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Our Aim

BEACON LIGHTS HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AS A YOUNG PEOPLE'S MAGAZINE. WE ARE INTERESTED IN PROMOTING UNITY AMONG PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUNG PEOPLE AND TO ACT AS A MEDIUM THROUGH WHICH THEY CAN VOICE THEIR OPINIONS AND IDEAS. LATELY BEACON LIGHTS HAS ALSO SERVED AS A CONNECTING LINK BETWEEN THE CHURCH ON THE HOME FRONT AND SCATTERED POINTS OVER THE GLOBE. WE ARE ANXIOUS TO CONTINUE IN THAT CAPACITY AND TO BECOME A VITAL FACTOR IN OUR CHURCH LIFE. ANY SUGGESTIONS, IDEAS OR CRITICISM IS ALWAYS APPRECIATED.

MAKE BEACON LIGHTS YOUR MAGAZINE!
Priority—again and again we, who live in the world of today hear this term expressed, or see it appearing on the printed page.

The present priorities which the government has laid on countless articles limits me on every hand. They even make it difficult for me to procure lumber to use for a temporary platform when a program is to be rendered in my church.

Priority—just what does the term mean? Turning to my dictionary I am informed that a priority is the state of being first in rank, first in time or place. It is the first claim anyone may have upon something.

My government lays the first claim upon most of the produce of this rich nation for the purpose of setting forth the war effort; or, to put it in terms of an everyday expression: "to win the war." My government has the right to do this for she has the authority. When she therefore considers her needs for different materials greater than mine, she places a priority rating upon the same.

Speaking of priorities, I wonder, do we ever realize the tremendous significance of the great spiritual priority, or first claim, which God has placed upon His children? Suppose we think on that fact for a few moments.

The first question which immediately comes up in my mind is: How do I know that God lays first claim upon all I possess and all which I undertake to do? If I would learn the priority ratings of my government, I would naturally go to the authorities at Washington, D.C. The same is true if I would learn of the claims which God makes upon me. I must have an authentic word from Him. I must learn from Him what He demands of me. He places within me the knowledge of His demands through His Spirit by means of His own Word concerning Himself, in respect to me. I must be careful to investigate only that Word, since no other source will do.

— 8 —
Now what does that Word tell me concerning God and His demands in respect to me? It tells me that God's demand is that I, as His creature, devote and dedicate all my time and all my talents to His service exclusively. I must understand clearly He must receive first place in my life, for again and again His Word comes to me with the injunction: Me first.

Why must God be first, and why must I spend all my strength and talents in His service? He is God. He is dependent upon nor subject to anyone. Beside Him there is found no one who is worthy to receive glory and honor, for He is the perfectly holy and righteous One. There is no one that can compare to Him in heaven or upon the earth. He is the source of all things and in Him we live and move and have our being.

Now this Lord has created all things with a very definite purpose, namely: to glorify Himself. Even as our government is putting forth all its effort to become victorious in this war, so also God has created all things to serve the glory of His thrice holy name. And as far as God is concerned there will be no question of it whether or not He will realize His purpose with all things, for He is God.

This fact therefore; that God lays first claim to all I possess and all I do, limits me on every hand. It means that I may not, even for one single moment, serve myself. I may not serve man, but God, and God only.

This demand of God coming to me; reveals to me that I by nature have not the slightest desire to live unto Him, and dedicate my all to His service. I seek myself and give myself a priority rating of the very highest possible degree.

By the grace of God, however: things take a tremendous change in my life and in the lives of other of God's children. By that mighty grace of God we principally desire to conform to the priority of God's claim, not because we are afraid of the consequences involved if we do not live solely unto Him, but because the light of God has been shed abroad in our hearts, which makes us henceforth sincerely willing to live unto Him.

Notice, I stated that we principally desire to conform to the priority of God's claim. We are often inclined to bend away from the way of God's good commandments in respect to us. Oh, if we only place ourselves before the definite question: How often do I place first things first in my life?, we must arrive at the conclusion that we fall far short of our calling. Why do we go about our daily toils filled with zeal and enthusiasm perhaps? Is it because we are filled with zeal for God to do
things with all our might? When we do different things, just why do we do them? For God's sake. Perhaps we can find a hundred other more important things to do, than do what God demands. This is often true when we must prepare for a recitation in the catechism classroom; when we must contribute to a worthy cause, or the like. We ourselves know in which ways we fall short.

Now what shall we do about it? Shall we bemoan this sad condition, and make up our minds things are once this way, and perhaps cannot be changed? You, dear reader, know as well as I do, that there are people, also in the realm of the church who always are attempting to break down, but you will never find them spending their efforts in building up. They always regret that certain conditions exist, but they will never make the slightest move to correct those faulty conditions.

Let us, also as Protestant Reformed young people, not let this be said of us that we are always negative and never positive; breaking down, but never building up. On the contrary, let us try to overcome the inclination to not place first things first, and let us prayerfully resolve henceforth to try to realize our responsibilities to God. Let us be instructed in His Word, learning to know His claims in respect to us. Then, I'm sure, we will live more and more in harmony with our solemn calling to place God first in all that we do, and thus show forth the praises of Him who called us from darkness into His light.

A Message
To Our Young People!

* * * * *

Beacon Lights is YOUR Magazine

There are at least 500 Protestant Reformed families who do not receive Beacon Lights.

What are YOU doing about it?

Beacon Lights was started with an Open Forum Department. Thus far only one contribution has been received. How's about writing a letter to the Open Forum Department?
To us the dates 1924-1944 suggest two decades of the existence of our Protestant Ref. Churches.

True, the temporary organization into what was called the Protesting Christian Ref. Churches did not take place until January 27, 1925, and the final organization under the present name did not take place until November, 1926. Yet 1924 lives in our memories as the memorable year of our birth. This was the year in which the Synod of the Christian Ref. Churches, meeting in July, adopted the Three Points which became the occasion for the separation. And on December 12, of this same year the consistory of the Eastern Ave. Church was deposed from office, and its pastor, the Rev. H. Hoeksema was suspended, marking the beginning of our separate existence as Protestant Reformed Churches.

Twenty years have elapsed. We now number twenty three churches, served by the same number of ordained ministers. All but two of these ministers were prepared by our own Theological School. The two who are the exception have served during all these years as professors in our school. One minister, the late Rev. W. Verhil, was taken away by death almost a year ago. Twelve of the twenty three churches belong to Classis East, which represents the churches of Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin. While eleven churches reside under Classis West, consisting of the churches of Iowa, Minnesota, Montana and California.

Twenty years. During that time many of the charter members of our Churches, who helped to organize our congregations in their stand for the truth, have passed on into eternity. And practically a new generation has arisen, which can cherish the fact that it was reared in the truth of God's sovereign grace. Many of them are now members of our young people's societies and readers of Beacon Lights.

We do well to make this a year
of commemoration. Those who took an active part in the history-making events of those first years, as well as those who were young people at that time may well refresh their memories on the events as they were enacted. Those who have made acquaintance with this history since that time may well become better acquainted with it.

This is a good time for our societies to make a study of the error of the Three Points and the positive stand of our Churches against it. We may have done this before, yet a thorough review will serve to strengthen our convictions and help us realize more fully why we are Protestant Reformed. Some of our societies are already doing this: their example is worth following.

It is our task to build on the foundation laid by our fathers and to carry on where they leave off. Our duty to be faithful to the charge entrusted to us as we face the future.

That also is an important part of our work of holding the home front. Even the home front knows of no time for relaxation, tolerates no retreat.

* * * * *

**Jesus the Christ**

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

On the basis of this confession Peter was declared blessed by his Lord. For flesh and blood could not possibly have revealed this unto him, but only his Father Who is in heaven.

Some years before this old Simeon gave up his vigil in the house of God, to die in peace, for when they brought the babe Jesus into the temple his age-bedimmed, yet Spirit-enlightened eyes beheld the Lord's Christ. Simeon represented the hope of all the believers of the old dispensation, for they all had longed to see His day, according to the promise of His coming.

And ever after the Word of God has rung true in the hearts of the believers: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved. For salvation is in Christ, and faith is the living bond whereby we are united to Christ and receive all His benefits from Him. "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that (faith) is not of you, it is a gift of God." Eph. 2:8. Therefore "whosoever believes that.
Jesus is the Christ is born of God.” I John 5:1. And “who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denies the Father and the Son.” I John 2:22.

Blessed are they that make this good confession. Whether in the assembly of the believers or in the midst of the world, whether at home or in the armed forces, on land, or sea, or in the air, they know and experience this blessedness.

Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. Jesus is His personal name, as He was named by the angel before His birth, and as He was known and spoken of by friends and acquaintances while He walked among us. Even that name has the distinction that it fully describes Him as He actually is in all His life, His calling, His walk and His work. He is always and forever Jesus, “Jehovah-salvation,” in Whom Jehovah appears to us as the God of our salvation. Jesus is the name that refers to His person, but Christ is His title, which refers to His office. He is Jesus, the Christ. For He has a work to perform. Not by a personal choice, nor by the appointment of man, but by the eternal calling of God to be Servant in God's House to do the work which God appoints Him to do. His official title, the Christ, sets Him apart as the Servant of God par excellence, the one and only Servant Who is qualified and Who also finishes all the work that is to be done in God's Temple. He is the Anointed One, ordained of God and qualified by the Holy Spirit to be God's eternal Prophet, and at the same time God's eternal High priest, and likewise God's eternal King, God's Servant, the Lord's Christ.

His work is to glorify the Father through the salvation of His Church, since God has willed to realize the highest glory of His Name by taking unto Himself a people which He has chosen from eternity. Christ gathers that Church. He came into our flesh to reveal unto us the Father, to lay down His life for His sheep, and to grind the head of the Serpent under His heel. He broke the power of sin and death, and opened the way into glory. He suffered and died, is risen, and is received up into heaven.

God has exalted Him at His own right hand as Lord of heaven and earth.

The Lord unto His Christ hath said,

Sit Thou at My right hand
Until I make Thy enemies
Submit to Thy command.

Christ in heaven is still our Prophet Who witnesses to us of the Father through His Word and
Spirit. He is still our High priest, presenting our prayers and interceding for us before the face of the Father. He is still our King. Who prepares a place for us in glory even while He is busy preparing us for that place. So powerfully He rules over all things in heaven and on earth, that even while nations rage and peoples imagine vain things, we can triumphantly say:

*Thou shalt subdue the kings of earth*

*With God at Thy right hand:*

*The nations Thou shalt rule in might*

*And judge in ev'ry land.*

*The Christ, refreshed by living streams,*

*Shall neither faint nor fall,*

*And He shall be the glorious Head,*

*Exalted over all.*

I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Believing this we share His unction as a prophetic, royal priesthood. He calls us to the office of all believers. Not as if He needs our assistance in filling His office. Nor do we add to the work which He is called to do. But Christ fulfills His calling in and through His Church. He privileges us, as His brethren, to share His calling with Him. He makes us fit by His Spirit to be prophets of God in order to tell His praises. He causes us to be priests who consecrate ourselves in love to God in all that we do. And He makes us kings even in the midst of the world, so that we are more than conquerors through Him Who loved us.

Blessed are they who in thought and word and deed confess Jesus to be the Christ, wherever they are. Blessed are they, for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto them, but their Father in heaven. Thrice blessed they are, for they experience that blessedness in this life in a peace that passes all understanding, and they shall live with Him Who lives and reigns forever and ever. Faith is the victory, which overcometh the world.
Another Sign

Once again the coming judgment of this world is plainly declared by the work of the hands of the Almighty God. Argentina suffered a major disaster last week when a violent earthquake leveled San Juan a city of 30,000 inhabitants, killing upwards of 4,000, injuring 10,000 with 15,000 to 20,000 missing.

It is safe to say that a few days after our newspapers cease bringing us new information concerning this disaster it will be completely vanished from our thoughts. Indeed, our minds are very limited and we cannot carry with us all the things of which we have heard or read, and it is not cessary either that we carry along with us in our minds the fact and the details of this earthquake. What we should carry with us in our thoughts, however, is that which this earthquake signifies. This recent event signifies that the end of all things is at hand, and that judgment upon this world cometh with rapid strides.

This earthquake speaks of judgment to the child of God. It reminds him of the judgment meted out to wicked Korah, Dathan and Abiram who were swallowed up by an earthquake. It reminds him of the earthquake at the death of Christ and again at His resurrection wherein God declared His judgment after man had given his sentence concerning His Son. It reminds him of God's Word that He will once more shake the heavens and the earth. It speaks to him of that coming judgment. That fact should constantly be before our minds. We ought to live in the consciousness of its coming, not in fear and dread, but in hope and expectancy that our complete deliverance according to body and soul is at hand. This recent earthquake speaks of the wrath of God. But for His child it is likewise another sign that deliverance is coming. When Christ comes again to judge the quick and the dead, this earth with all the workers of iniquity shall be destroyed, and we shall receive a new earth in which righteousness shall dwell and where no evidence of the curse shall be found. Of this San Juan's earth-
quake is another sign. Do you see it? Do you appreciate it?

An Expected Sign

Above we considered another sign of the coming of Christ. Coming on the heels of this sign, an incident occurred on the other side of the world which is not directly a sign of Christ's coming, but which nevertheless was expected by the child of God because he believes that the Day of Christ will come.

Unofficially in one of its leading papers Moscow accused Britain of seeking a separate peace with Germany. Whether Britain is guilty or whether Russia purposely does this unofficially stating that it is only a rumor, to warn Britain to keep her hands off the Polish question, that fact as such is an expected sign. This particular fact was not expected by the child of God, but he does expect signs which indicate that men will speak of peace when there is no peace and that all the talk of the world of a lasting peace is nothing more than talk.

The unbeliever expects this corrupt world to be able to end all wars. He expects the Utopia of which the worldly philosophers and poets sing. The child of God who looks for Christ's kingdom because he believes God's Word, understands that there cannot be peace on this corrupt earth until that day when Christ comes and brings peace by destroying the wicked and filling our hearts with love. He understands that the heart and mind must be changed before lasting peace is achieved. He sees plainly that a peace enforced(?) by the sword even when that sword is held jointly by all the larger nations will result in another flare up of warfare. At Tehran such a peace and such a post-war world was planned. This recent unofficial accusation by Russia is a sign that war shall come again after this war is ended. Britain does not trust Russia. Russia does not trust Britain. Washington, London and Moscow all think differently on the Polish question. Where is the political victory of Tehran?

He who believes God's Word knows that hatred, greed, distrust and war will come again in the future after this war is over. Does Jesus not tell us there shall be wars and rumors of wars? Does God's Word not tell us that Gog and Magog shall rise up in the last days and wage war? He who believes this Word of God is not surprised when he reads of this rift between Russia and Britain. For him it is a sign which he expected. And many more such signs we may expect in the future.
Everyone has what we call a sense of responsibility.

However, life teaches repeatedly that everyone does not have the same sense of responsibility. With some this sense is very keen, with others it is dull. And then again, some have a very acute sense of responsibility in respect to some things and are very broad-minded in respect to others.

Take the case of John for example.

John was a young man, I should judge somewhere between nineteen and twenty years of age. He was just an ordinary fellow, like almost any Christian young man. He had been reared in a Christian family in which he was the fourth of five children. From all indications, father and mother were both sincere Christians and faithful members of their church. They had themselves been brought up in Christian homes and therefore were truly desirous that their children might grow up in the fear of the Lord. And, since they were conscious of the responsibility which the Lord had laid upon them with a view to their children, they had done everything that every normal Christian parent will do to see that his children are instructed in the things that pertain to God. Not only had they themselves instructed their children in the home but they had also sent them to the Christian school. They had seen to it that the children were faithful in their attendance of church and catechism classes; they had insisted that there be time to learn their lessons properly and were careful to know whether their children were prepared for their classes. They had moreover also endeavored to teach them what was right in a practical way and had warned them, upon every opportunity that presented itself, against every evil practice. And, like all Christian parents, they had not spared the rod in correcting their children when they had done the wrong.

So you see, John had grown up like almost any other Christian young man. And now there was every reason to believe that he would continue in that way. He
was not indifferent to the things he had learned; on the contrary, his interest in spiritual things was progressive. Although his knowledge was to a great extent simply doctrinal, he could nevertheless speak with assurance of the fact that he had a part in salvation through Jesus Christ.

Well, John had been to catechism class and came home in a rather bad mood. It seems as though the minister had given the class a written test the week before and, having corrected the papers, had returned them that evening. Now John's grade was not the highest in the class but that didn't bother him. He felt that he had done his best.

"But", so he said to his parents, "I despise a cheater! Cheating is just as bad as stealing and everybody despises a thief." The story behind this all was very simple. One of the fellows had received a perfect grade and he didn't deserve it. John had seen the week before that this individual had copied the answers from his book which he had very neatly concealed in some way. And that wasn't all, this fellow never knew his lessons. He always had his book out so he could glance at the answer. Surely, John knew that this fellow was actually the loser. But, even at that, he didn't like the whole idea. "It's crooked, that's all! And this fellow ought to have a better sense of responsibility."

Entirely correct. We agree wholeheartedly with John.

But that's not the end of the story. For the next time we see John, we find him working at a certain place. Help is scarce and John knows it. So he is being paid a very good wage, maybe too good, and John will admit it. The boss has every right to expect that John will do his very best. And we expect that. But now we are disappointed. Oh yes, generally speaking John does a fairly good job. But his best? No! He gets away with a little something here and some other little thing there. It is evident that John is not thinking about his work: he's thinking about Saturday night when he gets his check. And when that night comes he isn't a bit backward about taking the money.

Yes, we are disappointed. We thought that John had such a good sense of responsibility. But it seems as though John doesn't realize that our responsibility in all things is not first or simply to man but to the Lord our God. For it is still true: "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

"Cheating is just as bad as stealing," John said.

Well?!!
It was in the spring of 1927 when two elders of the Christian Reformed Church of Oaklawn took upon themselves to ask the Rev. H. Hoeksema to give a lecture in the local public school, in order that they might become better acquainted with the issue of Common Grace which had created such a stir within the Churches. Rev. Hoeksema complied with the request, and quite a large audience turned out to hear him. Although all were not ready to agree with the speaker, many did go home with the conviction that they had been edified by a sound exposition of the truth of the Word of God.

The immediate result, however, was that the two elders were deposed from office by their consistory upon the advice of a neighboring consistory which had been called in. Yet for some this did not settle the question whether the Church was right in adopting the Three Points in the Synod of 1924. Again Rev. Hoeksema spoke in Oaklawn, as well as in South Holland, Roseland and Englewood, whereby it became increasingly evident to us that the Church had erred in deposing from office the Reverends Hoeksema, Ophoff and Danhof. We became convinced that if we were to hear and maintain the sound doctrine in our own midst we had to separate ourselves from the Christian Ref. Church and organize a congregation of our own.

It was not a large group that finally agreed to organization. In fact, five families and two unmarried young men came together on the evening of July 7, 1927, with the Rev. Hoeksema in their midst, who spoke to them on John 7:39 in connection with Acts 2:41 and afterwards assisted us in the organization. Now it was possible for us to again hear the sound preaching of the Word from Sabbath to Sabbath. For a number of years our various students and ministers supplied our pulpit, until the year 1935 when the Rev. C. Hanko arrived in our midst and has labored among us for nine years.

So for a period of eight years we had struggled along without a shepherd to minister to our various needs. Yet from the very beginning we were privileged with having our own place of worship. Although we were not strong fi-
financially, we were able to purchase a church building which for some time had been used as a Community Hall for local entertainments. After undergoing some necessary cleaning and repairing, the building proved quite fit for our purpose. During these first years we were due for many disappointments, since we are still an imperfect people who carried our sinful nature with us when we left our former church, and that sinful nature also became evident at times, causing many sad moments in our lives. But the Lord deemed also this for our good and has kept us in existence as a congregation through all our struggles. Although we lost some members, the Lord also added to our number, and after eight years we were able to say: "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us." Rev. Hanko's labors have also been appreciated in our midst and the congregation had grown from slightly more than five families at the time of organization to 17 families by the spring of 1943.

This past year was an especially happy one for us as congregation from the aspect that now for the first time we have our own parsonage for our minister. For eight years he was forced to move from place to place, until suddenly we faced the problem of having a minister without being able to supply him with a home. We decided that the time had come that we should buy a parsonage of our own and found that we could obtain a very suitable house not far from the Church. Through the united efforts of the whole congregation, and the splendid collections we received from our Churches, we were able to purchase this property, for which we are thankful to the Lord Who has made this possible.

The year 1943 also has its sad moments from the point of view that we lost a few of our former members. The oldest member of the congregation was taken away by death. one family moved to sunny California, and two families returned to the Christian Reformed Church. Yet we are happy to report that we have grown in unity of faith and love during this past year. We have become more firmly knit together as one in the Lord, and that, after all, is of first importance. Trusting in Him also for the future we can rest assured that all earthly things may fall away, yet we shall be victorious in Him. May God give us more zeal for His cause at all times, so that we shall not be found as having lost our first love, but may grow in grace and live as members of the body of Jesus Christ. To God be all the honor and glory forever.

—16—
"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life. . . . And God created great whales and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind. . . .and God saw that it was good.

And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas."

To and fro with gracefulness and ease swim the fish, remarkably adapted to its environment. We marvel at its perfect freedom in the lake or stream as it flits up and down with such rapidity and skill. What a transformation there is when we take this creature from its normal surroundings! How helpless and lifeless it soon becomes as it flounders pitifully on dry land, for was it not created to be in water?

We ask ourselves the question, "Why does its freedom depend on its being in water? By examining the fish's body we find the solution. Most animals are equipped with lungs which enable them to breathe air directly; not so with fish, for they must obtain their air from the water by means of gills. These comb' or rake-like structures have many small finger-like tines called filaments which are richly supplied with tiny blood vessels giving off the waste carbon dioxide into the water and removing the fresh oxygen from it. After the water enters the mouth, it flows over the gills and out of the operculum (external opening on lower side of the head). It is this constant flow of water that separates these tiny filaments; thus, the maximum surface is exposed which enables the constant exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide — essential to life. As soon as a fish is removed from water, these filaments adhere to each other and become covered with a sticky substance, which prevents breathing. Even though the fish may be surrounded with an abundance of air, it cannot breathe.

However, there is a certain family of fish which inhabit Lake Chad in Africa, which is an exception to the rule that fish al-
ways breath by means of gills. During the dry season, much of the lake dries up leaving many of these fish stranded. Instinctively, these creatures make mud huts for themselves and live in these until once again the lake becomes its original size. During the interval when the lake has receded, the fish breathes by means of its "swim bladder" or float, which in this species of fish is connected with the outside, and functions as a lung.

The fish possesses the external sense organs, namely: nostrils, eyes, and the lateral line. The two nostrils of the fish are peculiar in that they are U shaped tubes, each having two external openings. Although they are not useful for breathing, they are essential in distinguishing various odors in the water as the water passes thru these tubes. Just posterior to the eye and on each side of the body, one finds a darkened lateral line extending to the tail. This makes it possible for the fish to register changes in pressure and other movements in the water. Therefore, although the fish lacks ears, the lateral line functions as an auditory organ.

Another feature which adapts the fish to water is the swim bladder or float. Within the body cavity attached to the backbone is this thin-walled air-filled, balloon-like structure. By means of it the fish can voluntarily elevate or lower itself in that water, regulated by the amount of air expelled from it, thus functioning as a ballast tank in a submarine.

If we were to do some deep-sea diving, we would discover a host of interesting and unusual forms which inhabit the watery depths and ocean bottoms. It is rather astonishing how animals can continue to exist in an abode of utter darkness, for no sunlight can penetrate to such a depth. The factor of extreme pressure exerted on their bodies makes it remarkable that life can go on. Often there is no plant life available. Then, too, we would find that some of these species of fish are seemingly handicapped by blindness, and those having eyes are thought to see by means of phosphorescent light cast from the bodies of many of these animals. Examination has proved that certain fluids within the tissues of the fish make it possible for them to resist the pressure forced upon them. They possess sensitive organs of touch and their jaw and teeth are larger to offset the fact of their blindness in capturing food.

There are many other interesting facts about these "inhabitants of the sea," which may be discussed in another issue.
It was purely by accident that Mrs. Shiber and her friend, Kitty, became involved in aiding British soldiers to escape from the German occupied territory around Paris. Mrs. Shiber is the widow of an American newspaper man, who after the death of her husband made her home in a Paris apartment with a friend. Like all the other Parisians, they tried to leave the city when the Germans seized it, but were forced to return when they were caught in the traffic jam of refugees who were attempting to get away. On their way back to Paris they picked up a soldier and hid him in the trunk of their car, sheltered him in their apartment, and after days of suspense and anxiety, found confederates who smuggled the soldier across the border of occupied France, and helped him escape in England. This led the two middle-aged women to help many more soldiers, until the day when they were discovered by the German gestapo. The Frenchwoman was eventually executed, but Mrs. Shiber was exchanged with the American government for a German spy after undergoing considerable hardships in German prisons.

Excerpts from Mrs. Shiber's book of her experiences appeared in the Reader's Digest, so perhaps some of you readers have already been lured into reading the book and it is well worth it, for it is a first-hand account of many happenings at the beginning of the war in Europe. Altho Mrs. Shiber emphasizes that especially her part in the work was rather reluctant and fearful, one must admire the pluck of these two women.

Look to the Mountains a novel by Le Grand Cannon, Jr.

The story begins in Kettleford, New Hampshire, in the year 1769.
Whit Livingstone shyly courts Melissa Butler and before they take the marriage vow, goes up the Merrimac River to find a new place to live. Melissa waits for him three months, after which he comes back with the news that he has found the ideal spot to set up their home—at the foot of a high mountain which never ceases to be a source of wonder and inspiration for simple Whit Livingstone. They are married, and, not yet twenty years old, the young couple sets out in a canoe, in cold November. Melissa stays in a small settlement with some newly-found friends of Whit, while her husband goes eight miles away to build a log cabin with a stone chimney for his bride. Their life together is the life of pioneers—a life of hardship and toil, disappointments, and yet in it all a simple happiness and satisfaction in founding and maintain-
ing for themselves and their children, a new home in a new country.

Many novels have been written about the American pioneer, but few have the simple, homely touch of Cannon's story. The characters are very real, and their life is not too vivid and exciting, but seems real. The story does not have much plot, but merely relates the story of a section from the lives of pioneers.

It is deplorable that this, as so many other novels contains some profane language. There is a notable lack of any religion or mention of it even by the preacher who marries Whit and Melissa and between them the subject arises only once, when they decide not to baptize their first baby because it seems superstitious. Whit seems to put some stock in Indian charms and if he has a god, he worships nature.

**The Amazing Cross**

*By Rev. Herman Hoeksema*

This is the latest published work of Rev. II. Hoeksema that is especially appealing to Young People. It consists of a series of lectures portraying two phases of the Passion of Christ and has been compared to the famous Schilder Trilogy.

The Radio Committee has contracted with the Eerdmans Publishing Co., to act as agents for the sale of this book. We will be glad to mail this inspiring volume to anyone sending $2.00 to the: Reformed Witness Hour, P.O. Box 8, Grand Rapids, Michigan.

— 19 —
Our country is classified as a Christian nation but in reality it is no longer Christian. Our present administration reveals very boldly its antichristianity, if not its atheism. It speaks of God. It prays to Him. It promises us religious freedom. Yet in spite of all this it shows the atheistic and antichristian tendencies. We are promised freedom from want, but one may rest assured that the Government will never fulfill this promise. No Government can promise such things and fulfill its promise. Only God can give us an abundance of food, and He can also make us live in dire want should He so desire. The early killing frosts that we experienced last fall brings this thought forcefully. How can any Government guarantee us freedom from want when God controls all things and sends the weather He sees fit to send? If our Government would only take God's existence as the Sovereign Ruler of all things into consideration it would not promise us freedom from want.

It is a well-known fact that our country as a whole is forsaking the Christian beliefs of our forefathers. Our nation has forgotten God. Our nation no longer considers the fact that He upholds and governs all things. People go on living as though there is no God. They have hardened their hearts to the fact that they must one day make an account before God of all they have done and said and thought in this life. In fact, many have hardened their hearts to such an extent that they refuse to acknowledge that there is a Supreme Being in this universe. However, according to a recent article in "The Reader's Digest," there are no atheists in foxholes.

There are certain signs which clearly show the downward trend of our country religiously. Foremost among these signs is swearing. Swearing has become so common that it is almost classed as good English. Some people must swear in every sentence or else they don't feel right. Moreover, swearing has become almost universal. Aside from religious groups there are probably no more than one in fifty who does not swear. Swearing is truly a sign of antichristianity because it clearly indicates that those who swear do not acknowledge or recognize God as a Supreme Being. One who dares to take God's Name in vain and curse Him to His Face certainly
is not honoring his Creator. Of course, it is well known that honoring God and revering His Name is one of the first principles of Christianity. Therefore, one who swears is definitely showing himself to be antichristian.

Even in the midst of judgment the average man continues to ignore God. Who can deny that this world conflict which we are experiencing is a judgment of God? God is punishing the nations for their sins. And yet men continue to curse Him, to seek their own earthly lusts, to see how much fun they can get out of life.

This world has become pleasure mad. This is especially true of our country. Isn't it true that the majority of Americans nowadays are striving only to see how much fun they can get out of life? Take football, baseball, hockey, golf, movies, dances, etc. out of the average person's life and what has he left? He has little or nothing left! What would the average woman do without her bridge club, bowling club, and other similar clubs? Many of them would have little left to live for. All this certainly shows that many people have pleasure as their main goal in life.

If a man experienced all the pleasures in this world, if he lives his whole life merely for the fun of living, what does it profit him? Soon his life fades away as a flower in the field and he returns to the dust from which he was made. He must leave all his pleasures behind and appear before God without any hope of salvation.

Therefore, we should be reminded that the main goal of our lives should be — how can we serve our Master best. All that we do should be done to His Honor and Glory.

Editor’s Desk

Since we have not enjoyed a Young People’s Convention since 1941, we wonder whether all our young people know how our Federation Executive Board came into existence and how it operates. The President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Assistant-Secretary-Treasurer, in other words, the officers of our Federation constitute the Executive Board. The officers now serving were elected at our 1940 and 1941 conventions for 2 year terms but because we have had no convention since 1941, these Board Members are still in office.

However, at our last Board Meet-
ing we drew up a plan by which we hope to elect new officers to carry on the work of the Federation. More about this plan in our next issue.

* * * * *

On the evening of January 20, our Federation president became the pastor of the Protestant Reformed Church at Holland, Michigan. The Rev. Walter Hofman, better known to us all as "Wally", hopes to continue as president of our Federation, at least for a time. He has always given the Editors of Beacon Lights his fullest cooperation and we sincerely wish him God's richest blessings in his pastoral work.

* * * * *

This issue carries a feature entitled "Priorities" written by Rev. S. Cammenga, recently installed at Orange City, Iowa. who, not so very long ago was numbered among our Grand Rapids Young People. In our next issue we hope to present an article by James Van Weelden from Oskaloosa, Iowa, who is at present a scholar in our Theological Seminary.

* * * * *

Although we cannot have another Convention just yet, we still have a Federation of Societies and all member societies are interested in one another. We are adding a page for "Society News," so you may know how your fellow societies are carrying on. So, societies, appoint yourselves a reporter and give us the news!

* * * * *

We wish to thank all those individuals and societies who have donated so liberally to the Servicemen's Fund, making it possible for us to send Beacon Lights to all our Men in the Service, in the States and Overseas. Recent donations were received from:

* * * * *

Mr. and Mrs. J. Verwys. (Grand R.) $7.75
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MAIL all donations to Miss A. Reitsma,
706 Franklin, S. E., Grand Rapids, Mich.
To Our Boys In Service

Grand Rapids, Mich.

Dear fellows:

The other day, as I was musing a bit over a letter I had received from one of our boys who is in one of the distant parts of our far-flung battle field, I was suddenly struck by the fact you fellows, and especially those of you that have been sent abroad, and that have been initiated into the real horrors of this terrible war, are really far away from us. And I was not thinking so much of the distance in miles as of the distance in experience between you on the battle-front and us here at home, a distance that is still increasing with every day that passes.

I was trying to visualize a little of that experience, and to understand what it must mean for a young man to be fighting in the jungles, daily to live in an environment where one must either kill or be killed, or to participate in bombing raids or naval battles, and I came to the conclusion that it is quite impossible to imagine just what you are going through, and what effect your experience will have upon your entire outlook on life. We may read a little of it in our daily papers, especially from the accounts of those war correspondents that cover certain areas of our battle line, and write as eye witnesses. Yet, we here at home cannot begin to realize what it all means for one that is actually in the thick of it. But I felt that there is a great distance between us in respect to experience, and I began to wonder just what permanent impressions it will leave upon you. Will we feel this distance, when first you come back to us from distant lands, and out of the horrors of this terrible conflict?

And suddenly I felt that letter writing, though we may be thankful for its possibility, is but a poor means to abridge this distance in experience, and I wished I could visit you all for a while, and talk to you face to face, that I might bring home life and home experience, especially from a spiritual and religious viewpoint, a little closer to you! But this is impossible, and we can only meet one another at the throne of grace, where all distance is swallowed up.

Whatever may be the effect of this war upon our outlook on life and on the world, may it never change our faith and our spiritual outlook and view of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And however great may be the distance in your experience and ours in these days from a natural viewpoint, may it never separate us in faith and doctrine. For these are not contingent upon our experiences in peace or in war, but are based only upon the Word of God which abideth unchanged for ever!

Our God is able to keep you. That is our comfort and our prayer.

Yours as ever,

Rev. H. Hoeksema.
December 6, 1943

Dear Friends:—

First of all before I start anything I believe it is my solemn duty to apologize for not writing sooner and more often. Although I may have a slight excuse I have left my former place of training and am now on one of the islands resting up. We made one short stop before we came here. That was on the Island of Betio on the atoll of Tarawa in the Gilbert Islands. There we encountered quite a number of those slant-eyed yellow skinned people or shall I call them savages. But we succeeded in driving them off and now the Gilberts that once belonged to a heathen race, are in the hands of God-fearing people again. The Flag of Great Britain and the United States is again waving proudly and defiantly at the Japanese. Thats all about that.

Now about where I am at present. It is surely a beautiful place. The nights are cool and the days are quite hot. In the morning on the tops of two large mountains snow is visible but by noon the sun is quite high and the snow melts away. We are situated quite high above sea level and it is cool up here, but as you get down by the ocean it is hot.

Well I can't seem to think of anything else to say so I'll Good-bye.

Pvt. Charles Sikkema
Co. F, 2nd Bn., 8th Marines.

Dear Friends:—

Having been persuaded by the last issue of Beacon Lights to write once again, I am doing so now. Thanks to all responsible for the summer issues as they were enjoyed immensely. I am feeling fine although I received slight injury this morning, but this also gives me time to write this letter. The weather during the day is very hot, but evenings are cool. We work six hours per day and have two shifts. I received raise in rating last week, to electricians mate 2nd class, (staff sargeant in army) and am in charge of 20 man detail. We are not near actual fighting, but do feel the sting of war from overhead, and even that is well under control. We have meetings every evening, in charge of an Orthodox Presbyterian chaplain, so we do not lack spiritual food and teaching. This surely is a good sign of God's mighty Word. being out here in heathen places. He surely cares for all our needs everywhere. Thanks to Him alone for all things. In His name and love, always.

Geo. Lanting, E M2/c
63rd Naval C.B., Co. D-1
c/o F.P.O. "Frisco".

* * * * *

SERVICEMEN
Don't Forget To Write Us
A Letter!
The Reformed Witness Hour

The past month has been an important one for the Reformed Witness Hour. It was just three short years ago that the first Radio committee was appointed at the annual business meeting of the Young Men's Society of Fuller Ave. And it was also just two years ago that the committee was organized into a permanent body of six members. But by far the most important anniversary was marked on the 17th of January when it was just one year since our program was expanded from a small local station to the Wolverine Network. This was the step that made possible our vast expansion last fall, which increased our coverage to such an extent that to date we have received mail from listeners in nine different states.

We are very happy also to report at this time that since last August a total of more than $4,800 has been collected for the Radio Fund, leaving only some four or five hundred dollars to be raised before the conclusion of the broadcasting season.

The question may be asked whether our radio work justifies the spending of so much money. The committee feels that it certainly does. To date we have received some 125 pieces of mail, many from persons outside of our denomination. These letters are very encouraging, and we would like, at this time, to submit the following quotations from them for your judgment.

Mr. N. H. of S. Holland, Ill. writes:

Please send me your message of January 23. . . . Would it be possible to get all of your 69 messages? I was just informed of your program and enjoyed it very much.

A. L. of Grand Rapids writes:

We just listened to your program. The singing as well as the preached word were both wonderful. May God bless this work.

From J. W. in Chicago we hear:

. . . we heard the Rev. H. Hoeksema of the Protestant Reformed Church of Grand Rapids deliver a fine address, which was, in my opinion, sound to the core and thoroughly scriptural. I would greatly appreciate receiving a copy of that sermon.

These people are not, as far as we know, members of any of our Protestant Reformed Churches. And their letters should certainly convince anyone of the worthwhileness of the Reformed Witness Hour.

The Radio Committee.
BEACON LIGHTS

Bible Study
Outlines

REV. GEO. LUBBERS
RANDOLPH, WISCONSIN

Outline XVI
A HARD-PRESSED SANHEDRIN MEETS
Acts 5:17-12

The Occasion—There seems to have been no special occasion for the High Priest and all that were of the sect of the Sadducees to be spurred to action. The case seems to be as follows:

a) The success of these Galilean fishermen was more than the evil hearts of these cold, caloused rationalists could stand. The rejectors of the resurrection were seeing too many evidences of the one Resurrection for their own comfort. They were indeed a hard-pressed lot of unbelievers. b) Unless they repented, there was no other alternative left but to continue to the bitter end of the course of Matt. 28:11-15. The latter they do. And it is Caiaphas who had prophesied unwittingly as high priest of the need of the death of Christ (John 11:47-53), who now again takes the lead. “This Man” (vs. 28) indeed was affording Caiaphas with a lot of grief, had given the Sanhedrin plenty of work. But the work was grinding them “the rejectors of the chief Corner-Stone” to powder.

Matt. 21:44. c) They lay their hands on the apostles and put them in the public prisonhouse. Evidently they put all the twelve in prison.

2. However God is with them and an angel comes and releases them from prison and enjoins them to stand in the temple and speak all the words of this Life! a) This must have been an electrifying influence for the apostles. spurring them on to greater activity. How they must have been reminded of Jesus’ word of promise that He would be with them. That they were reminded of Jesus’ sayings on other occasions we have proof in John 2:17. b) When the leaders learn that the apostles were not in the prisonhouse but that they were teaching the “people” in the temple and that in bold defiance of all their threatenings, they say: “What will this be?!” vs. 24. c) Consequently they lead the apostles before their gathering without force. Publicly and in full view of the people they dare not ill-treat them for fear of being stoned if they should.

The Issue at Stake—1. As this appears from the highpriest’s hard-pressed question to the disciples, vs. 27. a) He asks
them the rhetorical question whether they had not been explicitly told not to teach in the Name of Him whose power had healed the man born lame! And this question implied that all that Peter and the other apostles could say was: yes! b) But what had they done? 1) They had filled Jerusalem with the teaching of the resurrection from the dead, the Resurrection of Jesus from the dead! vs. 28. 2) And because of the evil conscience ascribes the motive of all this teaching and activity to be to bring "the blood of this man on their head"! He applies the verdict of guilt to self, yet—without repenting! Everything in Jerusalem was blood-theology! It brought peace to anguished hearts, but the wick-ed shall not see life even when the "words of this Life" are preached!

2. That the above is indeed the issue here is also evident from Peter's address. a) He not only reaffirms that He must be more obedient to God than to men. b) But He is also more obedient. For he again preaches the very "blood of this man" in their presence. vs. 29-32.

The Outcome—1. The highpriest and the Sadducees are "cut in two" by this testimony of Peter. wish to rush upon the disciples to kill them. They only can add more blood to their already blood-stained consciences.

2. But is is a professor of the university in Jerusalem, who was also present at the time who councils a more sinful, sober course. a) He reminds that of the possibility that this work might be of God. He cites the case of Theudas who had 400 men as followers and how he came to nought. He reasons that this came to nought because God was not with him. b) Now here their were thousands following these men. It certainly gave food for thought! And Gamaliel, the teacher of Paul, wishes to take due account of it. Is it not better to be on the safe side! Do not kill them for that might be fighting against God! c) This made a psychological even though not a spiritually profound impression on the gathering. An evil conscience needs very little to disquiet it in its evil intentions.

3. Consequently they scourge the disciples and let them go. a) The disciples praise God that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ's Name. b. And they proceed to testify in the temple!

Outline XVII
THE CHOOSING OF THE FIRST DEACONS
Acts 6:1-6

The Occasion—1. Luke informs us that there arose a murmuring of the Grecian Jews against the Hebrew element in the church because their widows were being neglected in the ministration. We should bear in mind that this was not a dis-cension between Jew and Gentile, for the Grecians were not gentiles but Jews. They were Jews from the western dis-persion, who lived outside of Palestine proper, and who had learned the lan-guage and manners of the Greeks. 2. This murmuring does not mean that there was lack of love on the part of the
brethren. It was not a question of the principle of love, but a matter of administration. The disciples seemed at first to be able to administer also the tables. But the number of the church at Jerusalem had become too great for them. It was somewhat similar to Moses' position in the wilderness as recorded in Ex. 18:13-27. 3. Still the question may be asked: Why were the Grecian widows neglected and not those of the Hebrews? Were the latter in the majority? Did they press themselves to the foreground making the most of the occasion? Acts does not state the reason. 4. However this may all be, the complaint that was raised was evidently not without foundation. For steps are taken to remedy the situation and to prevent a further recurrence of injustice. How well they succeed is evident from vs. 7. Even the priests, and that "many of them", must have witnessed the administration of the mercy of the greater High Priest; the Priest according to the order of Melchisedec. Here was the true priesthood of the benevolence in Christ Jesus. They also become obedient to the faith!

The Preponderant Consideration—1. Indeed the serving of tables is necessary. It was a spontaneous outgrowth of the operation of the gospel in the hearts of the redeemed. For these tables were tables of the Lord. They had nothing in common with the tables of devils. Hence the administration of the tables required special wisdom and piety. a) They must be men of good repute. Men who had the confidence of the congregation and who command respect. b) They must be full of the Spirit and of Wisdom. Their life must be influenced so by the Spirit that they do His will. And so they will be able to walk in the wisdom of the meek and in the fear of the Lord. Prov. 1:7; 4:1ff.; James 1:5; 3:13. A study of these passages will assure us that "wisdom" is not to be identified with a mere head full of learning. There are many educated fools, and also many illiterate men with hearts full of wisdom!

2. Why must these men thus attend to the ministering of the tables and not the apostles? What is the deciding factor? The text states the following: a) The calling of the apostles was not to serve tables. That was not the genius of their place in God's covenant. vs. 2. Thus it is emphasized by Paul in I Cor. 1:17 even in respect to such an important matter as baptizing. b) Their calling was to witness of the resurrection! They must preach the Word. And nothing must intervene, nay, not even the administration of mercy. How the apostles are separated to this work is evident from Acts 1:8! And always this is brought to the foreground in the preaching of the apostles. Acts 2:32; 3:15; 5:32. In fact from the last letter written by the aged Paul to Timothy we can see how important the preaching the Word is. II Tim. 4:2. c) The preponderant consideration is therefore: That the Word of God may be preached!

The Nature of the Office of Deacon:

We can do no better, both for the sake of brevity and clarity, than to quote
prove that their appointment as such was meant to be temporary—that the office of deacon was a permanent one in the church is clearly shown in such passages as: Phil. 1:1 I Tim. 3:8-12. e) The requirements for this work as postulated by the apostles in Acts 6:3 are essentially the same as those mentioned by the apostle Paul for deacons in I Tim. 3:8-12.

Outline XVIII

STEPHEN SUMMONED BEFORE
THE SANHEDRIN
Acts 6:7-15

The Unsuccessful Verbal Assault Upon Stephen—1. Of the seven deacons chosen, Stephen stands out as the greatest in power and wisdom. For we read of him: a) That he was full of grace and power. He must have given great testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. b) This testimony was confirmed by the great signs and wonders that he performed among the people. This attracted notice. The signs that he performed were not “many” (conf. 2:43) but they were “great”. They were signs of the same quality as those performed by the apostles. He also represented the God of the burning bush.

2. Some of the synagogues of the Libertines and of the Cyrenians and Alexandrians and of Cilicia and Asia rose up to dispute with Stephen. These men were: a. The Libertines were evidently Jews who had been taken prisoners by the Romans under Pompei and later set at liberty. Libertines later became a proper name for this group.
They evidently had their own synagogue in Jerusalem. b) The Cyrenians and Alexandrians were Jews from northern Africa. Possibly these had been transported thence under the campaigns of Alexander the great. c) Those of Cilicia and Asia are Jews from Asia Minor.

3. In this dispute with Stephen, even though they be many, they are unsuccessful. For: a) Stephen spoke with the wisdom of God revealed in Jesus Christ. It was the wisdom as not revealed to former generations and hid in God from before the foundations of the world. Eph. 1:8, 18ff.; I Cor. 2:6ff. b) In this he was guided by the Spirit of Truth. Compare John 14:26; Matt. 10:19. For the Word of God is the sword of the Spirit. And none can stand before that Apology. Compare Eph. 6:17. What is the nature of Scriptural apology?

The Issue at Stake—1. The alleged issue. a) That they, the Libertines, etc., were indeed lovers of the temple and its ordinances as given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai. b) That Stephen was a heretic; one who spoke against Moses and the God of glory. He was a heretic because he preached that Jesus of Nazareth had come to dissolve the temple and to change the customs given by Moses. (All the laws in connection with the temple worship). c) The only argument unbelief has is persecution. The world is never tolerant. vss. 11, 12.

2. The real issue. a) They are unwilling to be obedient to the witness of the resurrection of Jesus, and to believe that in this Jesus God has fulfilled the Promises made to the fathers. b) It is the same question of whether Christ is indeed Lord of the temple. It was a willful ignorance of all that had happened at the cross. It was the Jew seeking a sign, being unwilling to see the Sign of the Cross. Compare 2:13-22; Luke 22:66-71. Unbelief always comes with the same arguments and follows the same pattern!

The Special Divine Testimony Given.
1. Its Form. a) God changed the appearance of Stephen. It became like the face of an angel. Upon this face the entire Sanhedrin must gaze presently when Stephen makes his defense. b) This shining face reminds us of: 1) The shining face of Moses when he came down from the Mt. of God. Ex. 34:29-35; II Cor. 3:7. Notice what Paul says of this face in relation to Israel’s unbelief. 2) The glory of Christ on the Mt. of Transfiguration. Matt. 17:5; II Pet. 1:17. c) In both these cases we have to do with the temple. In the former with the shadows of better things to come; the latter the actual bringing in of the better things by “the exodus in Jerusalem”. The former has no glory by reason of the excellence of the latter. II Cor. 3:10.

2. Its Content. a) It was the glory of the exalted Christ who dwells in the Holy Place of the heavens revealed on Stephen’s face; as such it is the very same glory as that of Moses’ face in the desert. Before the very face of the Son of God unbelief remains rebellious! b) In both cases it is divine testimony to those who must hear the Word of God.
A like experience is the lot of these children of those fathers who always killed the prophets! Compare 23:33-35

Outline XIX
STEPHEN'S DEFENSE
Acts 7:1-60

A hasty reading of this chapter should tell us that it would be folly to analyze each verse separate. Rather each verse should be viewed in the light of the whole. Not to do this would mean exegesis of many passages and books of the Old Testament. By reason of looking at the trees one would not see the woods. Therefore we will treat this entire chapter in this outline and treat it synthetically. Each society can then follow the method they prefer to employ.

The Central Thrust of this Defense: The Rev. Hoeksema has the following notation: "It is a masterful, historical review clearly revealing that he, Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom, in which he points out the positive historical line of the Covenant; the truth concerning Moses and the temple, as revealed in the Scripture and as being realized in Christ. He refutes the accusation against him and points out that not he but they (the Sanhedrin, G.L.) are the true children of those fathers that always resist the Holy Spirit and killed the prophets. Their fathers had slain them that foretold of the coming of Jesus, and they themselves had become murderers of the Just One."

This clear-cut statement speaks for itself.

A General Survey of this Defense:
1. In general it should be noticed that Stephen traces the positive development of God's covenant from Abraham to David. Hence the 14 generations spoken of in Matt. 1:17a. The reason is that in these generations the growth and idea of the temple can be seen.

2. We notice more in detail the following: a) Stephen traces the work of the "God of glory" in the days of the Patriarchs in vss. 1-17. Also here there are already traces of rebellious fathers. b) That of Moses and Israel and the tabernacle is verses 18-45. Here there is rebellion in a marked degree. In Egypt already (vs. 23-27) in the desert at Sinai and subsequently (vss. 39-43). Always there were the hard and uncircumcised of heart! These had no eye for the Kingdom of Heaven. c) According to the progressiveness of revelation the real nature of the temple is revealed especially after David and Solomon (vss. 46-50). God really does not dwell in the temple made with hands. vs. 49. Thus Isaiah the prophet had already spoken. And of this Stephen had disputed when the Libertine Jews etc. had assaulted him and falsely accused him. Indeed Stephen had spoken in full accord with the Word of God!

The Application—1. The nature of it. a) It is very personal. Stephen emphatically places the Sanhedrin in the company of all those who killed the prophets. Instead of this being Stephen's trial it was the death-knell of this Israel
BEACON LIGHTS

according to the flesh. b) It was fearless. It was standing before the face of Jesus, the Judge of the nations.

2. Its Effect. vs. ff. a) They rush upon Stephen, being cut to the quick in their hardened heart. And they stone him outside of Jerusalem. And they seal the testimony of Stephen, that they are children of the fathers who always resisted the Holy Spirit. b) They receive one more testimony of Stephen's relationship to the Son of Man, Jesus of Nazareth. A clear-cut commentary on the vicious nature of unregenerate man.

THANKFUL IN ADVERSITY

It is not so hard to be thankful when all things are going just right, When you are earning big money and the future looks rosy and bright, When you have a nice car to ride in and lots of good things to eat, When your friends all greet you with a smile whenever you happen to meet. When you are surrounded by sunshine, then it's very easy to say, Lord, we thank Thee for the blessings Thou hast given us today.

But can we also be thankful when poverty comes our way? When we are too tired to go to sleep at the end of a busy day, Can we be thankful when crops fail and the harvest no increase yields. When our soldier boys must suffer and die on foreign battlefields, Do you think if your boy were dying, you would be able to say, Lord, we thank Thee for the blessings Thou hast given us today.

Sometimes the way seems dreary, and our burdens too heavy to bear Sometimes our friends frown upon us and no one seems to care, Sometimes our dear ones get cancer and must suffer from day to day And we can do nothing to help them as they slowly waste away, But still we can be thankful and at even we must say, Lord, we thank Thee for the blessings Thou hast given us today.

The Lord always blesses His people and gives all that's best for them, But so often we do not see clearly, our eyes have been darkened by sin, We want houses, and clothing, and riches, and no one likes to be poor, And though we have riches in abundance, we are always wishing for more. But when we have all the things that are pleasant, then we often forget to say Lord, we thank Thee for the blessings Thou hast given us today.

It is a blessing to stand at a sickbed, and watch the angel of death draw near To see how richly God blesses His own, so that they know no fear, For they know their sins are forgiven, they were washed in Jesus' blood, Christ's blood that was shed on the accursed tree that once on Calvary stood. Then, when we stand at the grave of loved ones, with thankful heart we can say Lord, we thank Thee for the blessings Thou hast given us today.

Mrs. Gertrude Braaksma.