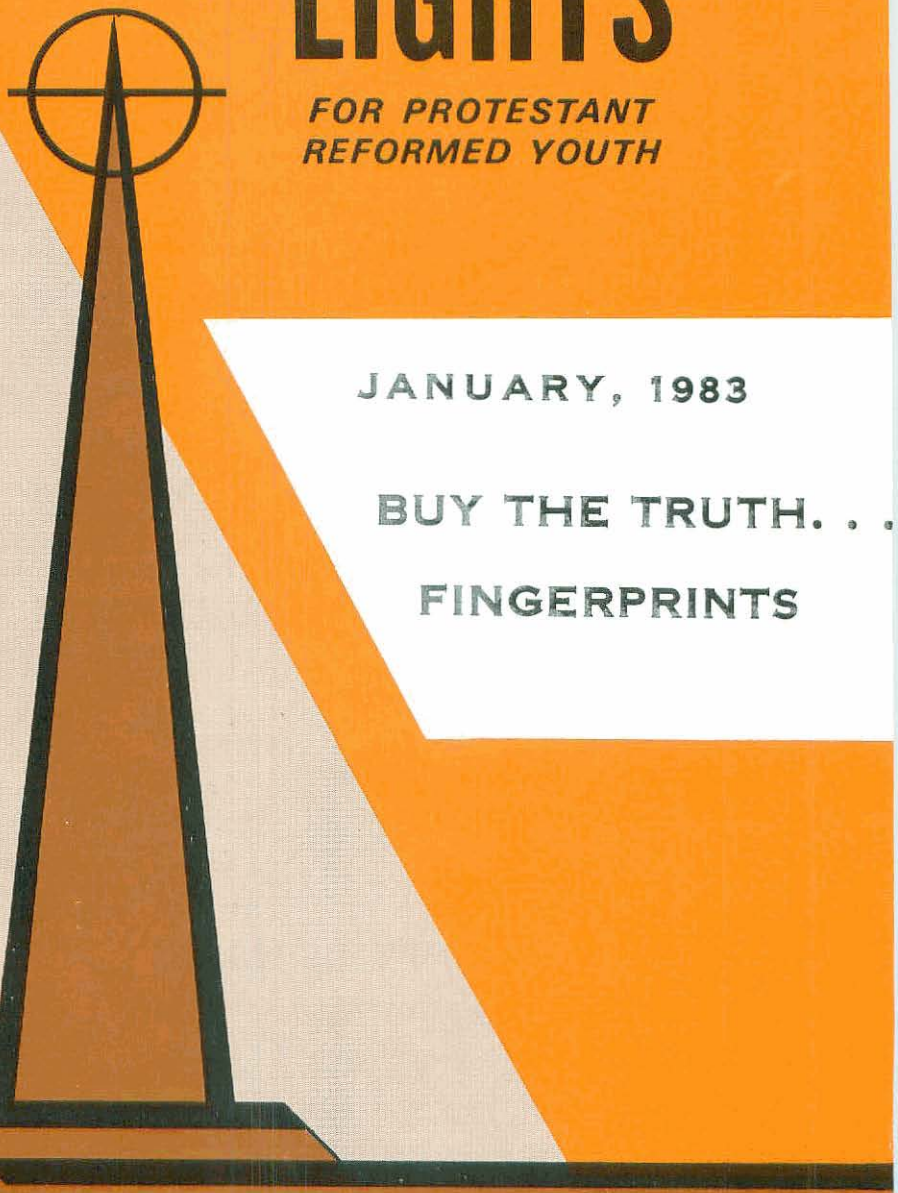
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH



JANUARY, 1983

BUY THE TRUTH. . .

FINGERPRINTS

BEACON LIGHTS

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A FINGERY PISTLE TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

by John M. Faber

Dear Grandchildren:

This New Year's letter is all about fingers: finger marks, finger prints and finger posts. I am sure that all of you know what finger marks are. Your mother must have told you a dozen times, when you were a toddler, not to put your hands against the windows; "You get all finger marks on my clean windows", she would say. Or, after she had just waxed and polished the living room table top she would warn you kids, "Now be careful and don't put your hands on the table, or it will be full of finger marks". Possibly you have seen finger marks on the window of a restaurant if the toddler's mother allowed her tot to stand on the seat and play patty-cake with the window. They are unsightly smudges and only have to be washed again.

Do you also know what finger posts are? Do you remember when your folks took you to some formal Gardens, and the paths were posted to show you the way? Those posts were shaped like a hand that ended with a forefinger. Those finger posts were guides to the visitors to find their way to the exit without doubling on your tracks.

Fingerprints, now, are the impressions of the inner surface of the last joint of the thumb or finger. Do you know that your own prints are different from each and every person on earth? I often wondered about the prints of identical twins who share the looks so minutely that strangers cannot tell them apart. I used to think that surely their fingerprints must also be identical. Wrong. I even called the identification desk of the Police Department, and I was told, "No, they are not alike." All fingerprints are unlike over the whole world. I find this a great miracle. God gives to each new-born person its own personality, and its own personal fingerprints. A person can sometimes have a personality change, but never undergoes a fingerprint change without destroying them. That fact has been of unmeasurable help to law enforcers. Each criminal is now fingerprinted, and those prints go on file for future identification.

Even mothers can use such information to detect the identity of a child who opens the shiny cookie jar. It's no use to say you did not take a cookie if your prints are on that shiny surface. You are caught!

All the doers of deed, who leave fingerprints can be recognized by those prints. So God also left fingerprints on all His Creation. "God left

fingerprints?'', you ask. Well, not as we do. Everything about God is different, you know. But the Prophets Nehemiah saw that truth, when he wrote, ''Thou, even Thou, art God alone; Thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are therein, the seas, and all that is therein. . . .'' Of course He left them, and we can see those prints anytime we want to; just look around you. The psalmist wrote Psalm Eight for us to sing, ''Consider the heaven; the *work of his fingers*''. In God's History Book, in Exodus, we find the history of the Ten Plagues He sent upon Egypt. He used both of His Hands, as it were, all ten fingers to punish the Egyptians. And when His people were fleeing from their foe God left a very plain print on the Red Sea: A large trough right through the sea wherein Israel might travel dry-foot! But get this admission from the wicked magicians when they could not mimic the fourth plague — that one of the turning dust to lice; the magicians told Pharoah ''This is *the finger of God.*'' You see, even the wicked recognized God's fingerprints in those miracles: God was known as a miracle worker.

Later when the people were encamped at the foot of Mount Horeb, God made ten other fingerprints. We know them as The Ten Commandments. In Deut. 9:10 Moses, reciting that desert history, said, ''And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone written with *The Finger of God.*'' So, as a murderer leaves prints on the murder weapon, revealing himself to be the author of that deed; and as a child leaves prints on the cookie jar, revealing himself to be the author of that deed; so also God leaves proof that His Fingers did the deed. I can recall another fingerprint proof from Holy Writ. When King Balshazzar was feasting in his palace, drinking from the golden cups which he had stolen from the temple in Jerusalem, and using them for the service of his gods, suddenly, a writing appeared on the plaster wall of his dining room. The writing was done as by a man's hand and finger. The frightened king sent for Daniel to explain that miracle. Daniel said, ''That was a part of a hand sent from God.'' So, Daniel *and* the king knew it was the Finger of God writing judgment upon the king and his kingdom. God's fingerprints revealing himself to be the author of that writing.

And now I am going to take a big leap in time. To the first Christmas day. The night that Jesus was born the angels sang of His glory telling the church that that baby was God in the flesh of our human nature. Later, when Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist, a voice from heaven said, ''This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased.'' We all know that Jesus was sent to do God's will, His work, -make fingerprints for God. He was the Finger appointed by God. His miracles testified of that. He cast out demons, He healed lepers, He raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead, etc., etc., all fingerprints. Jesus, Himself understood that. When the wicked Pharisees saw Him cast a demon from a man they accused Him of doing so by the power of Satan. He then said to them ''If I by the *finger of God* cast out devils then know ye that the kingdom of God is come unto you.''

So Jesus was, and is God's greatest Fingerprint. Not the biggest, not lik

the starry heavens, not like the big earth, not even like that dry path through the Red Sea. No, not the biggest, but the greatest. Jesus showed us that He was the great revelation of all God's work of salvation. What a print that is! There is no margin of error in the statement. Undoubtedly, unmistakedly, God is the sole Author of that work in us; from the beginning (rebirth) to the end (glorification) it is the Father's work, in and through our Lord Jesus Christ, Right?

And, children, if you have noticed any of my fingerprints on this letter you may be sure, that is a proof that I wrote it.

Love Gramps.

LOVE THE LORD THY GOD

Jim Koole is a member of Hope Church, Walker, MI.

by Jim Koole

Fellow youth in Christ. I have been asked to write on the last part of Question and Answer 105, Lord's Day 40

"Also that I hurt not myself, nor willfully expose myself to any danger."

This part of question and answer 105 is under the sixth commandment in the law of God; "Thou shalt not kill." This does not only mean that we may not kill our neighbor, but also that we may not commit suicide. These are sins that are so prevalent in our day and age. Just read the newspaper, it is full of this ungodly sin.

This command covers more than the actual sin of taking a man's life or the taking of our own life. Christ says in Matt. 5:21 & 22 for us to hate the brother even in thought is a sin. It is also sinful for us to be dissatisfied with God's way in life for us. God has been pleased to dwell within us. I Cor. 3:16 & 17a "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy;"

Maybe a clearer way to understand this, is to rephrase the command this

way. "We may not willfully expose ourselves to any danger where we get hurt, nor where the possibility of getting hurt exists. This is not talking of the Providence of God whereby it may be His will to take our life, but where we beforehand already know we could get hurt.

We say to ourselves that we would never place ourselves in a position where we could get hurt or take our own lives. Why then do you think this command is written so personally. Look at the way our forefathers worded it. "I will not hate my neighbor, I will not hurt myself and I will not willfully expose myself to any danger."

Our forefathers use as proof that we must fight against this sin Christ himself. Matt. 4:6-7: Christ and the Devil are on the pinnacle of the temple and Satan says to Him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee." Satan says go ahead and jump because God will watch over you. Christ says to Satan, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." He knows God will watch over Him, but He would not willfully expose Himself to danger.

We also know Christ watches over us. The Scripture speaks of this over and over, how God cares for His own. That does not mean we can go ahead and break the law of the land and drive over the speed limit and say God will care for us. We not only sin against God in speeding, but also in placing ourselves in the danger of getting in an accident and hurting ourselves. We do not go out and drink and then drive, exposing ourselves to danger. God hates all such wickedness.

It is a sin as we have concluded to expose ourselves to danger, may we seek our entertainment where the world does so? What about such things as the races, circus, boxing and the list could go on and on. You know where the world commits this sin. Why do you see such crowds at these events? It is because the world thrives on sinning against the majesty of God. They can't wait to tell their friends of the gruesome accident they saw at the races or how one boxer beat up and hurt another boxer. Do we take joy in these so called pleasures of the world?

The Word of God in II Cor. 7:17 says: "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you." What a beautiful promise of God. Young people, may our walk not be as the world's walk, may our entertainment not be as the world's entertainment, but may our walk be as children of Light.

May the words of I John 2:14b-15a exemplify us as christian youth. "I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." And I Timothy 4:12, "Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity."

May we pray for the strength to walk as pilgrims and strangers, that when the Lord shall appear we may be found faithful. May God graciously preserv us. Yea, Lord Jesus, come quickly.

Golden Nuggets From The Gold Mine Of The Scriptures

by Rev. C. Hanko

"For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish." Psalm 1:6.

Back in my childhood days many homes had a large framed picture on the wall depicting the narrow way that leads to life and the broad way that leads to destruction. Often we stood studying that picture. The broad way, I recall so well, was a wide, smooth road with many laughing people enjoying each other's company along the way. The road was lined with various places of enterainment, theaters, dance halls, taverns, dope dens and the like. No one took notice of the fact that at the end of the road was thick darkness, smoke and fire. The narrow way had the cross at the outset, and beyond that a narrow gate. Homes and churches lined the way, but the way itself was winding, steep, rugged, leading through dark canyons and over steep hills. Along the way lurked lions and hidden snares. It was by no means an easy way. But from the far end of the way shone a bright light of eternal glory.

There is a marked similarity between that picture and our text, since they both speak of two ways, the way of the righteous and the way of the ungodly. But there is also a definite difference between the two, for the picture was intended as a warning, while our text is intended as an incentive to the true

believer in Christ Jesus.

The Lord knows the way of the righteous.

The key word is *knows*. Jehovah knows the way of the righteous man, but He does not know the way of the ungodly sinner. As a result, the righteous one inherits eternal life, while the sinner perishes in his sins. This causes the Psalmist to cry out, O the blessedness! Thrice blest is the righteous man now and forever! (verse 1).

If you will consult your English dictionary, you will find that even there the word 'know' has various meanings. This is much more true in Scripture, where the word has a very rich meaning.

Take note of Gen. 4:1, where we read that Adam *knew* his wife. Out of that intimate knowledge children were born.

In I John 2:3 we are told, "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." The first know refers to our experience. The second know speaks of intimate love, surrender, fellowship. We experience that the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the fact that we desire to be pleasing to Him.

God says of Abraham in Gen. 18:19, "For I know him." In the previous verse the Angel of Jehovh had visited Abraham, had eaten and communed with him, and was now reavealing to him the secrets of God's heart. God will bless Abraham in such a way that this blessing will carry on throughout his spiritual seed in their generations.

This is in harmony with Rom. 8:29, where we read, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate. . .". God knows with an eternal determination of love for His people, whereby He claims them as His own to bless them in His covenant fellowship forever.

Many more references could be cited. In your daily devotions be sure to take note of that word *know* in the Scriptures.

In our text we are told that God not only knows the *righteous*, but He also knows *their way*. It is exactly because God knows His people from eternity that He declares them righteous through the death of His dear Son on the cross, makes them worthy to be called His sons and daughters, and prepares for them an inheritance in the heavens.

The obvious implication of the text is, that God does not know the way of the ungodly. O yes, He has determined that way also, even from eternity. He directs that way by His providence, so that the wicked serve their purpose for the salvation of the saints. But God always looks down upon them in His wrath, and ultimately judges them according to all their ungodly deeds which they commit against Him.

They deliberately put God out of their thoughts, yet they can never escape His all-seeing eye. They transgress all His commands by indulging in hatred, stealing, slander, sinful lusts, breaking the Sabbath, swearing, inventing and serving their own gods, as if God in heaven does not know, yet He keeps record of all their deeds. They think they are getting away with their ungodly walk, but God is only giving them over to their sins until the day of His just

retribution.

We read of pagan young people who indulge in sexual relationships before they are married. The boys gain esteem by getting a large number of girls involved in their sex life. The girls readily give themselves to promiscuity. As you can imagine, this dissipation often results in a forced, undesirable marriage that is headed for disaster.

But are the so-called 'Christian' nations, which boast of their culture any better, especially with their modern means of birth control and abortion? The epidemic of social diseases in our own country is a sad commentary on that which is done in secret, and not always so secret at that. These are the ungodly who are visited already in this life for their ungodly deeds. And this is one aspect of their ungodly walk. How about so many members of the church who listen to hard rock, attend theaters, and read novels that are saturated with sex and all the horrors of sin? How about our own young people?

Thus speaks the Lord to wicked men:
  My statutes why do ye declare?
Why take my covenant in your mouth,
  Since ye for wisdom do not care?
For ye my holy words profane
  And cast them from you in disdain.

God *knows* the way of the righteous.

God has planned every step of that way in sovereign love and wisdom.

God leads His people along that way, over Calvary, through the narrow gate of Christ's righteousness.

God enlightens His children by His Holy Spirit, creates the new life of Christ in them, brings them to conversion, to faith, to a sincere love and devotion to Him.

Sometimes Father leads His child through trials and bitter afflictions. At those times God may seem far away from them; it becomes difficult to pray. Satan attacks with sore temptations that seem too great to resist. Asaph says in Psalm 73, "My feet were almost gone (from under me); my steps had well nigh slipped." And sometimes we do slip and fall into sin, much to our shame. Yet in those trying times the Lord preserves His own, purifies them as by fire, so that they come forth stronger and better Christians. We can say, as Asaph said after his trials, "Nevertheless, I am continually with thee: thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory."

The way of the ungodly shall perish. At the end of their way is everlasting hell fire, where God defends His Holy Name and visits the sinner for all his sins in just retribution.

The way of the righteous ends in eternal blessedness, for at the end of their way stands Father's House with its many mansions, and Christ with the victor's wreath in His hand, to reward every man according to His works of grace. O the blessedness! Thrice blessed is he who loves and keeps God's commands.

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

The Christian Buying The Truth

"Buy the truth and sell it not." — Prov. 23:23

John Bunyan's incomparable story, *Pilgrim's Progress*, sees Christian and Faithful passing through Vanity Fair (this world), where all kinds of merchandise are displayed for sale: houses, lands, trades, businesses, titles, public and ecclesiastical offices, countries, kingdoms; lusts, pleasures and delights, as whores, wives, husbands, children, masters, servants, lives, blood, bodies, souls, silver, gold and all earth's natural resources. One finds there the Italian Row with its beads, crucifixes, masses and Marian cult. There is the German Row with its philosophies and destructive higher critical mutilations of the Bible. The French Row has its fashions, art, skepticism, atheism, communism, debilitated immorality and blot of St. Batholomew's Day Massacre. The nation's best no longer appear at this Fair. There is the Russian Row with its atheism, godlessness, its American-built-and-furnished factories, its Marxism upheld by lofty supporting columns of the wealth of American capitalism, its encroaching colonialism and expanding military machinery. There is the American Row with its opulence, agnosticism, apathy, crime, its moral decrepitude and political and military ineptitude. The merchants along these rows cry to passersby, "Come, buy! buy! Why don't you buy?" To this hard-sell pitch the pilgrim's answer, We buy the *truth*! We buy the Pearl of great price. We buy the Treasure hidden in the field. We will buy the truth at any cost. No price is too dear for it. Buy the truth! That commodity you must buy and never sell, give all for it and never exchange it.

It is having the truth which makes a man good. There was a man who, calling Jesus good, asked what good thing he could do to inherit eternal life. But he himself was not good for he was unwilling to buy the truth at the expense of all that he had. Others, too, thought the price of truth too steep, as Herod and Agrippa. Some had it (at hand, but not in heart), yet sold it, as Esau, Judas and Demas. The ungodly world lives, loves and worships the lie, while it holds the truth down in unrighteousness. It thinks the lie, desires it, speaks it, eats it, sings it, prints it, paints it and educates in its depths.

The false church, too, is especially devoted to the lie, much more so than the profane world. It operates the lie mill with a vengeance, corrupting the truth and its membership, so that it never buys the truth. It has sold out every vestige of it. Therefore, the great masses of people everywhere no longer know what you mean when you testify, I buy the truth! Nevertheless, consider:

I. *The Commodity*. Negatively, be not deceived by any substitute. Beware of counterfeits. Accept no paper money, no debased coin. That is, have nothing to do with a "gospel" debased into "another gospel." That is not "truth" which is thought to be so in man's judgment. The following have not the truth: the philosopher, the modern politician, the atheist scientist, the well-educated but *sans* church news media man. "Thy Word is truth," therefore, Buy the truth though it knocks your prejudices in the head, though it prove you foolish.

Positively, this priceless commodity is the truth. In its confessional form it appears objectively in the Belgic Confession, subjectively in the Heidelberg Catechism and antithetically in the Canons of Dort. Buy up all that! Don't sell any of it. Doctrinal truth it is. There is no truth without doctrinal truth. They err who tell you it is not a doctrine, but a person. It's both! The scripture is profitable for doctrine, and by means of it to exhort with all longsuffering. II Tim. 3:16; 4:2.

Experiential truth is "truth on the inward parts," "truth in the heart" (Ps. 51:6; 15:2). Only when the truth is rooted in the heart will there be a walking in the way of truth. There is a truthful way of doing everything and a lying way of doing things. There is a truthful way of peddling newspapers and a lying way of doing that. There is a truthful way and a deceitful way of doing business. Someone always asks, Must I go broke to be a Christian? I have to eat! I have to live! But no, it is not absolutely necessary to eat or to live. It is absolutely necessary to obey God and to live in strict conformity to the standard of truth. There is a truthful way and a hyprocritical way of living the Christian life. The truthful way is in buying the truth and selling it not. The truth is not going to *win* the world (postmillennialism); it will *shame* the world! The truth is too sharp for the world. Yet do not compromise the truth by blunting its double-edge, nor by filing down the defensive-offensive fighting weapon it is to a harmless dress sword.

The command, "Buy the truth" implies that by nature we do not have it. We need not buy what we already have. By nature, we neither have it, nor love it, preferring to be flattered with clever myths and fictions. Therefore we need grace to heed the injunction or we shall be destitute of the truth. (I Tim. 6:5).

II. *The Purchase* of it means a parting with everything else. Does this mean that Christ, the gospel and salvation can be bought? In the sense of our text, yes, but not in any other sense. The only way to "buy" eternal life is not as Simon Magus thought to do, with money, but in the gospel sense, "without money and without price," and in harmony with the injunction, "Go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves" (Matt. 25:9). Doing so, we heed the counsel, "Buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed. . . ." (Rev. 3:18).

This means we shall be glad to part with all for the sake of the truth. We shall be willing to part with every sin, for we cannot hold with sin and buy the truth. We sin, yet can be saved, for God saves sinners; but we cannot *love* sin and be saved. For the saved are saved from the love of sin. To buy the truth is to depart from evil and do good.

Then procure nothing but the truth. Buy *only* the truth. Don't waste time nor energy on anything other than the truth. Millions are spent on buildings for the doing of evil. Think of the properties owned and operated by the curious new cults. Many pulpits pour out a sugar-coated but deadly spiritual cyanide. Don't buy that "evangelism" with the fancy "you can choose" label. (This means that the natural man can choose either the lie or the truth. But "the natural man receiveth—chooseth—*not* the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them—so how *could* he choose them?—for they are spiritually discerned"—it takes discernment to make a choice, and spiritual discernment to make a good choice—I Cor. 2:14.) No one has a natural, native desire for the truth. One must by God's gift and grace be given the desire for it. He will never choose the truth who has no desire for it. Never will he choose it *until* he has a desire for it. Then to desire it is to choose it. Then he will say, in the love of the truth, "I have *chosen* the way of truth" (Ps. 119:30). Likewise of the natural man it is said, Prov. 17:16, Why is there in the hand of a fool money to buy wisdom when he has no heart for it? or, "no *mind* for it!" Why is a rich playboy packed off to college to secure an all-expense-paid education when his heart is not in it, or worse, he has no mind for it? Just so, no one will ever buy the truth as long as he has no heart for it.

Buy *only* the truth and it won't be that *ersatz* truth of easy-believism or only-believism or the "just say 'yes' to Jesus" stuff. If it is not the truth it is not genuine. Frippery and flummery are for fools. When you know a thing is a fake, you hardly want it as a gift. Buy *all* the truth. Why pick and choose, buy a half truth? You won't be satisfied with even a prime cut of truth; you must have the whole beef of truth. One truth balances another. Omit a truth and you become unbalanced. Calvinism is the truth. Then buy all of Calvinism. To mix half Calvinism and half Arminianism, or 70 per cent Calvinism with 30 per cent Arminianism is not to buy the truth but to sell it. "Buy of Me" Christ commands. To seek the truth elsewhere is to seek it in vain. The truth of His blood will wash away the false in you. The truth of His Spirit will blot out the darkness in you.

III. *The Warning* against selling the truth. Some do sell it. Some do

because they deem the cost of truth too great, the price to quit sin too high. They talk about the truth, express a desire for it, but do not buy it. Some sell the truth because it's fashionable to do so. They sell it because "everybody's doing it." Have you ever pled before your parents a course of action on such a "ground"? The answer to that is, That's right! Everybody is doing it; but *not* in our family! Some sell the truth in the interest of what they think is respectability, which lesser commodity lies with the complex and the vague. But modern sophisticates are satisfied with less than the truth, which is too simple, too plain for them. Some sell the truth for the crowd, for comfort, for bread, or even for nothing. Others tire of the truth, become weary of it, like the man who deserts his wife because, with the novelty of married life worn off, he has grown tired of her.

What fools people are concerning wisdom and truth! For the one many turn to Theosophy, and for the other to Astrology. But where the gospel is purely preached they have no heart to buy what they simply cannot afford to be without. They'd sooner lose it than labor for it. Fight to get into the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 11:12)? They go sleeping to hell! Some leave the oasis where the gospel is purely preached, and so sell the truth. As for those brainwashed cultists who remain in a "church" where they cannot discern that "the moon is not the sun," they *never* buy the truth, but *always* sell it! The hypocrite will have it-for show-at the least expense possible. We have the truth, but it is not as though it cost us nothing. Sometimes it costs a job; it costs friends and relatives. Part of the price paid is the opening of the ear, the removal of the stony heart and transplant of a heart of flesh. It costs earnest, incessant prayer to God in the spirit of, "Lead me in Thy truth and teach me" (Ps. 25:5). It takes daily laborious searching of scripture, but *nothing* must stand between you and the truth; not money, pleasure, occupation, hobby, aesthetic interests, opportunity for marriage, girl-friend or boy-friend. Nothing must be dearer to us than the truth of God. We belong in the church where the faith of our fathers is living still, where the perfect doctrine of salvation is preached, taught and preserved. You do not buy the truth when you say something like, "Well, this or that church is close enough to the truth." To take such a stand is to place some man, or some woman, before God. The "close enough" contention sells out the truth. No church which is creedless, or with only a six-point or ten-point creed, or which has relegated its creed to the archives or to the glass case of the museum is "close enough." No church which is a reeking system of pagan superstition is anywhere near "close enough" to the truth. Buying the truth includes insisting that the pure, unadulterated Word of the gospel be in the pulpit. Be not content with proximity to truth, with fragments of truth, little pieces of truth. Get the truth itself!

Then is what you read the truth? Is what you hear the truth? Is your work and activity in harmony with the truth? Do you play according to the rules of truth? Are you so wholeheartedly on and involved in the truth that you have no "back room" of your consciousness devoted to something else? How far along in the truth are you?

DRAMA - Should We Use It?

This article appeared in the May, 1957 issue of Beacon Lights and was the negative part of a debate in print. We use it only and not the affirmative statement because the very real problem concerning this subject is close and obvious to each one of us. It need not therefore be established by an article. This presentation by the late Jim Jonker is a correct one and to the point. Let us seriously, for a moment, as young people think on these things.

by Jim Jonker

Drama has become one of the most popular forms of entertainment in our day. We can find it in various places, on the radio, over television, in the movies, in operas, in amateur plays, and even in the church. But though it is popular, it is also very questionable. Questionable not only regarding practice, especially as it is corrupted by Hollywood in our day, but also regarding principle. The question for the Christian is, "Is it right, or is it principly wrong?" If there is principle objection to it, no one will dare to maintain that it is still right and proper to have drama. Let me prove that there is such principle objection. We will consider drama from two aspects; its origin and development, and its essential make-up.

Drama originated with the Greeks and soon was studied and copied by the Romans. In England, Roman drama was adopted. The drama came to America especially from England, but some came from the Greeks and Romans. We would note here, that at an early date the church began to use the drama, but also at an early date it felt the evil of it, banished it, and relegated it to the streets.

Especially two things are evident concerning the origin of drama. First, drama surely originates in the world. That the world of Greece and Rome was evil and the Greeks and Romans an ungodly lot is plain from the accounts of many and various historians, but above all from what Paul tells us of them in chapters such as I Cor. 1 and 2, Acts 17, and especially Romans 1. Secondly, drama busies itself with the world. Drama came out of a lust for the sensual and in both Greece and Rome centered about and grew up out of rites to the god of wine.

But now you ask the question: "Just because drama comes out of this world, is it necessarily evil? Is the drama as such sinful? To this we answer "Yes." Note the essential make-up of drama. The original word from which "drama" came means to perform or do, and hence to act out. The drama as a

stage term, therefore signifies that life is dramatized and acted out; that one person assumes the personality of another. Why is this wrong? We call your attention to three reasons.

First, the Christian may not dramatize life. Life is an immense reality. Life is the allotted time which God gives His image-bearers *to serve Him*. Life is God-given and that life is not a joke or a play-thing. A Sovereign God gives it, and a Sovereign God demands that the creature shall glorify him with it. Can a Christian play and act such a grim reality? and that for amusement or profit? Shall he play the life of rebellion of the reprobate, or play the serious struggle of the child of God? Does not Scripture forbid it? Life is too serious! Don't bring in an excuse that drama can show life. Would you see life, then turn not to the stage, but to the Bible!

Secondly, the Christian may not play the part of any other human. God gave each man the stamp of personality. If a man takes a personality which God gave, not to him, but to someone else, and tries to put off his God-given personality, he is living and acting the lie. The better the actor can realize that lie, the lie that he loses his identity in that of the one he is dramatizing, the better actor he is said to be. If one plays the part of another, he is of necessity a HYPOCRITE. It will be striking to note that the word "hypocrite" as it is used in the Scriptures is exactly the word the Greeks used to designate a person who takes part in a drama. And Scripture tells us that hypocrisy is a great sin. (e.g. Rev. 22:15). Note also our Belgic Confession in Art. 37: "Nay, all men shall give an account of every idle word they have spoken, which the world only counts amusement and jest . . . and then the secrets and hypocrisy of men shall be disclosed and laid open before all."

Thirdly, no Christian may dramatize sin. Apart from the fact that this is done for profit or amusement, to dramatize sin should be for the Christian a capital crime. Instead of abhorring it, one becomes an imitator of that which is evil. The covenant child of God, instead of playing sin (which is a denial that sin is a terrible reality and an abomination to the Lord), seeks more and more to be made free from it.

When you, Christian friend, consider this question, look at it basically and principly. Come not with petty arguments and excuses or try to compare it to other things which are acceptable and by a stretch of the imagination can be construed as remotely resembling drama. Do not ask questions about its results, such as, "Can drama not be educational?" No one will doubt this. Many sinful things can be educational. The end never justifies the means. Look at it for what it is: behold it in the light of God's Word.

"Be ye not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

"Love not the world, neither the things of the world. If any man love the world, the love of God is not in him."

Let your prayer be that of the Psalmist — "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way."

PUZZLE

The words in the puzzle are found in a Psalter number.

You will find the Psalm from which it was taken in the free letters after having circled the words.

T H F E I D O O T S R E D N U
H E A V E N F S N B A S E I P
E L E I F T A Q I F L E E G O
I P M L E C Y U A T G O D H N
R H A D A X S A S D H R S E D
H E H T R L I I E M I G H T F
I U S C O A B L Y A S S A I L
S O M O N K W O E S R E M R T
R D F A O O E I E D A C P E N
P Z I O N E V E N H E A R T A
E X L K G N I S O G L F A T T
O U T D I S T A N T I F Y A L
P C O R R U P T I O N I E C U
L F D I S M A Y A D E L R S X
E M O H E J C Y L D A L G B E

News From, For and About Our Churches

by Karen Vink

BIRTHS

Mr. & Mrs. Don Terpstra were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Elizabeth.

Mr. & Mrs. Lew Bruinsma of Redlands were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Gina Mae, on September 17.

Mr. & Mrs. Dave Groeneweg of Hull rejoice in the birth of a daughter, Larissa Jo, on October 26.

Mr. & Mrs. James Koole of Hope were blessed with the birth of twin girls, Stephanie Joy and Sarah Jean, on October 29.

Mr. & Mrs. Mark Jurries were blessed with the birth of a daughter on November 29.

CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

Mr. Keith Vooys, of South Holland, made public confession of his faith on October 3.

Gayle Brummel, of Hull, made public confession of her faith on October 10.

Kenneth Engelsma, Joyce Kuiper, Jon Meulenberg, James Reitsma, and David Schimmel of Hope made public confession of their faith on October 17.

Duane Huisken, Dan Bodbyl, and Anna Mae Meelker of Redlands made public confession of their faith on October 24.

Public confession of faith was made by Ken Elzinga and Todd Terpstra of Hope on November 21.

Dan Kaiser, Doug Looyenga, Joan Oomkes, Mary Oomkes, Dirk Monsma, Pam Pastoor, and Larry Van Putten of First made public confession of their faith on December 12.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Henry T. Heemstra and three baptized children were transferred from Holland to Faith.

The membership papers of Miss Rachel Jansma have been transferred from Hull to Loveland.

Hull has received the membership papers of Mrs. Dennis Hoksbergen from First Christian Reformed Church.

The membership papers of Mrs. William Faber have been received by Southeast from Christ Community Reformed Church.

The membership papers of Mrs. Sally Koll were transferred from Southwest to First.

The membership papers of David Buiter were transferred from Redlands to Hope.

The membership papers of Lora Ondersma have been transferred from Hope to Faith.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. John Kalsbeek and their seven baptized children were transferred from Redlands to Faith.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Ed Karsemeyer and their two baptized children were transferred from Hull to Redlands.

South Holland received the membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Roger Maatman and four baptized children from Bethany Christian Reformed Church.

ACTIVITIES

The Ladies Aid of Redlands held a Pot Luck Supper on July 23.

A Reformation Day Lecture was held in South Holland on October 25.

A Reformation Day Lecture given by Rev. Engelsma was held on October 28 in Grandville High School.

The Young People of Hull sponsored a singspiration on October 31.

The Choral Society of South Holland held a singspiration on November 7.

Holland Choral Society gave a concert on November 7.

A Thanksgiving singspiration was held in Faith Church on November 21.

The Ladies Circle of Loveland held a bazaar on December 3.

Hudsonville Choral Society held a program on December 5.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of South Holland held a Bake Sale on December 11.

The Federation Board sponsored a roller skating party at Terry Hall on December 1.

The young people of South Holland sponsored a hayride on October 7.

A Young People's Fall Retreat was held on October 8 & 9.

The young people of Loveland sponsored a skating party on October 18.

The young people of Redlands sponsored a Pancake Breakfast on October 30.

A Young People's Mass Meeting was held at Hope Church on Sunday, November 21.

MARRIAGES

Pat Feyt and Bill Faber of Southeast were united in marriage.

Darlene Brunsting and Kevin De Groot of Hull were united in marriage.

Arlene Moelker and Henry Westhuis of Southeast were united in marriage on August 27.

Cindy Van Kampen of Holland and Mark Ophoff of First were united in marriage on October 15.

Gerben De Jong and Carol Roti of Hull were united in marriage on October 29.

Thomas Buiter and Laurie Kamps were united in marriage on November 5.

Beverly Poortenga and Ronald Bultema of South Holland were united in marriage on November 19.

Mary Flikkema and Keith Vooys of South Holland were united in marriage on November 27.

Richard Dykstra of First and Valerie Kerkstra were united in marriage on December 9.

THE PATHS OF THE LORD

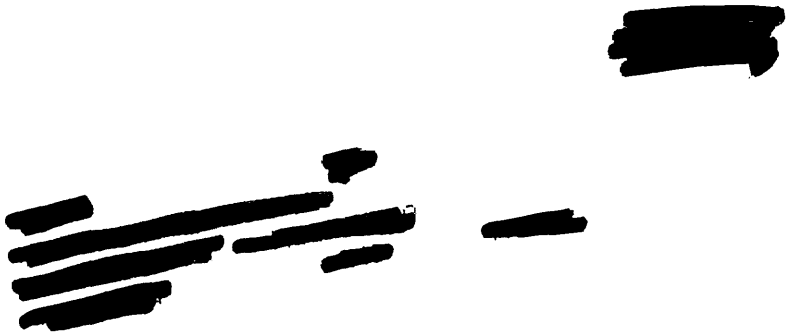
Grace and truth shall mark the way
  Where the Lord his own will lead,
If His word they still obey,
  And His testimonies heed.

For Thy Name's sake hear Thou me,
  For Thy mercy, Lord, I wait;
Pardon my iniquity,
  For my sin is very great.

He who walks in godly fear
  In the path of truth shall go;
Peace shall be His portion here,
  And His sons all good shall know.

They that fear and love the Lord
  Shall Jehovah's friendship know;
He will grace to them accord,
  And His faithful covenant show.

The Psalter #68



COME TO WASHINGTON!

1983 PRYP Convention

Trinty Western College, Langley, B.C.

August 15 - 19

hosted by the

Young People's Society of

Lynden Washington