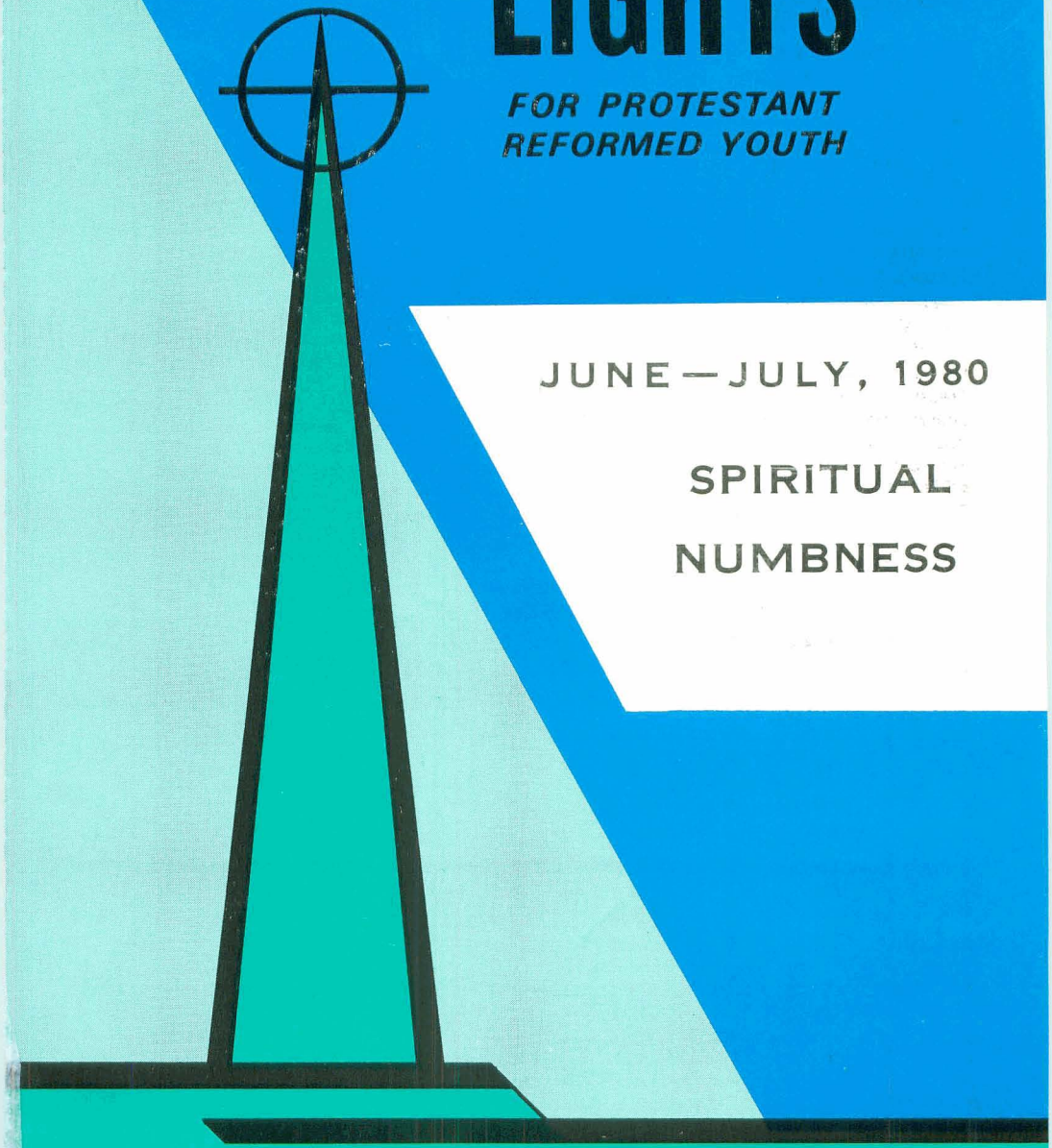
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH



JUNE—JULY, 1980

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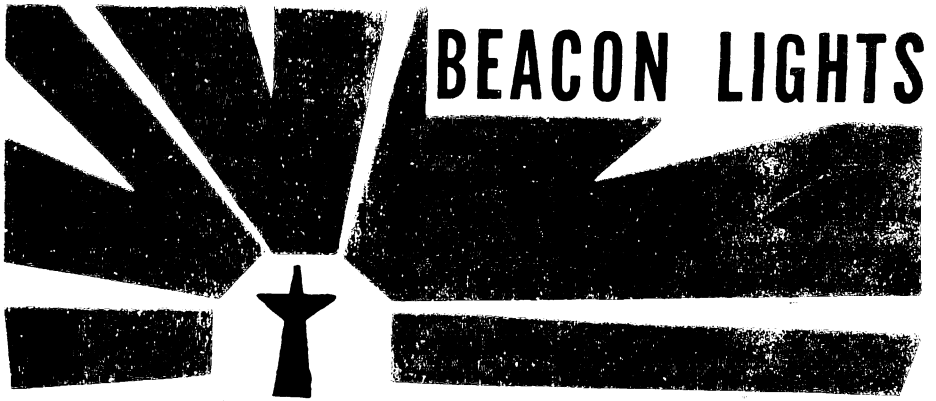

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Editorial

A FEAR-FULL "E" PISTLE TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

by John M. Faber

Dear Grandchildren:

Were you ever afraid? I know you were. One of your cousins, little curly redheaded Peter, told me in confidence that he was terribly afraid in his dark bedroom, so his mother allowed him to have a small light plugged in the baseboard plug. That gave him just enough light to distinguish the walls, ceiling and furniture, but not too much to sleep well. I asked him what he had been afraid of, and he said, "I don't really know because I do not believe in spooks and hob-goblins or anything like that. I am just *afraid!*

I guess little Peter's fear is not an isolated event among all you cousins. It's quite natural to children, and adults too. I can remember when I was a little boy (that was in the olden times) when I had to walk home at night on a lonely dark road with weed-rimmed ditches on either side, I was afraid! I tried to keep my eyes looking straight ahead, but they would always turn to the edges to see if I could find anything that would especially frighten me. And I suppose that older brothers like to frighten younger brothers and sisters by scaring them with spook-stories. I guess that is natural also, because older brothers are often mean that way.

Fear is a very natural emotion in mankind. Ever since Adam sinned his first sin fear has lived in the hearts of all men. Remember the Sunday School story of Adam and Eve who ate of the forbidden fruit at the Serpent's suggestion? Remember how they then tried to hide from God when He called to them? They hid among the trees of the forest and when God asked Adam why he was hiding from Him, Adam said, "I heard Thy voice in the garden, and I was *afraid*, because I was naked, and I hid myself." That was the first mention of any fear in the Bible. But the pages of Holy Writ are sprinkled with the words, "fear" and "afraid" some 727 times. Many of these passages speak of fear in the sense of reverence, as when it is recorded that "Abraham feared God." That kind of reverential fear is found 228 times. But the scary kind of fear, with its closely related term, "afraid" is found 499 times! Whew, that is a big number! How much is 499 times? Well, if you would read one of those texts each day, starting on your birthday, you would be up to the 499th one four months and two weeks after your *next* birthday! I guess that *is* a big number. That is why I came to the conclusion that fear is a common emotion to mankind in general and in God's people as well. So don't worry about the fact that you are afraid at times. You are in good company because your Dad and Mom are also afraid at times; so are your relatives, your teachers, your congressmen; and even President Carter.

But I am going to talk about the fears of children and young people—all

my grandchildren. Fearing may be right or it may be wrong. It certainly is wrong when you are afraid of imaginary fears, like spooks and hob-goblins. I would say, quite un-grammatically, "There ain't no such animal."

It certainly is right to be afraid of the Devil. We have every right to fear that enemy of God and His followers. The Bible tells us why we should fear him. God tells us that Satan is like a serpent—a poisonous snake hiding in the grass ready to strike out and bite us on the ankle. God's Word also likens Satan to a roaring lion which is the most fearsome of the wild beasts. Fear it? You bet! The Bible also likens that Enemy to a dragon. Now I never saw a dragon, and maybe there are not many left in the world, but the dragon was always pictured as the largest of the land animals, and the most fearsome because it destroys anything that is in its way. The dragon mentioned in the Book of Revelations pictures one of those creatures as having seven heads and ten horns. In that passage the Devil is portrayed in all his fearfulness.

So it is alright to fear the Devil. He is our greatest enemy because he is God's greatest enemy. Jesus, in one of his sermons telling the people not to be afraid of any man who might kill our body, said, "Rather fear him which is able to kill both body and soul in hell." Seeing Jesus said so, we had better do it!

The Bible also tells us when not to fear. Joseph was told by the angel not to fear when he announced that Mary would have a child by the Holy Ghost. Mary, too, was told not to fear when she received that same message. And so on many other occasions God's people were told not to fear when they would have naturally been afraid on seeing supernatural things.

Now this letter is getting so long that, before I lose your interest, I must come to the fear I am really concerned about. I sometimes hear that you are terribly afraid of "The Last Days" which shall come upon us just before the end of time when Christ shall descend with the sound of the trumpet in the brightness of His Glory. Sure, the Bible tells us of many fearful things that precede His Coming; earthquakes, heaven-quakes, when the stars shall fall from heaven—great judgements all. And we are told that before that time comes, we will have to suffer persecutions—and you young people had better figure on that in your lifetime—when you shall hide in dens and caves to escape your enemies. BUT (and that is the most important "but" in your life) accompanying those dire predictions come the comforting "fear nots" from our sympathizing High Priest. We need not fear, because those dire things are so many of God's means to destroy His and our Enemy, and the wicked world and all its wickedness. And they are signs that God is about to snatch us up to meet the Risen and Glorified Jesus, our Lord. He will then make new Heavens and a new World where we shall live with Him and the Holy Angels and the redeemed saints, which cannot be numbered for multitude. In the New World, there will be no more fear, no diseases, no crying, no dying! Only eternal joy and bliss will be our reward.

Young People, when the author of the Book of Revelations heard Jesus say, "Behold I come quickly" he responded with, "Even so, come Lord Jesus." Let us take that prayer upon our lips and every day until He comes!

Love, Gramp.

WHAT STANDS IN THE WAY?

by Mrs. Terri Garvelink
Hope Prot. Ref. Church, Walker, Michigan

Having joined the Protestant Reformed denomination shortly before marriage, I have often wished I had received the wealth of sound instruction which some of you possibly take for granted. From infancy on you are surrounded by the Word of God in all its truth and riches, in church, home, and school. Think of the thorough, steady and progressive instruction you are privileged to receive in catechism, all the way from the age of five or six through Pre-Confession and sometimes even after that. From Sunday to Sunday you hear the faithful preaching of the gospel by men thoroughly trained in our own seminary; the whole counsel of God not only, but also the Heidelberg Catechism, that beautiful synopsis of the great doctrines of Holy Scripture. From Kindergarten through 12th grade you receive a truly Christian education, God-glorifying "instruction in all aspects of God's creation in the light of the revelation of Holy Scripture." You are raised by God-fearing parents who promise to instruct and bring you up in "the doctrine which is contained in the Old and New Testament and in the articles of the Christian faith, to the utmost of their power."

Certainly, with the Word—the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ—so clearly set before us from the cradle to the grave, we as Protestant Reformed people ought to live truly sanctified lives; we ought to abound in the love of Christ; we ought to be as burning and shining lights in the midst of this dark and perverse world which knows Him not.

But is this really true of us? Or are you a little troubled, as I am, when you take an honest look at how we *live?*

What would happen if the King of the Church should suddenly pay us a visit? Do you think he would say, "Well done, you faithful servants" because we are faithful in doctrine; diligent and busy maintaining our own schools and seminary; busily engaged in mission and church extension work, if in our daily walk we are not witnesses through our love, consecration and obedience to Christ? Aren't you sometimes haunted by thoughts such as expressed in the words of the poem "If Jesus Came to Your House?"

...if the Saviour spent a day or two with you,
would you go right on doing the things you always do?
would you go right on saying the things you always say?
would life for you continue as it does from day to day?

would you ...let Him know the things on which your mind and spirit feed?
would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd plan to go?
or would you, maybe, change your plans for just a day or so?

Don't you wonder whether we would go right on thinking, speaking, acting as we always do if the Lord were right there beside us as He was with the disciples? How much television would we watch, how much beer and liquor would we drink, how much rock and roll music would we listen to? Would we continue our involvement in sports, whether actively or passively, the same as usual? Would we conduct ourselves as we always do on the job, in school, in the home, on a date? Would we spend our money in the same way; our leisure time?

"It causes me to tremble," doesn't it you? What possible excuse could *we* come up with for doing our own thing, for pursuing our own little kingdom instead of diligently seeking the Kingdom of Heaven?

We could try to blame prosperity, I suppose, the affluence of this day and age, and without a doubt this is an evil influence on our spiritual health and well-being. Or how about blaming our emphasis on doctrine? Who could deny that among Calvinists in general, and in our denomination in particular, there has always been a great deal of emphasis on doctrine and the defence against heresy and that we could use more stress on living a life of love to Christ and our neighbor? Or possibly we could blame the fact that we have always been so close to the gospel that we have become blind, or at least very nearsighted to it; that we no longer see the unspeakable wonder of it.

And yet, there is something more involved when we fail to joyfully serve the Lord with our heart, mind, soul, and strength. Something more basic stands in the way, obscuring our view of that blessed Redeemer who loved us with an everlasting love. Is it a love for the pleasures and treasures of this world; is it personal ambition, a desire for recognition and admiration; is it the pursuit of material gain and "security"; is it an inordinant love of sports; is it a secret sin we can't bear to forsake? What stands in the way?

It could all be summed pretty well in one little word: SELF.

Jesus Himself tells us that when He says, "If any man will come after me, let him *deny himself,* and take up his cross, and follow me." It is only as we learn to get that SELF out of the way that we can truly see and love Christ and our neighbor. Until then we are nothing; we are as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal.

God's ultimate purpose for His own is to prepare them to spend eternity in glory with Him; but "without holiness no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). God *will* have His way with us: if the Word and Spirit are not enough for us to forget ourselves and to seek Him and His fellowship with undivided heart, then He will deal with us in another way. Then He will chastise us; He will afflict us and He may even do so again and again until our every earthly prop is shot out from under us and we lie prostrate in the dust, in the depth of sorrow and despair; all of our earthly schemes of joy shattered, our pride

broken.

But it is at this point when all seems darkness and we cry out: "Lord, be merciful to me; I can't handle it: There dwells in my SELF no good thing—no strength, no wisdom, no goodness," that we open our eyes and find ourselves no longer in the dust but upon the Rock. Then, as we begin to perceive His glorious face, we say, "Now mine eyes seeth Thee, wherefore I abhor myself in dust and ashes." And we learn to say with Spurgeon: "Thou didst die for me, and shall I not live for Thee? Hold Thou me by Thy free Spirit, and pour down upon me *more love to Thee.*"

Beloved fellow-Christians, has there ever been a people of God on the face of this earth more blessed with "the excellency of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" than we? Then let us strive to deny ourselves and show *in our daily lives* that we count all things but loss for the joy of serving the Lord of our life, Who saved us from the abyss of hell: eternity under the wrath of God.

FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

Confessing Our Sins And The Faithful Judge

by Rev. G. Lubbers

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" I John 1:9.

We must always have the right starting-point in life, young people, in all our considerations concerning the deepest problems of life. The deepest problem of life is the *sin-problem!* If we did not have sin in our members and in our life, we would not have any vexing problems of conscience, which can be so disturbing and upsetting, would we? If it were but a skin-problem we could go and see a doctor, a dermatologist. But sin-problems are deeper and different altogether. They are the deep consciousness that God is light and that there is no darkness in Him at all. Even this thought makes the very devils to tremble and quake. (James 2:19; Luke 4:33,34)

The correct starting-point in each step of the way for us is to listen to *the*

"message which we have heard from Him, and we declare unto you, that God is light and there is no darkness in Him at all". I must here notice that John speaks of "*the* message". It was a message, which John must relate and declare to the church from God. Now this message we must *receive* in childlike faith. This is God's message to *you*, dear young people. Someone once told me that he used to sit in church and in catechism saying: does God really mean *me*? Well, "get with it", that is the truth! David was slow to hear once too, until Nathan said, "Thou art the man". David did not come to himself even though he roared in the disquietude of his heart. He knew all the while that he was really dealing with God, who is light and in whom there is no darkness. (Psalm 32:3,4) But all the while he was thinking, "If only Joab does not tell the real happening, how Uriah was killed". He does this even though it thunders in his heart. "But the thing that David did was evil in the eyes of the LORD", before whom all things are naked and opened! Often we are like this David, this man of God!

Wondrous starting point: God is light and there is no darkness of sin and evil in Him at all!

That is the message, which you and I heard from our mother's knee in thousands of forms and in as many situations, where sin did so easily beset us. And when we are young these are "the sins of youth". When we grow older sin still besets us on every hand. We have a constant battle with our sinful nature, our flesh; sin is in our members, our hands, our eyes, our ears, our mouth, and in our deepest and secret thoughts of our sinful hearts. That is what we see, and we learn to know, when we have come to have fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. Then we begin to learn to see the sinfulness of our sin.

Everybody in this world talks about sin. Not all say the same thing about *their* sins, however. Nor do they all call it "sin". The world of sinful men have a way of trying to cover up their sin, and they ever attempt to reason away their sin. They flatter themselves that under the cliche: the times have changed, they have licence to walk in present-day immorality; they prate about "new-morality"! Now they have licence to sin; they *all* do! Young people fall for this "line" now as they did fifty years ago when I was one of the young people. Meanwhile everybody must and does talk about their sins and about the sins of others—especially the latter. Yes, that is why God can judge the world righteously. Even the pagan world of our day—pagan America—on radio, television and the printed page *talks* about sin. Their mouth is full of it! They speak from a conscience that is always judging and accusing. They shew the "work" of the law written in their heart, but they do not have the "law" written in their heart by grace. And so everybody talks about it, and holds the truth down in unrighteousness, and, thereby, become inexcusible before God. Hell will not be full of good, innocent people, who have not known the way. It will be full of *unrepentant* sinners, who may have experienced "remorse" for their sins, but not godly sorrow which works repentance not to be repented of (II Cor. 7:10). There are many Judas Iscariots, who go out and hang

themselves! But nowhere in all the world of sinful, unrepentant men, is there peace. Many are like Saul who went to the witch of Endor, and here hear their doom declared.

Yes, everybody *talks* about sin. He may call "drunkeness" with the cover-up term, alcoholism. He is called by everyone but the Bible, and he who preaches and believes the Bible, an alcoholic, a man addicted to sexualism, a man or woman who is a victim of society! But in his deepest heart he is a liar! He deliberately says: God is *not* light, and there is darkness in God, too. He makes himself a "god" of his own imagination! Be not deceived, young people, God is not mocked. He stands back of the message which was declared unto you: *God* is light! God *is* light! God is *light*! With this God we have to do, and not with the lie of the sinner, who would speak of sin and cover it up, gloss it over with lying speech.

John knew such people in his day already. Yes, he knew that we are "by nature" inclined ever thus to speak of our sins. We deny them as did David for a season. Yes, then we "say" something about our sin. We say that we *have no sin*. We are already perfect, somehow. At least we blissfully are living in sweet (?) ignorance that to lust is sin. We never went beneath the surface a bit, and have not understood the cry of the Psalmist "...cleanse thou me from secret faults" (Psalm 19:12). Never have you and I then cried "who can understand his errors"! And then John thunders in our ears: you deceive yourselves, and the truth: God is light; God is light is not the ruling principle in your life! You then have never stood next to the Publican in the temple, and confessed in unison with him: God be merciful to me *the sinner!*

Yes, and John also knows another state of mind. It is that of us when we "say", when we merely allege something concerning our "sins". Then we look back across our twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, seventy, eighty years of our life, and we say: I have *not sinned* up to the present moment. I plead innocence. But the mouth of such is stopped before God by the spiritual nature of the law! In every syllable of it shines forth the truth, in indelible truth: God is light, is light. Of that truth God registers in every man conscience, which conscience-books will be opened when the entire world shall stand before the great white throne to be judged. That will be the self-vindication of God in all His holiness and righteousness and truth. God is light!

But if we are not in the class of those who merely "say" something about our sins, but humbly and truly "confess" them, all is different. The confessing saint really walks in the light, as God in Christ is light. Then we listen to what God says of us in our sins, and how He has come to save us, His people from our sins in JESUS! Immanuel God-with-us! God says: I am light. We say: Yes, Lord, we humbly adore thee, who are light and in whom is not darkness at all. We believe this message with the heart and confess it with our mouths. That Word is nigh to us, even in our hearts! Thou has translated us from the kingdom of darkness. We are light in the Lord! That is confession of faith. And there is no confession of sin, without confession of faith! Let this sink deep into your heart and into mine.

Yes, then we confess our sins: *root, branch and all.* Not a bit of piece-meal confession. Yes, we may start as did David with one sin. He says: Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight. Yes, yes, it was adultery and then murder. In that order. And the last sin was to cover up the first. It was a sin that would be punished in his house, and we heard the deep feeling of pain and guilt in David's outcry: O Absolom, my son, my son.... And no Joab will show us any pity.

But meanwhile everyone who confesses his sins is assured of forgiveness. Notice, we are to confess our "sins". Notice the plural. Sins refers to sins which we have done, which we can really remember and recount so very vividly. Many an elderly man or woman has spoken to me of their sins, sins of youth, which somehow pained them all through life. They had not really "confessed" them, so that they cried out, "O the blessedness of the man whose sins are covered and forgiven. Yes, covered by the blood of sprinkling, the blood of atonement. But when they saw that God is "faithful and just" in forgiving, they had peace. Yes, they say that forgiveness was not merely the washing away of sinful *acts*, but that it was also a forgiveness of the *sinful nature* against which we ever have to struggle till we die; then they had peace and cried out aloud upon their beds: O it is wonderful, it is wonderful, it is all of grace, which is far greater than all my sins. God is just in forgiving me in the blood of the Lamb of God. Hallelujah! And God is faithful He keeps and kept His word of the Gospel unto me in forgiving me. He does not ask payment twice.

Yes, Christ paid it all. And this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, like me! Sin is sin indeed. The Cross is real, it is real: the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sin. And the confessing sinner knows that God has cast his sins in the sea of everlasting forgetfulness. They will not ever be remembered against him anymore.

The former things will not be remembered anymore.

Yes, not even my sins.

YOUNG PEOPLE:

As the 1980 Convention at Hope College draws closer, we are to be reminded of the reason for this convention. We are coming together as covenant children of God with a common love to study and discuss God's Word. In order to come better prepared, we have had the discussion group outlines printed for your use. We would encourage you to study them so that we may have a more edifying discussion.

Yours in Christ,
Program Committee
1980 Convention

CHRISTIAN COURTESY

by Everett Buiter

I. What is Christian courtesty?
   A. What is courtesy?
      1. It is defined as curtsy or courteous behavior.
         a. Curtsy is an action which expresses deep respect by bodily action or gesture.
         b. Courteous behavior implies the state of having such manners as befit the court of a prince.
      2. However, today courtesy has spread out its meaning and it involves all sorts of manners which any man might have.
         a. It includes a graciously polite and respectful attitude towards the position or feelings of others.
         b. These manners must be performed to all those about us whether they are superior to us or inferior.
   B. What then is Christian courtesy?
      1. Does it differ from secular courtesy?
         a. Do Christians perform more courteous actions?
         b. Do the Christian deeds of courtesy come from the heart and the secular deeds of courtesy are only done for outward show?
      2. How does courtesy become Christian?
         a. Is our courtesy Christian before we are regenerated?
         b. Can we really show a graciously polite and respectful attitude towards someone else's position or feelings?
      3. Was Christ very courteous in His actions?
         a. What about His actions towards the scribes and Pharisees? (confer Matt. 23, Mark 7:5-13, Matt. 22:15-22)
         b. What about some of His actions to His own people and followers? (confer Luke 10:38-42, Matt. 15:21-28)
         c. Did not Christ show respect and was He not polite only to those who served Him?
         d. How must our courteous behavior be in comparison to Christ's?

II. What is the basis for our Christian courtesy?
   A. Must the Christian pattern his courtesy after the many manners of the secular realms?
      1. Must we confer with the books of proper behavior and courtesy?
      2. Must we base our courtesy upon the ideas and thoughts of Ann Landers or any other person who is an expert on proper behavior?
      3. Is it really important that the children learn the proper deeds of

courtesy while they are at home and in school?

B. Rather we must believe that the child of God must go to the Bible in order to see how his behavior must be.
   1. What does the Bible say?
      a. Concerning the bodily actions that we apply to courtesy or politeness the Bible has several instances where men performed courteous actions toward their friends or neighbors.
      b. Read Genesis 18:1-8 and see how Abraham was courteous.
      c. Read Genesis 19:1-3 and see how Lot was courteous.
      d. We also can read of rules for eating at a guest's table. (confer Proverbs 23:1, Luke 10:8, I Corinthians 10:27)
      e. We can also read in the Bible the different ways of greeting each other and the different salutations which are used. (confer Matt. 26:49, I Sam. 25:23, Mark 5:22, Gen. 19:2, Gen. 43:29, Luke 10:5, Ruth 2:4, and I Cor. 16:21)
      f. What must be our attitude towards all of these passages and is this enough that we do these outward acts only?
   2. There are also some good passages which might serve as good basis for all of our deeds of courtesy.
      a. We have Jesus' words in Matthew 13:12.
      b. We have Jesus' parable of the exaltation of the humble in Luke 14:7-11.
      c. There are also Christ's words in Matthew 5:38-47, which tell us to do good unto our neighbors and our enemies.
      d. There are Paul's words in Galatians 6:9-10 where we are admonished to do good to all men.
      e. There are many more texts but these texts are good foundations for all of our deeds of courtesy.
   3. But when all is said and done are not all of our acts of courtesy and politeness dependent upon the sum of the law and the prophets which Jesus gave to us in Matthew 22:37-40?
      a. If we are to show courtesy and respect towards others must we not first of all fear and love God?
      b. If we are to show courteous deeds to our neighbor must we not love him and esteem him better than ourself (Phil. 2:3, Eph. 5:21, I Peter 5:5)?
      c. Read I Peter 3:8-17 and you will see that love must first be present in a man if he is to show respect and do courtesy to others.
      d. Can we then do courteous things to others without loving that person, and also do the ungodly then perform true and genuine deeds of courtesy?
      e. Must we not be very careful to make sure that we examine our motives in our courteous actions?

III. Now we must take a look at our own deeds and see whether we need improvement.
   A. What about our actions toward those with whom we come in contact with?
      1. Do we as citizens show enough respect to our authorities?
         a. Do we respect our government because it is more powerful than we are or because we feel that it is instituted by God?
         b. Do we show enough respect to our parents, teachers, and ministers and how do we show courtesy to them?
      2. Does our courteous action to others proceed from a love and an esteeming of them as better and higher than we are?
         a. Do we show this courtesy to even our inferiors, i.e. younger brothers or sisters, friends that are not as talented, *etc.*?
         b. Or are our deeds of courtesy done so that we look good and virtuous to others?
      3. Do we consider our courteous actions as good works which please God?
   B. What improvements can we make in our lives?
      1. Must we be more friendly to strangers?
         a. Do we do as we are commanded in Leviticus 19:34, "But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God."
         b. Must we not work more on meeting and greeting strangers?
      2. Must we not show more respect to the elderly?
         a. I think that we as young people can visit the elderly more often.
         b. We can also go to them with questions so that we might obtain some wisdom from them.

CONFESSION OF SIN

by Jon D. Smith

I. Essential Material for Consideration
   A. Scripture
      1. Old Testament — Prov. 28:13, Ps. 51:1-5
      2. New Testament — I John 1:9, James 5:16, Matt. 5:23,24
      3. Examples of: II Samuel 12:13, Luke 5:8, Luke 15:18
   B. Reformed Confessions
      1. Heidelberg Catechism — Lord's Day LI
      2. Canons of Dort — Fifth Head, Article 5
      3. Westminster Confession — Chapter XV

II. What is confession of sin?
  A. First, we must define sin.
    1. Sin can be defined as "The transgression of the law"—I John 3:4.
      a. We sin whenever we do not perfectly perform the law of God.
      b. We sin because we are by nature sinners.
    2. Sin, from another perspective, is "missing the mark".
      a. We sin when we do not in every thought, word, or deed hit the mark of God's glory.
      b. We always sin because we are by nature sinners and by nature aim at our own glory not God's.
  B. Secondly, we can now define confession.
    1. Confession in its root meaning has the verbal idea of "to speak the same thing".
      a. It means in its verb form "to assent, to agree with".
      b. And for our specific topic it means to assent that sin is sin.
    2. Confession inherently has the idea of agreeing *with*.
      a. We confess our sin first of all to God, i.e., we agree with God that sin is sin.
        1) Because we first confess to God our sins, we confess to ourselves that we have transgressed God's law.
        2) And also because we confess to God, we confess to other believers that we are sinners and do not glorify God in all that we do.
      b. This idea of "agreeing with" includes more than a mere stating of agreement with God.
        1) To simply say, "I am a sinner and I have sinned" is not enough.
        2) Confession of sin also includes the forsaking of sin. Cf. Proverbs 28:13.

III. The Ground for Confession of Sin
  A. Negatively, it is not out of anything good in ourselves.
    1. We are by nature sinners and do not want to confess our sins.
    2. It is impossible in ourselves to do any good thing even to confess our sins.
  B. Positively, the ground is God's sovereign salvation of His people.
    1. God from before the foundation of the world elected His people in Christ to be a holy people.
    2. This salvation was objectively realized on the cross of Calvary.
    3. This salvation is made manifest in the elect by the work of the Holy Spirit as we are daily conformed to the image of Christ.
    4. Therefore we confess our sins as the result of God's work in us.

IV. The Benefit of Confessing our Sins.
  A. Negatively, confession of sin is not a condition that man must meet in

order to be saved or to have fellowship with God.

1. God does not save in response to our works.
2. But God has given us a certain way to walk outside of which none are saved. This way includes confession of sin.

B. Positively

1. We confess our sins to God with the result that we *consciously* are forgiven and cleansed from all unrighteousness.
2. We confess our sins to each other so that we are all encouraged in the faith.
   a. Other saints are able to help us bear our burdens and to pray that God will strengthen us in our weaknesses.
   b. When sins that have caused a break in fellowship with other believers are confessed the bond of fellowship is renewed.

V. Pertinent Questions

A. What is the relationship between confession of sins and our salvation?
B. Is there true confession of sin without turning from sin? Cf. Prov. 28:13.
C. When should public confession of sin be made?
D. Sould we confess that we are by nature sinners or just particular sins or both?
E. What happens if a Christian does not confess his sins?
F. Can we worship God properly and at the same time not be reconciled with a brother? Cf. Matt. 5:23,24.
G. What can we say in refutation of the Roman Catholic doctrine of auricular confession?

THE LITURGY OF OUR CHURCHES

by Deane Wassink

I. The Meaning of "liturgy".

A. Definition.

1. Webster: a rite or body of rites prescribed for public worship.
2. We might explain it this way: the liturgy consists of all the parts of our public worship service as well as the particular position of each part in the whole service.

B. Thus the liturgy includes the following:

1. The Salutation and Benediction.
2. The congregational singing.
3. The congregational prayer.
4. The sermon.
5. The special forms for worship.

a. The Baptism Form.
b. The Form for the Administration of the Lord's Supper.
c. The Form for Excommunication.
d. The Form for Ordination.
e. The Form for Marriage, etc.

6. Other aspects of the worship service such as the use of the King James version of the Bible, the use of organs in the church, etc.

II. The Purpose of the liturgy.

A. The purpose of all the liturgy is to aid the congregation in its worship of God.

1. To worship God is to give honor, reverence and praise to Him both for who He is, and what He has done.
   a. Thus we worship God as the Sovereign creator and sustainer of the heavens and the earth.
   b. But, we also worship God as the God of our salvation in Christ.
2. Notice that *God* is the center of worship.
   a. Man with his talents and experiences is not to be the object or the center of worship.
   b. Instead God alone is to be worshipped.

B. The liturgy helps to achieve the purpose in two ways.

1. It achieves the purpose by the orderliness in which the service is conducted. (Read I Corinthians 14:26-40)
2. It achieves the purpose by the fact that the congregation is given a a familiar and consistent mode for the expression of its worship.
   a. How does the "order of events" in the worship service contribute to this?
   b. Sometimes it seems that our liturgy has become so familiar that we no longer pay attention to what is being done, why it is done, or what it means. What should be done about this?
      1) Should *we* change?
      2) Should we change the liturgy?
         a) Should we keep changing it to keep it fresh?
         b) Should we be innovative like many of the churches around us?

III. Particular elements of the liturgy.

A. The Sermon.

1. In the liturgy of the Church it is not the content of the sermon, but its position and role in the whole service that is important.
2. The sermon is not only the longest, but also the central part of our worship service.
   a. Why does it have such an important place?
   b. In view of the purpose of the liturgy should we shorten the sermons or give them a less significant role?
   c. How do things like responsive readings, special numbers, films,

etc., during a church service affect the sermon or the purpose of the whole liturgy?

B. The Congregational Singing.
   1. Congregational singing likewise plays an important role in our worship services. Why?
   2. Now and then in our churches there is discussion about whether or not we should sing hymns during the official worship service. You discuss it. Here are some questions to help you.
      a. Our Psalter numbers are God-centered; most hymns are man-centered; which best fits the purpose of the worship service?
      b. What benefits would there be to add hymns to our Psalter numbers?
      c. What are the practical problems of gathering and preparing a selection of hymns for our worship services?

C. The list of subjects for discussion is limited only by the number of aspects to the liturgy. Rather than develop additional subjects in detail, here is a list of topics for further discussion.
   1. The pros and cons of the King James version of the Bible.
   2. The importance and necessity of our forms (including the Marriage Form!!!)
   3. The significance of the salutation and benediction in the worship serivce.
   4. The principles behind the elders shaking the hand of the minister after the service, and the elders (and deacons?) sitting separate from the congregation.

Current Events and Comments

SPIRITUAL NUMBNESS

by Randy Groenendyk

Last winter, a group of 50 leading Protestant and Roman Catholic scholars met at an interdenominational meeting on the campus of the University of Notre Dame. Their major conclusions were reported in a one-column article in the Grand Rapids *Press*.

Now, I would expect that few of us ever pay much attention to the reports which come out of these theological councils, since they often only urge the church to work harder in the world for social and political reform.

However, those theologians correctly pinpointed a major problem in the church world today—a problem which even has infected our Protestant Reformed churches.

The problem those 50 scholars referred to was that of spiritual lukewarmness, or in their words, "spiritual numbness." It is a problem which affects the lives of every single one of us, and in my opinion, might just be the biggest problem facing our churches today.

The problem of spiritual lukewarmness has not sprung up overnight, however. In fact, it has plagued the Church for a long, long time.

Revelation 3 refers to the classic example of spiritual numbness—the church at Laodicea. Verse 15 tells us that the church there was "neither cold nor hot," but rather, lukewarm.

I think the most striking aspect of the sad story of the Laodicean church is that, in some ways, it could be *our* story.

The Laodiceans were a rich people. Revelation 3:17 paints for us a picture of how many Laodiceans undoubtedly felt about themselves: "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing." In fact, they were so rich that when the city was leveled by an earthquake in 60 AD, they were able to rebuild the town entirely out of their own personal finances.

Like the Laodiceans, we, too, are a rich people. We have beautiful houses, cars, boats, stereos, and hundreds of other possessions which literally 90% of the rest of the people in this world do not have. In comparison to the rest of the world, we are fabulously well off.

Unfortunately, at times we are like the Laodiceans in another respect: spiritual likewarmness. Like them, we are sometimes neither cold nor hot—we are lukewarm.

With all of our material possessions and all of this world's pleasures and amusements, we often lose our zeal for the cause of God. We get so caught up in our work, our entertainment, our personal lives, that we have neither the time nor desire to seek first the Kingdom of God.

The result is that even though we may appear to be living a proper Christian life, our spiritual activities mean very little to us. We go through the motions of being a Christian, but our hearts just aren't in what we do.

We sit in the pew on Sunday, but don't pay very close attention to the sermon. We attend Young People's Society, but don't give much thought to the discussion.

For some reason, reading the Bible doesn't excite us anymore. Our prayers turn into a long recitation of our problems and desires. In short, our Christianity sometimes seems to consist of nothing more than a few ritualistic spiritual exercises.

And so, we drift from week to week in the sea of lukewarmness. Oh, every once in a while we may hear an inspiring sermon and pledge to be better Christians, but we soon forget and life goes on as usual. We are trapped in the web of spiritual apathy and just can't seem to get out of it.

What's more, our spiritual lukewarmness is no small sin in the eyes of

God, as we are actually rebelling against our Lord and Master. As the scholars who met at Notre Dame put it, we are shaking our fist in the face of God. We are telling our Redeemer that our salvation doesn't mean very much to us, and that we really don't care about serving Him.

And what is God's reaction to people who serve Him only half-heartedly? We read in Revelation 3:16 that God responded to the lukewarmness of the Laodiceans by saying, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Clearly, spiritual lukewarmness is an abomination unto the Almighty God.

The question we must ask ourselves is, what can we do about the problem of spiritual lukewarmness? To start, we must recognize that it is a problem which afflicts *our* churches and *our* lives. It certainly is not confined only to other churches and other people's lives.

Second—and this is the hard part—we must learn to put aside our driving pursuit of worldly possessions and happiness and focus in on serving God with zeal and enthusiasm.

To be sure, this is easier said than done, and we certainly cannot accomplish this change on our own. Throwing off the cloak of lukewarmness requires prayer and hard work, but in the end, only God can rekindle in our hearts the strong and infectious desire to serve Him. We are rescued from the sin of spiritual sleepiness only by His grace.

Yes, it is a hard fight, especially in this age of unparalleled wealth, pleasure, and temptation. Yet it is a war which all Christians are called upon to wage. For if we give in to the pervasive mood of spiritual lukewarmness, we will be just as repugnant to God as the Laodiceans were, and He will reject us just as He rejected them.

OPEN LETTER

Dear Young People,

It is late in the night and very quiet after the unwinding of another busy day. But regardless of the time, I would like to sit down and talk with all of you.

Very often you are told and reminded that what you are doing, you should not be doing. What you say, you should not be saying, and you don't say what

you should be saying. Young people, I'm not here for those reasons. I want to sit down and share some other important thoughts with you.

I want you to be aware of my appreciation for all the hard work I see taking place. I am impressed with the amount of time you put into the monthly singspirations. I know that it requires much work, time, and thought on your part. I see you striving for creativeness and originality in these events.

I am overwhelmed too, by the intense amount of effort you put forth in organizing an annual PRYPC. I have had opportunities in viewing this while spending those times with you. I realize that planning a successful convention takes an incredible amount of energy. These conventions also offered me an opportunity to meet many of you and learn more about you. You expressed sincere care and concern about many aspects of your lives both in regards to the present and also to the future. The participation, attention, and interest at these events were commendable and the experience indeed a pleasant one. At times, your enthusiasm almost seemed inexhaustible!

I also feel you deserve a public note of thanks for the monthly printing of this magazine, *The Beacon Lights*. From personal past experience I am acquainted with what a time consuming project this is. It can be very difficult, frustrating, and yes, somewhat unrewarding. Finding topics and authors to write the proposed articles is not a simple, quick, or easy task. I realize also that not only must you perform in accordance with a schedule, but you also depend on many others to meet with your schedule. If the schedule is not met, it poses another problem for you.

Throughout the entire year, I also have observed and read about countless activities being sponsored by both our individual societies and also by the Federation Board. That too, demands work and organization. And, at the same time, it offers a healthy means of communication between one another. In regards to all of this, I would like to mention the positive feeling it brings to find such an exchange of concern shown. It is encouraging to see you working together, sharing your happiness, and being a supportive system for each other during the trials and troubles that you encounter. I hope you protect, cherish, and continue to develop these delicate qualities because they are of significant spiritual value!

I wonder if perhaps we as adults are too eager to expound on our own negative feelings and as a result we do not offer enough positive reinforcement. We often leave compliments and expressions of thanks unsaid. I do believe and must confess that at times we tend to underestimate the credibility that you deserve. These are jobs well done and I personally encourage you to keep up the good work. You truly are a fine group of young people and you are greatly appreciated. In conclusion, I ask that you please except my apologies for this letter which has been so long overdue.

Thank You Kindly,
RB

ADMONISHINGS

by Ken Hanko

Will you ask why I write about admonishing?

I will reply that the answer is very simple: you and I don't admonish as we ought. Sometimes we laugh at sin. Sometimes we pretend that we have not heard it or seen it. At best (and that's not very good), we turn our backs and walk away. Very seldom do we admonish against sin.

But God demands it! In Matthew 18:15, Jesus says to us, "If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee thou hast gained thy brother." And in Ezekiel 33:8, 9, God says to the prophet, "When I say unto the wicked, O wicked man, thou shalt surely die; if thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless, if thou warn the wicked of his way to turn from it; if he do not turn from his way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul." It is so important to admonish our brother, that if we fail to do it, we bear responsibility for that man's punishment. Or, to put it very simply, if we do not admonish sinners, we sin, and become worthy of punishment.

But even faced with the command of God, and this warning, how often do we admonish? Too often we are afraid that we will be reminded of our own sins and weaknesses. Too often we are afraid that our friends will hate us, that they will no longer want us to be with them. So we ignore sin, turn our backs to it, or treat it as if it didn't exist.

We must not forget that we, by the grace of God, will be and must be the means whereby the relationship of love between brothers is restored. If our brother walks in sin, can we have true fellowship with him? If our brother walks in sin, can the bond of love between us be whole?

But you will say, what if that sinner is not my brother? Our duty is the same. Look again at Ezekiel 33. The sinner may indeed die in his iniquity, but if we have not warned him, his blood is required at our hand.

So far I have considered admonishing only as a duty, a command of God. And it may well seem an odious duty: it is, after all, a very difficult thing to do, and it may not be very pleasant either. But it ought not be so. We should find joy in it, for we do it for love's sake; first of all, of course, for the love of God, but also for the love of our brother.

We admonish because we love God. We want to please God and we long to serve Him. We please and serve Him only by obeying Him. Therefore, when He commands us to admonish, we obey in love, and we rejoice in obeying. Secondly, we admonish because we cannot bear to see God's name dishonored.

When a man sins we are horrified. We see that the God whom we love is not being praised as He ought to be praised, and as we want Him to be praised. We love Him so much that we cannot keep silent.

We admonish also because we love the sinner. Our love, as I Corinthians 13 says, cannot rejoice in another's iniquity. Rather we worry about the spiritual welfare of the sinner. We know that when he sins he hurts himself, and, because of our love for him, we do not want that. We want him to know God's favor, not His anger. We want him to have the consciousness of God's love; for we know that without that consciousness he is utterly miserable.

There is yet one more requirement. We must be humble when we admonish. We may not remind a man of his sin because we are angry with him. We may not try to get his goat or rouse his anger because we bear a grudge against him. We may not taunt him with his sin because we want to start a fight. Neither may we be proud. We may not exalt ourselves at his expense. We may not shame him before others. We may not pretend that we have some kind of authority over him. God forbid that we admonish, thinking ourselves in any way better than him.

We must be humble. "If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem the other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself lest thou also be tempted. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself." When we admonish we remember that we also are sinners. In fact, because we know our own secret sins and our own heart, and not his, we esteem him better than ourselves. We look on ourselves as greater sinners than he. And we look to his things rather than to our own. All our desires and feelings are unimportant to us. We forget ourselves. We don't care that what we must do is hard for us. We don't care if we are reminded of our own sins. We don't care if our pride is hurt. We care only for the sinner, only for his desires and feelings and needs. We are so wrapped up in serving him that we forget ourselves.

Of course, this is difficult. It is not easy to admonish, and it is not easy to do it humbly and in love. That doesn't matter. God and our love, both for God and for the sinner, demand it. Perhaps we will find it easier to admonish if we remember these things.

In conclusion let's turn to Psalm 141:5. David prays there: "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." If our brother receive us thus, what greater joy can we have? We have gained a brother.

May God give us grace to be faithful to Him, to love as we ought, and to seek our brother's welfare before our own, to His glory.

Truth vs. Error

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

TELL IT LIKE IT IS

First, read the article straight through without pausing at reference points; then go back, reread and look up the references.

The man on the street likes to claim, I "tell it like it is!" As an old cartoon character used to say, "Interesting, if true!" But *is* it true? [1] We as Christians are bound to deny that it is, if the man is to be set straight. For it's false. The statement assumes that man's mind is the measure of all things. [2] Ayn Rand, a contemporary atheist authoress, is bold to allot this limitless capacity to the human mind. [3] Dr. H. Bavinck discusses this fantasy of the ultimacy of man's mind [4] under his third point on the doctrine of *God's Incomprehensibility*. The assumption involved in this boast is that man, whether fallen or not, knows innately and autonomously. [5] In this way, that is, independently of God, he knows, whatever there is to know. Man can, by direct study of the world and of himself, understand all things, and see them as they are. [6] He then has the native ability to "tell it like it is." Oh, it's true that some men deliberately lie and misrepresent; but they are just as capable of telling it "like it is." They can, if they want to, and occasionally they do, too. So the man on the street thinks.

But this is all wrong. It is wrong, not in harmony with reality, for a man to assume that he is his own standard, or that "man is the measure of all things." For this is to assume that man is god. This is the devilish philosophy, "Ye shall be as God, knowing (as He does, with absolute comprehension in knowledge) good and evil." The trouble is, you see, that man does not even know *what* it is, let alone *how* "it" is; now can he make even a stab at determining what it *ought* to be. For, as every Christian knows, by and since the Fall, man's understanding was darkened, [7] so that the world, through its wisdom (a form of ignorance) knew not God. [8] So then, man ever since his fall has been

inclined to tell it every which way but as it is, and, as a matter of fact, is incapable of telling it as it is. Nor has he "the foggiest" of what it ought to be.

How then can the unbeliever rationally speak of it-ness or is-ness? Really he can not; for he is forever taking it for granted that, whatever "it" happens to be, *it is*, whether or not God is, whether or not He made all the world, and whether or not He has interpreted all He has made. [9] Whereas, if we as Christians take anything for granted, or lay anything down as our beginning principle, it is that God is, [10] that He created the universe and that He has interpreted all reality, including himself. [11] We need no "proof" or confirmation of these truths to establish our faith. We *believe* them. [12] They are *always* at the back of, or at the forefront of, our minds. God has spoken! Deep down in the ears of our hearts we have heard God speak from and in His own Word written. That's it. His inscripturated Word is enough for us. [13]

The unbeliever, however, assumes that he knows the real world and that he interprets it rightly. He wants to be creatively constructive in his thinking. [14] He refuses, [15] as the Christian always aims, to be receptively reconstructive of God's thoughts. He does not, as the Christian, think God's thoughts after Him. This is then to think, "I shall be as God; I *am* as God!" He absolutely and independently knows what is and what ought to be by his own unaided mind and self-illumined reason. [16]

In all honesty (and is man willing to be that? is he capable of that?), man must say, I tell it like I think, or imagine it is; like I hope it is; like I'd like it to be, but of course, I can't be sure. I think possibly I'm OK and possibly you're OK. But then possibly I'm not OK, and possibly you're not OK. Perhaps if we reason together amicably, we can mutually say more: *probably* I'm OK and *probably* you're OK. Of course, this also implies I'm probably *not* OK, and *you're* probably *not* OK! But as reason infers the human mind's facility to substantiate and confirm its own propositions, we ought next to be able to say, or to arrive at saying, I am actually OK and you are actually OK. But don't forget that originitive reason sees this as only a fifty-to-fifty chance of being so. There is also the fifty-to-fifty chance that it is not so, that you are actually *not* OK and that I am actually *not* OK. [17]

This is all an "out in the blue" line of reasoning (the only possible line of thought for an unbeliever). It has as much chance of proving that nothing is as of proving that something is. How may there then be any certainty that anything is? Impossible to say, if man "knows" in and of himself. Man's automatic, self-wind mind is like a ball of mud floating on a shoreless, bottomless sea of irrationality.

But the Christian, and only the Christian, is able to "tell it like it is." For he alone lays it down as the fundamental position of truth that the God revealed in scripture, the true and triune Jehovah, is the only living God. He alone, as a Christian, lays it down that this God created the heavens and the earth [18] and all creaturely reality, visible and invisible. He alone takes the position that the triune God has created all the facts of reality and has given meaning to all the facts by placing on them His own interpretation. This divine

interpretation of the Creator, of His creation, of man the crown of His creation, is found only in the scriptures. [19] There in the Bible God has revealed the truth concerning himself, His world, His works, the truth concerning man's fall and man's redemption.

As a Christian, the Bible is at the bottom of all my thinking, my affirming, declaring and asserting. That means I think, reason, state and conclude with the triune God and His creation as my frame of reference. It means that I take God's interpretation of all things as my point of reference. [20] From there I make my going out and my coming in. I then see things, not hazily, in a vacuum, [21] but as God made them and interpreted them. I see them as they really are, as God has declared them to be in His infallible Word. I look not at the "real world" of the unbeliever, which spins in the void, but at the real world environed by the true and living God and underscored by His scripture revelation. [22]

On that basis, I, and all Christians with me, "tell it like it is." For then we tell it like God has made it to be and says it is. [23] That is the only way possible to "tell it like it is." [24] That is the only way to know "up" from "down", right from wrong, God from devil, and heaven from hell. There stand, [25] and then tell it like it is! [26]

1 Rom. 3:4a
2 Job 11:9,7-8
3 Job 12:2
4 Isa. 5:21
5 Job 15:8
6 Ct. Job 37:5
7 Eph. 4:8
8 I Cor. 1:21, ASV.
9 Psm. 10:4
10 Heb. 11:6
11 Cp., e.g., The Psalms.
12 Heb. 11:1-3
13 Lk. 1:38b
14 Isa. 14:13-14
15 Jer. 13:10
16 Isa. 10:13a.b.
17 Eccles. 6:12
18 Jer. 10:10,12
19 Gen. 1-2
20 Col. 1:16-19; 2:3
21 Col. 2:8
22 Isa. 8:20
23 Jer. 2:10, 11, 5
24 John 5:39
25 I Cor. 16:13
26 Mark 5:19-20

The Alumni Choir has cassette tapes of its December 16 program available. Send $2.00 to:

Tape Ministry
First Prot. Ref. Church
1145 Franklin St.
Grand Rapids, MI 49507

CONVENTION 1980

In the second to the last week of July the 40th annual Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention will be held. This year it is hosted by our Hope Church in Walker, Michigan, on the campus of Hope College. The campus is located in Holland, Michigan. It provides excellent facilities for all of our needs. The recreation facilities are all in new condition. They include bowling, tennis, volleyball, basketball, and more. There are also many excellent places for us to hold all of our meetings. The food, which in the past left a little to be desired, is also very good.

The convention has a couple of new ideas this year which are added for our spiritual edification. A devotional period has been set up for all between 11:30 P.M. and 12:15 A.M. We have also added an extra speech giving us four speeches instead of the usual three.

The speeches will follow our theme which is:

Appreciating Our Reformed Faith

1. Foundation of Our Faith
2. Development of the Truth
3. Admonition to Adhere to the Truth
4. Our Walk

Everybody is invited to attend these speeches and the activities planned for the evening. These activities include swimming, a make your own sundae party, and others. A nominal fee will be charged by the college for these activities.

The topics for the discussion groups held during the day have been outlined by our seminarians. Thank you seminarians.

1. "Christian Courtesy" by Everett Buiter
2. "Prayer" by Jon Smith
3. "Liturgy" by Deane Wassink

On Tuesday we will be making a trip to Lake Michigan. We will be spending most of the day here. So hope that it is sunny.

A word about rules to the conventioneers and to their parents. We are Christian young people. Therefore, we must walk in this light. Rules are not made to be broken either directly or indirectly. Deliberate breaking of posted rules will be a good way for the discipline committee to send you home early. Parents, you have signed the pre-registration form which to us shows that you support these rules. Please impress this in your children before they come to the convention. The convention has been set up for the enjoyment of the young people. Let's keep it this way. We can learn and have fun at the same time. Don't misuse these privileges.

See you all in July!

Things to bring to the 1980 Convention:

1. Bible, pen, paper.
2. Sleeping bag, sheets, blankets, pillowcase—beds do not have service, just a bare mattress.
3. Towels—more than one, soap.
4. Racketball equipment—courts are available for a fee.
5. Bathing suit and cap if hair is long. Cut-offs are not allowed.
6. Ball glove.

NEWS From, For, and About Our Churches

by Linda Kaiser

BIRTHS

Mr. & Mrs. Ed Bruinsma, Jr. of Loveland were blessed with twin sons, Chad Alan and Jared David, on April 3.

We extend congratulations to Mr. & Mrs. Ken Velthouse of First in the birth of Mark David on April 26; and Mr. & Mrs. Steven Key in the birth of Michelle Joy on April 28.

Mr. & Mrs. George Tolsma of Edmonton were blessed in the birth of a daughter, Lisa Lynn.

Mr. & Mrs. John Wierenga of Edmonton rejoice in the birth of a daughter, Melanie.

Mr. & Mrs. William De Jong of South Holland were blessed with the birth of a son, Paul William.

Mr. & Mrs. Ade Lenting of South Holland rejoice in the birth of a son, Philip Andrew.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Carol Tolsma and Jackie Zylstra of Edmonton make public profession of faith on February 24.

Ken Hanko made public profession of his faith on April 13 in Hope.

MARRIAGES

Frank Van Baren and Sharon Haak were united in the bond of holy marriage on April 11 in South Holland.

The marriage of Mark Dykstra and Kim Miedema was solemnized at our Hudsonville Church on April 17.

The wedding of Greg Feenstra and Nancy Looyenga was solemnized in First Church on May 16.

MEMBERSHIP

The consistory of First has received the membership of Mrs. Michael (Nell) Phillips and Miss Ann Veldman from the Christian Reformation Church.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES

An Easter Singspiration was held at Hudsonville on April 6. There was a children's number and a trumpet solo.

The young people of South Holland sponsored a roller skating party on April 7.

Edgerton Young People's Society sponsored the Spring Banquet. It was held at the Blue Mound Inn on April 22. Rev. Slopsema spoke on "Christian Fellowship".

A Pancake Breakfast and Car Wash was held on May 17, sponsored by Hudsonville Jr. & Sr. Societies. Proceeds for the 1980 Convention.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

The Loveland choir presented a program on April 6.

The Choral Society of South Holland held a Singspiration on April 13.

Faith Choral Society gave a concert on April 27.

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