion, Muggeridge points to education in all its aspects. Education appears as the answer to all of society's ills. But what is the result of this emphasis upon education for education's sake? "Instead of sages, philosopher-kings and saints, pop stars, psychiatrists and gurus. Looking for a Leonardo da Vinci or a Shakespeare, the archaeologists find only a Rolling Stone."

Muggeridge concludes:

Surveying and weighing up the whole scene, then, will not their final conclusion be that Western man decided to abolish himself, creating his own boredom out of his own affluence, his own vulnerability out of his own strength, his own impotence out of his own erotomania, himself blowing the trumpet that brought the walls of his own city tumbling down, and, having convinced himself that he was too numerous, labouring with pill and scalpel and syringe to make himself fewer, until at last, having educated himself into imbecility, and polluted and drugged himself into

stupefication, he keeled over, a weary battered old Brontosaurus, and became extinct?"

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Is this not a frightening, but realistic presentation of the content of the media which surrounds us? Even the world recognizes and is concerned about the "soft core" pornography in television and the mass media. Even the world is disturbed by the violence presented in the media which it unquestionably links with antisocial behavior. Even the world is becoming concerned with the advertising industry and its influence, especially upon children. Even the world is becoming alarmed at the violence and corruption portrayed in the news reports.

Oh, we may chuckle when we hear about the kindergarten class, that when told not to squeeze a turtle, named it "Charmin", or about half a class of third-graders, who when asked to spell the word "relief", write "Roloids.". But the power and influence even in advertising is undeniable and alarming.

Television and communications researchers support Malcolm Muggeridge's thesis that "the technical complexities, necessity of editing, and the demands of the public make the television producer turn reality into fantasy." Reported in the July 1975 issue of the **Reader's Digest** the University of Pennsylvania Annenberg School of Communications researchers "found that heavy viewers of television (more than four hours daily) develop an unreal view of the world."

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This deception is found even in news reports. Jerry Rubin, one of the principals in the Chicago conspiracy trial some years ago writes in his book called **Do It:**

"Television creates myths bigger than reality. Whereas a demo (dem-

onstration M.D.V.) drags on for hours and hours, TV packs all the action into two minutes-a commercial for the revolution. On the television screen news is not so much reported as created. An event happens when it goes on TV and becomes myth... Television is a non-verbal instrument, so turn off the sound, since no one ever remembers any words that they hear, the mind being a technicolour movie of images, not words. There's no such thing as bad coverage for a demo. It makes no difference what's said: the pictures are the stories."

\*\*\*\*\*

What the future holds is even more frightening. In the November 1978 **Reader's Digest** in a condensation from Newsweek entitled "TV's Tantalizing Tomorrow" we read the following:

"Despite its projected benefits, the new technology is regarded with suspicion by those who fear that it will alter leisure habits and social arrangements in ways society may come to regret. Consider the video junkie of a not-too-distant day, snugly ensconced in his all-electronic cocoon, lighting up his three-dimensional wrap-around screen with selections from 100 channels. Will he ever tune out long enough to converse with the rest of his family? What about the future of reading-or of quiet, solitary reflection? 'We have to find out if we are producing something pleasant or are unknowingly inflicting people with a cancer', worries Sy Salkowitz, president of 20th Century-Fox Television."

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As people of God, and particularly as young people, we should be very cautious in our attitudes toward the media. We

may not find our pleasure in the world. Careful, spiritual evaluation is necessary if we are not to be deceived. It is very easy for us to lose our spiritual sensitivity when we constantly come into contact with the corruption and sensationalism dominant in the media today. As strangers in the midst of the world we must have our eyes focused, not upon a television set, not upon filthy literature, but upon spiritual

realities of Christ's kingdom. As the Apostle Paul warns in Colossians 3:2, 3: "Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God." And then we have this blessed hope: "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (vs. 4)

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## *THOUGHTS ON OUR WORSHIP*

### SINGING

Its Scriptural justification can be found in Ephesians 5:19, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." And also in Colossians 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

Many of the Psalms were written to be sung in the temple. (Asaph was a chief musician) We know too that the church in glory also sings. The impression from Scripture is that singing is a gift given by God for the church to use in praising God. Therefore, it is obligatory and an essential part of the service which may not be omitted neither by the church, nor by an individual.

Music can serve various purposes in the worship service. It can serve the purpose of praise as such. It can serve as a response to the sermon, the law, the confession of faith. It can be a prayer. It can itself be an expression of the truth. Therefore, in the choice of the songs, we must choose ones which best attain their ideals, determined by its place in the worship service.

Appropriate songs for worship must have words which are Scripturally sound, but also the music must be good music for worship. Some music is suitable for praising God and some is not. This lies in the nature of music itself, not in the use to which it is put. We should never under-estimate the power of music. (Most of its power is subconscious.)

Music must also express the same idea as the lyrics.

# SPRINGTIME

*by Sherry Koole*

By God, our Father's mighty Hand  
The seasons come and go.  
And soon our springtime will draw nigh  
Replacing Winter's snow.

All praise to God, our Father  
Who alone does wondrous things.  
He gives us the changing seasons  
Winter, Summer, Fall, and Spring.

The snow of winter now has passed  
'New life is all abroad.'\*  
We see through the changing seasons  
The handiwork of God.

The field, once covered in Winter's white  
Shall again yield forth its grain  
For the land now plowed and planted,  
Is enriched with springtime rain.

The streams now flow with water.  
The earth yields forth its good.  
And all the creatures of God's Hand  
Are supplied with daily food.

The trees, once barren in winter time,  
Are clothed in their springtime best.  
And here in their spread-out branches  
The sparrow prepares a nest.

We, too, can also find comfort  
In this wonderful season of spring:  
As He cares for each little creature,  
We, too, are under His Wing.

\* Psalter #169 verse 3, line 2a



## *Truth vs. Error*

**REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH**

### **FAITH NOT OF MAN, BUT OF GOD**

The infallibly inspired Word of God at Ephesians 6:23 reads, "Peace to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." The text, as just read from the trusty King James Version of 1611 is so plain a child can understand it. If you care to check it, and can read the Dutch language, it is just as clear and plain in the Staten Bible of 1618. As to content, the text is so rich and profound that we cannot now treat it in depth. But a cursory notice will reveal that these words are not a command, like "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ!" Nor are they an exhortation, as, "Seek peace and pursue it." Rather, we have an unconditional promise from God: "Peace! to the brothers! and love...!" It is God speaking peace into being for His people, creatively commanding love for them and ordaining the gift of faith for them. Notice what else is promised: "love with faith." That's why one man says, "I believe all in the Bible," and another says, "I believe nothing!" How is it that we have

this difference between one man believing and another not? Most modern evangelists have answered. All men have faith. They just do not have it in the right object. They only need to take their own faith and put it in Christ; put their trust in Him. But in 2 Thessalonians 3:2, the Scripture says, "All men have not faith." Then it cannot be that everybody has faith, and, therefore, one need only put his trust in the Lord.

How would you answer this question? "Are all men, then, as they perished in Adam, saved by Christ?" What do you think of this answer? "No, only those who are ingrafted into Him, and receive all His benefits by a true faith." That answer is quite in harmony with the Bible's claim that all men have not faith. But then there are some men who do have faith. Where did they get it? Our text answers, "with faith from **God**". This is classically confirmed in the words, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God; not of

works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (Ephesians 2:8, 9). The proximate cause of a man's faith is as expressed in John 3:27, "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven." God gives faith from heaven. The ultimate cause of a man's faith goes back to eternity. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48). Well, then, a certain number of men (the elect) have faith ordained for them. The origin of their faith is not from themselves, but from the sovereign, eternal ordination of God. The means through which God produces this faith in history and time is the preaching of the gospel. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17), and that word preached. That is a true church which takes its position on "the word of **faith** which we **preach**".

We Christians are partakers of all of Christ's blessings by faith only. That pardoned sinner who in penitence and thankfulness came to Jesus and anointed His feet received the blessing of forgiveness precisely through faith. The Lord's comforting word to her was "Thy faith hath saved thee: go in peace" (Luke 7:50). Where did her faith come from? Certainly "thy faith" cannot mean it came from the woman herself. Faith is not from self or man, but from heaven. God reserves to Himself the giving of faith. "For unto you it is given in behalf of Christ...to believe on Him" (Philippians 1:29). Empty earthen vessels we are until God works faith in us to will and to do His good pleasure. Faith presupposes regeneration. For the unregenerate do not believe. Impossible it is for the spiritually dead sinner to exercise what he does not have, faith, to believe. Man by nature is in a state of unbelief. His unbelief is from himself. His faith is from God, as the text says, "and...faith from God..." Love and faith are not plants native, but exotic to man. They are not of man's planting or

growing. If they were then would come to pass the Lord's word, "Every plant which My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13).

Then what kind of thinking or theology is that which supposes any and every man has it within his power to believe or not to believe? It should be plain from Scripture that men in their natural fallen state are free only to continue in unbelief. For we read, "they believed not on Him." In fact, the question is, "Lord, who hath believed?" As for blinded and hardened sinners, "they could not believe" (John 12:37-39). So then, men as they are born are faithless. If they come to God as they are born, they come to Him without faith. They come to God in a manner not at all pleasing to Him, "for without faith it is impossible to please Him." This promise, you see, is the promise of peace, love and faith. Peace God does not promise all men. For "there is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked. (They) are like the troubled sea which cannot rest." Peace is promised God's people: "Peace be with you all who are in Christ Jesus" (I Peter 5:14). "Peace to the brethren! means "peace to the elect, to the Israel of God," peace to those who are and ever shall remain living members of the Church, the Body of Christ.

But if we are brethren, then we already have faith "from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ". Faith is not produced of the operation of man, but "of the operation of God" (Philippians 2:12).

With so much Pelagianism in the world, most people would think that God, in giving us faith, first makes us with a kind of neutrality in which we are neither believers nor unbelievers, neither full of faith nor faithless, but are prepared with a sort of equilibrium between the two, so that then we may believe the gospel, if we are so disposed. After God gives us a mind and will so wholly objective and indifferent, we may then consent to His



proposals on our own and go forward by ourselves, in our own choices by our own power. This, too, fits in very piously with the scientific method of the age. But Scripture knows nothing of such humanistic dreaming. For God in giving us faith so gives us the ability to believe and to persevere in faith. God gives every spiritual ability to go forward, to be established in grace and to continue in the perseverance of the saints until He brings us infallibly to glory.

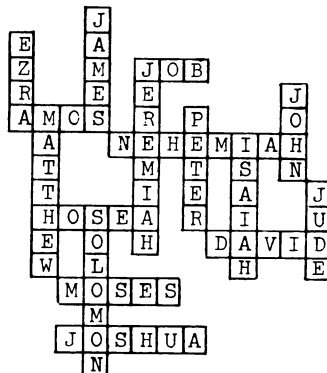
The popular modern conception that faith originates with man is not worked up out of the Bible mine, but is a wraith of the imagination. Faith is "from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ". This means that for God the Father to do us any good, we must go to His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ for that good. No man comes unto the Father but through Him. He sovereignly bestows the mercy of the gift of faith upon whom He will. He, the Lord Jesus Christ, has all authority in heaven and in earth. In Him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. If any man lack wisdom, or faith, let him ask of God, through Christ, who gives to all men who ask Him, liberally. Nor is He annoyed by your asking, and so will not upbraid you, be severe with you, for daring to petition the only One who can furnish you with the saving good of true faith.

Do you have faith in the Lord? Then you do not boast that you are able of

yourself to do something toward your own salvation. For then you have learned that He does not save you in part, to let you save yourself the rest of the way. Faith says, He does it all. You are not a half-savior and Jesus a half-savior. So that between the two of you heaven reached will be the result. No, and it's that the Lord gives your own effort toward heaven a dash of grace, without which you could not make it. Faith rejects all that Semi-Pelagianism. There is no room for praising God for salvation only in part, as half or more of the praise must go to self! There is no place for dividing the crown of glory with Him, to leave Him with half a crown or less. But if you come to God with nothing but faith alone, then you surely will delight to sing, "Not the labors of my hands Can fulfil Thy laws demands... All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone. Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to Thy cross I cling!" Amen.

(Prayer) Lord God and heavenly Father, prepare our hearts with faith and humility, that we may attribute all of being saved to Thy power and majesty, and to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. To Him alone we give the praise, as He deserves. We take our refuge not in any creature-power, but in that one satisfaction to Thy offended justice made upon the Cross by the death and passion of Christ our only Savior. Amen.

#### BIBLE WRITERS





## Quarter of Earth in Deadly Conflict

By Agatha Lubbers

In each of the first three books of the New Testament (the Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, and Luke) are recorded the words of Jesus that he spoke concerning the events that shall precede the end of the world. One of the most notable aspects of the Sermon Jesus spoke on the Mount of Olives in the last week of his earthly life was His testimony to the disciples that there shall be wars, tumults, and rumors of wars. Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places, there will be famines; this is but the beginning of the sufferings. (Cf. Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7; Luke 21:9)

We see all of these events in the world today. Unbelieving men see them too but they do not understand what they see. We, who believe and study all the events of history through the spectacles of the Holy Scriptures, see these events in the world around us and we understand what we see. (This is not a proud boast but this is the truth.)

The news media report that war, guerilla conflict, terrorism, and other kinds of strife afflict more than twenty nations of Asia, Africa, Latin America,

and parts of Europe. The most critical conflict is China's war with Vietnam. It is a conflict that China claims has been resolved, but men fear that this conflict carries with it the threat of Soviet intervention and the expectation of worldwide tension and conflict.

Other countries that currently experience disputes range in population from China's 865 million to South Yemen's 1.7 million. These countries make up about a quarter of the earth's 4.2 billion people.

These wars in the world are an eloquent and clarion testimony that the words of Jesus are true. Jesus said there would be wars and rumors of wars until the end of the world and this is happening before our very eyes. But the end is not yet. The Man of Sin has not yet been revealed.

The scope, the intensity, and the seriousness of the conflicts are difficult for outsiders to gauge because of limited access to information on these hostilities. However, we do know that the chief areas of trouble are in such Asiatic countries as Israel, Lebanon, Iran, Vietnam, Cambodia, China, Burma, the Philippines, Kashmir, India, and Pakistan. In Africa

the countries that experience strife and tumult are Tanzania, Uganda, Rhodesia, Mozambique, Zambia, Angola, Ethiopia, Somali, Eritrea, North Yemen, South Yemen, Morocco, and Spanish Sahara. In addition Egypt is still in a state of war with Israel, although the signing of a treaty seems imminent. In Latin and South America El Salvador, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Honduras, Chile, and Argentina experience some form of confusion and revolution.

This brief summary of the major trouble spots in three of the continents of the world should help us who are members of Christ's victorious but militant Church to understand that the word of Christ is faithful and true. Having briefly reviewed the trouble spots we say with the apostle Paul, who wrote to the Church of Thessalonica as follows: "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation." (I Thessalonians 5:6-8)

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#### Teaching Bible in The Christian School

One of the critical discussions that is often heard concerns the place of the Scriptures in the Christian Schools. The Association for the Advancement of Christian Scholarship (AACS) has little place for the Scriptures or the Reformed Confessions in the Christian Schools. They say that the only way the Scriptures may be normative in the Christian School is in an indirect way. There is another "word" of God that must be discovered that will direct the Christian School, say the AACS proponents.

Rev. David Engelsma, who writes concerning the "Scripture in the Schools" in **Reformed Education**, takes another

radically different but historically Reformed position.

"...Historically, the Christian Schools have always taught Bible, the medieval schools, the schools of the Reformation, the schools in the Netherlands, and our own schools. I have little expectation that Bible will be dropped. If it would be dropped, not only parents, but also the church would have to do more in the way of instructing in Scripture. If we continue the present practice, could someone please work at co-ordinating the teaching of Bible in catechism, in the Christian school, and in Sunday School? Only let it be remembered that the teaching of Bible in the Christian school does not exhaust the calling of the school to provide Biblical teaching and, in fact, does not yet touch the heart of this calling.

"Scripture must be taught thus: as the foundation, light and center of every subject. Scripture is to be worked into every subject, naturally and matter-of-factly, as the ground on which that aspect of reality solidly stands; as the light that illumines both the particular aspect of creation, so as to give it meaning, and the student in regard to his knowledge and use of that aspect of creation; and as the core, or center, of the subject, thus unifying all the subjects."

Recently this same topic came under discussion in the **Outlook**, March, 1979. Rev. Peter DeJong writes an article entitled "Are Christian Schools Teaching the Bible?" He concludes that if they use the **Revelation-Response** textbooks that are currently distributed by the Christian Schools International (formerly National Union of Christian Schools) they are not teaching the Bible. Editor DeJong writes:

"They take up, in rather random fashion, a number of 'themes' or topics chosen according to the inclinations of those who were planning the course. Accordingly, popular, even 'faddish' themes get emphasized; subjects that are not popular in our time are ignored. We are confronted with a very elaborate system of Bible introductions that do not really intend in any orderly way to teach the Bible itself!"

Rev. DeJong concludes his article in which he is critical of the Bible materials as follows:

"Today many Christian churches, including our own, (an obvious reference to the Christian Reformed Church, A.L.) are fast losing their biblical, and therefore also their doctrinal and moral definitions and often begin to look more and more like what the Lord described as salt that has lost its taste. If they are not to experience the Lord's judgment of being discarded (Matthew 5:13), they will have to return, in a movement like that of the Reformation, to God's Word. Even a limited review of some of the newer materials being used for Bible courses in many of our Christian schools discloses the same distressing departure from the Word of God that we are observing in churches. One speaker at the recent Chicago meetings of the Council on Biblical Inerrancy observed that the Devil seems to concentrate his efforts on misleading church leaders and the institutions in which they are trained. Our Christian schools are properly parental, not parochial, so that they operate separately from the churches. One effect of this arrangement has been that churches after encourag-

ing their establishment and support, tend to give them little attention. What happens in them is largely left to decisions of a few overworked board members and teachers. A look at some of the newer Bible manuals suggests that, in the words of our Lord, 'while men slept', the 'enemy' has been sowing his 'tares' also in this 'field' (Matthew 13:25). We need to direct some serious attention to whether and how the Bible is being taught in our Christian schools. In some research through the earliest records of our Dutch Reformed churches of 400 years ago I was surprised to observe that those early, enormously influential, Reformation churches gave as much attention to securing sound Bible teaching in the schools as they did to getting it in the churches. If we and our children are not to stumble but to become effective servants of the Lord in our own and coming generations, we will have to pray and determine that God's Word will be our light in the classroom as well as in the pulpit."

With this evaluation of Rev. DeJong I heartily agree.

May God bless us and keep us in this way of instructing the youth of the Church.

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## **NEWS** From, For, and About Our Churches

by Cindi Dykstra

### **BIRTHS**

Mr. and Mrs. Larry Feenstra of Redlands rejoice in the birth of Luke Alan.

Mr. and Mrs. Pete VanderSchaaf of Faith rejoice in the birth of Catherine Joy.

Mr. and Mrs. Allen Karsten of Faith rejoice in the birth of Bradley Allen on Feb. 23.

### **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

Faith has received the membership of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Arens from First Church in Holland.

Hope has sent the membership of Mr. and Mrs. F. Haney and 2 baptized children to Faith.

Faith has received the membership of Mr. and Mrs. Ken Kuiper and their baptized son, Jonathan from Southwest and the membership of Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Moelker and their baptized children, Bonnie, Robert, Barbera, and David from Hanley Christian Reformed Church.

Redlands has sent the membership of Deb Van Uffelen to First Church in Grand Rapids.

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

Loveland's Young People held a soup supper followed by rollerskating at Fort Collins rink on Feb. 12.

Redlands' Young People held a party at Skateland with refreshments afterwards at the school on Feb. 19.

Faith's Young People held a sing-  
spiration in their new church on Feb. 25.

Hope Senior Young People's Society sponsored a casserole supper on March 22 at Hope School.

### **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

Mrs. Linda Feenstra made public confession of her faith on February 25 in Redlands.

### **MARRIAGE**

Mr. Clarence Pastoor and Mrs. Johanna Schmidt were united in marriage on January 2.

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## **THE CONVENTION OF THE YEAR**



*by Linda Feenstra*

Chairman of Promotions and Publications

Is everyone as excited about the coming convention as we are? We sure hope so! Judging from the support we are getting and all the work going on here, this convention has every potential of being a great success!

The first step of our convention will be sign-up on Monday at the

Hope Christian School in Redlands. All the young people taking the group flight will be bussed there from Ontario Airport, and will be joined by the rest of the young people attending the convention. In the early afternoon all conventioners will have a bus ride up the mountains to an elevation of 7000 feet. Here we find beautiful Pine Summit Camp—an inspirational place and great recreation area. We have already scheduled full days of activities, including discussion groups, hikes, tournament, ski lift ride, swimming, speeches, singing and *surprises!*

Our theme this year is “REDEEMING THE TIME”, based on Ephesians 5:16. Rev. Kamps, Rev. Joostens, and Rev. Miersma will be giving the speeches on the subheadings:

- I. In the Age of Ignorance
- II. During the Sex Revolution
- III. In a Fun Loving Generation

The discussion groups, too, promise to be good! The subjects chosen for discussion are based on problems we really face. Be prepared to participate and enjoy!

Friday, our final day, will take us down the mountains and to the coast. Whether relaxing on the sand or riding the waves, the beach is great, with *plenty* of sun (caution: burning sun!) for all!

**IMPORTANT:** Before making final plans, there are some *important* things to know. Because of our small congregation, we cannot provide housing for nearly everyone over the weekends. *Please, BE FAIR* to us and (if coming from Michigan or Illinois) come on the group flight (arranged by the Federation Board) through Jenison Travel Agency.

For all young people coming by other transportation, be sure to be at the Hope Christian School by 12:30 pm (afternoon) on Monday, July 23, as busses will be leaving for the camp at that time. Also, if intending to fly other than the group flight, be sure to come into Ontario Airport. *No L.A. flights.*

Read your registration packets and camp rules. Remember, these rules are part of our contract with the camp and *will be enforced.*

Now, just send in your registration and get set to come to California. Thank you for your support and cooperation. The Lord willing, we will meet in July. We pray for His guidance in this large responsibility we have undertaken.

If we all remember the reason for our conventions, certainly the Lord will bless us in them. In the words of Psalm 86:12 “I will praise thee, O Lord my God, with all my heart: and I will glorify thy name for evermore.” Come to the 1979 Convention, that together we may join in **GLORIFYING HIS NAME!**

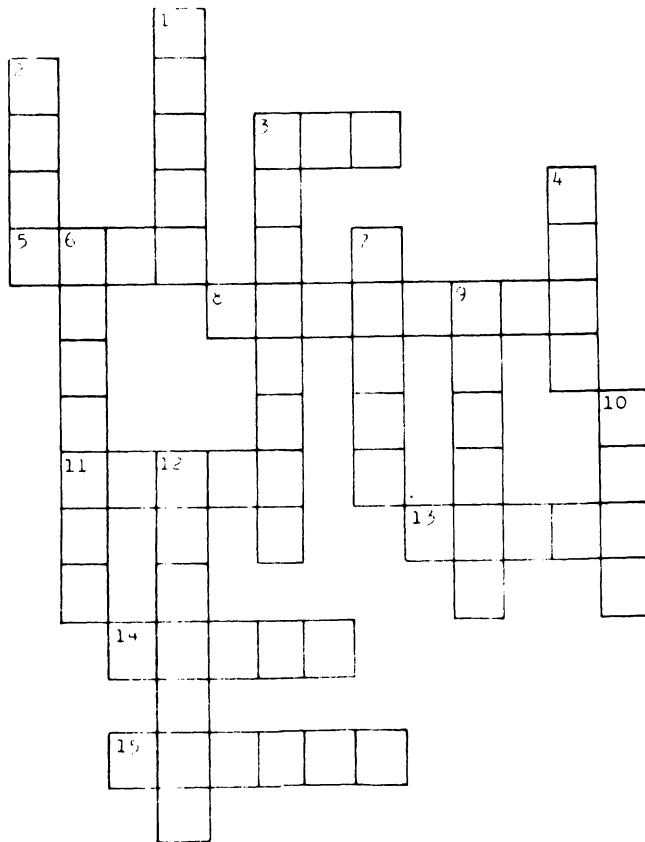
### BIBLE WRITERS

#### ACROSS

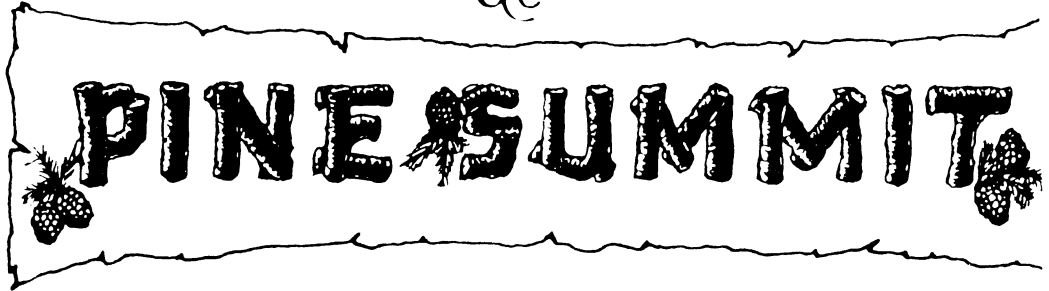
3. The writer was in a contest with God and the devil.
5. The writer was a herdsman.
8. The writer was a man who was a cupbearer to a king.
11. The writer was a man whose wife deserted him.
13. This writer wrote many of the great Psalms.
14. This writer wrote the first five books of the Bible.
15. The writer was a general who led the people of Israel into the Promised Land.

#### DOWN

1. The writer was a half-brother of Jesus.
2. The writer was a scribe.
3. The writer was a weeping prophet.
4. This writer wrote the last book in the Bible.
6. The writer was a tax collector.
7. The writer was a man who denied Jesus three times.
9. The writer was a prophet who had a vision in the Temple.
10. The writer was a brother of Jesus.
12. This writer wrote Ecclesiastes and Proverbs.



Let's Meet!  
at



Big Bear Lake  
California

Join us in  
Christian Fellowship  
at the 1979  
P.R.Y.P. Convention  
July 23~27