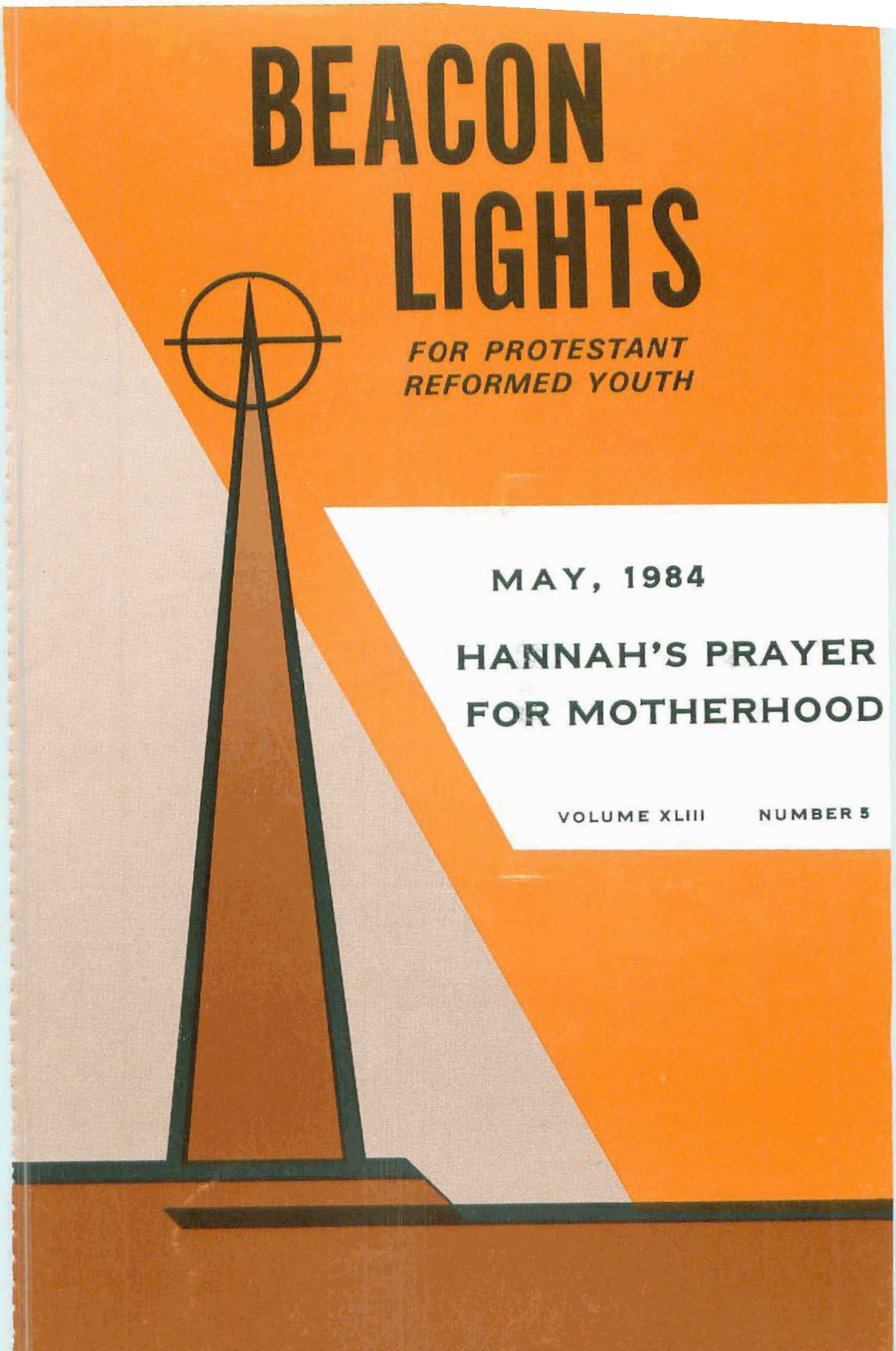
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH



MAY, 1984

HANNAH'S PRAYER FOR MOTHERHOOD

VOLUME XLIII NUMBER 5

Published monthly (except June-July and August-September are combined) by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.

EXECUTIVE BOARD
Dan Schipper - President; Bruce Klamer - Vice-President; Denise Van Baren - Secretary; Jane Pastoor - Vice-Secretary; Todd Terpstra - Treasurer; Jerry Kuiper - Vice Treasurer; Pam Kuiper - Librarian; Jon Bol - Youth Coordinator; Rev. Kortering, Rev. Van Baren - Spiritual Advisors

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF
David Harbach - Editor-in-Chief; John M. Faber, Ed Lotterman - Associate Editors; Mike Lotterman - Finance Manager; Marcia Lotterman - Secretary; Grace Faber, Vonda Klamer, Mike Rau, Thelma Westra

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Mrs. H. Brands, Paula Faber, Rev. C. Hanko, Rev. R. Harbach, John Kalsbeek Jr., Bernie Kamps, Rev. D. Kuiper, John Ten Haaf, Dean Wassink, Ben Wigger

Forms 3579 should be returned to:
BEACON LIGHTS
1382 Su-Lew Dr. S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504
Second Class Postage paid at Jenison, MI
(USPS 046-840)

EDITORIAL OFFICE: David Harbach
4930 Ivanrest Ave. S.W., Apt. B,
Grandville, MI 49418

NEWS EDITOR: Paula Faber
4190 Burton S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506

EDITORIAL POLICY
The articles of **Beacon Lights** do not necessarily indicate the viewpoint of the Editorial Staff. Every author is solely responsible for the contents of his own article.
If any material of **Beacon Lights** is reprinted by another periodical, we will appreciate your giving the source.
Contributions of general interest are very welcome.

SUBSCRIPTION DUES:
MICHIGAN: Grace Faber
4190 Burton S.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49506

OUTSIDE MICHIGAN: Vonda Klamer
10143 Wilson Ave. S.W., Byron Center, MI 49315

COLLECTIONS SEND TO: Mike Lotterman
1382 Su-Lew Dr. S.W., Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Subscription Price $5.00

CONTENTS

Editor's Notes - Dave Harbach 1
Hannah's Prayer For Motherhood - Rev. S. R. Houck 1
As A Father Pitieth His Children - Reformed Child Rearing - Rev. Engelsma . 3
CRITIQUE
One-of-a-kind-Teens? - Ben Wigger 6
TRUTH VS. ERROR
God's Eternity - Rev. R. C. Harbach 8
God's Promised Gift to Mothers, Legacy to Daughters - Mrs. D. Engelsma .. 11
CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS
Bible Studies - Deane Wassink 16
A Letter To Rachel - Francis Quek Kok How 17
Who Am I? 21

EDITOR'S NOTES

by Dave Harbach

Our cover article by Rev. Houck, "Hannah's Prayer for Motherhood", will prove to be spiritually encouraging to all who read it.

There is no editorial for this issue so that we may include two lengthy articles. Originally Mrs. Engelsma's article was to be in two installments but because of the nature of its content and an abundance of material for the April issue, we kept it entirely for the May issue. The other lengthy article is by Francis Quek Kok How, who wrote a letter to a friend requesting advice as she was contemplating college. Although a specific name is used - Rachel - it is understood that the letter can also apply to any young woman contemplating college.

In addition, the last installment of "As A Father Pitieth His Children" by Rev. Engelsma comes with a bit of sorrow. We are grateful to Rev. Engelsma for allowing us to print this excellent topic and hope that as you have read through the series you have been edified.

The possible answers to the puzzle, "Who Am I?", can be sent to me. I promise to put the answer in the June/July issue, so that your mind is put at ease.

HANNAH'S PRAYER FOR MOTHERHOOD

by Rev. Steven R. Houck

Hannah was very upset. Elkanah, Peninnah, and the children, however, were all enjoying the sacrificial meal. They had all gone to Shiloh "to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord." (I Sam. 1:1-18). It was a time of rejoicing and festivity. But Hannah was not happy. Elkanah had always been a very loving husband to her. He gave her a better portion of the meal than he gave to anyone else. But Hannah could not eat. Instead of eating, she wept. Year after year it was always the same. Whenever they went to Shiloh, the others ate, drank, and enjoyed themselves, but Hannah wept. For on those occasions Peninnah would provoke Hannah. She would scornfully remind her of the fact that she was childless. All of

Elkanah's children were of Peninnah. In all the years that Hannah had been married to him, she had not been able to give him a single child.

Indeed, this was the source of Hannah's sorrow. Not the wicked provocations of Peninnah. For a godly woman must expect such wickedness of her adversaries. But Hannah was childless. God had shut up her womb. Oh what a terrible affliction. There could be nothing worse than that. How could she be happy? How could she eat and drink? There before her eyes were all of Peninnah's children, but she had none. She felt as if she had failed as a woman of Israel. Her life was unfulfilled. There was something very important which was left out of her life. This grieved her greatly. Oh how her soul was vexed. As long as she was childless, she could not rejoice.

How different is this attitude of Hannah from that of most women today. They do not grieve because of a lack of children. They grieve because they have too many. Most are more interested in a career than in motherhood. Children do not fit into their plans very well. Therefore, they sharply limit the number of children in order that their life may not be too severely burdened. Often times young couples decide that they will have no children at all. At least not for the first years of their marriage. They say that they are more interested in the quality of life than in quantity. The wife must find her full potential as a woman. To feel fulfilled in life, she must have a career. Besides that, the couple receives a very pleasant bonus when the wife works. They have two sources of income instead of one. With the extra money they can buy the things that they have always wanted to buy and do all kinds of exciting things too. Their chief desire in life is a very wicked one — the advancement of their own selfish pleasures and material prosperity.

Hannah could have had this kind of life if she wanted it. Just think of the things she could have done. While Peninnah was stuck home with her children, Elkanah and Hannah could have enjoyed life. Hannah was a free woman. But she was a godly woman. She was not interested in her own worldly prosperity. Worldly pleasure was not the driving force in her life. Hannah wanted to be a mother. This desire was so strong, that she even brought this matter before the Lord. She went to the tabernacle and there she prayed to the Lord. For she knew that, if the Lord so willed it, He could open her womb and make her fruitful. Children are not simply the products of a man and woman. They are the gifts of God. (Ps. 127:3). He gives and He withholds according to His good pleasure. If Hannah was to have the child she so dearly wanted, then God must do it. Thus we read, "And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." (I Sam. 1:11). This was Hannah's prayer for motherhood.

Notice that this prayer was not a selfish prayer. Hannah, indeed, longed to be a mother. But she did not want a child simply to satisfy her own desires. She prayed for a man child, but in that prayer she also vowed to give that child unto the Lord. Her child, Samuel, would be brought to the tabernacle and there serve the Lord all of His days. The desire for motherhood was a desire for the advancement of God's kingdom and Church. Hannah's primary concern was not for herself, but for God's cause in this world. She considered it to be her duty as a godly woman to raise a family in the fear of the Lord. If she was to fulfill her calling in life, then she must bring children into the world who, by God's grace, would be children of the Church and Covenant.

This must be the desire of the women of our churches too. Our women must be mothers. The message which God gave to His people at the time of the Babylonian captivity, is the message we must hear and heed today. "Take ye wives, and beget sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; that ye may be increased there, and not diminished." (Jer. 29:5-6). For the sake of the church of God, we must "be fruitful and multiply." The women of our churches must be mothers so that God's people might be "increased and not deminished" in this world. This is not a matter of personal preference or choice. This concerns the kingdom of God and the Church of Jesus Christ.

Young women of Israel, do not seek to be doctors, lawyers, plumbers, and electricians as do so many women in our day. Your calling is to marry and be Covenant mothers in the Church. Do not desire the pleasures of the world as do the women of the world. The kind of freedom which they seek is really bondage. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness." (Matt. 7:33). Long to be mothers who bring forth the children of the Covenant, by God's grace. Childbearing is the way of life which God has ordained for you. (I Tim. 2:15). It is the way in which He gives you a full and good life. Make your prayer the prayer of Hannah. Pray that God will make you fruitful. Pray that He will give you many sons and daughters who fear the Lord and serve Him always. Pray for motherhood.

As A Father Pitieth His Children [REFORMED CHILD REARING]

by Rev. David J. Engelsma

Discipline is no enemy of parental love for their children. Rather, love demands discipline, if this love for children reflects God's love for His children. The experience of every believer convinces him of the truth of this, for the Heavenly Father disciplines every one of His children. Scripture teaches this emphatically. It is the powerful doctrine of Hebrews 12, not only that the God Who loves us also chastises us, but also that it is exactly His Fatherly love that chastises: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons. . . ." (vss. 6,7). God's discipline is severe: rebuke, chastising, whipping. This is the figure; the reality is sickness, poverty, persecution, and death. It was not yet unto blood among the Hebrew Christians, but it might come to this. Because of the

severity of the discipline, the chastised were discouraged, wearied, fainting, ready to throw in the towel and quit—their hands hung down and their knees were feeble.

The purpose of God with this discipline is our profit, "that we might be partakers of his holiness" (v. 10). For the rearing of us, instruction alone is not enough, not even when the Teacher is God and the teaching, His Word. Our depravity is so great, that chastisement is needed, in addition.

Earthly parents must learn from this aspect of Divine Fatherhood. A love for our children that is lax, that withholds discipline, is not the love of God for them; in fact, the wisdom of Proverbs says that it is not love at all: "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes" (13:24). It is not an imaginary danger in our permissive age, that there are, in the church, children and young people who have everything they desire; who may do as they please; and who are unrestrained, except by some Eli-like pleading that has no teeth in it.

Parents must start early, showing that disobedience to God's Law, including disrespect for parental authority, is sin and chastising wilful disobedience to that Law in appropriate ways—a rebuke, a slap on the hand of the very young, a spanking on the rear of the older child with a stick. If nothing else motivates parents, let this move them, that without the holiness produced by discipline also the covenant children shall not see the Lord (Hebrews 12:14).

It is necessary that our love discipline; it is equally necessary that our discipline be administered out of love. In the very passage in which He stresses the urgency of discipline, the Lord points out, and warns against, an all too common failure of us parents in the discipline of our children. Referring to the earthly fathers who corrected us and to whom we gave reverence, the apostle says, "For they verily for a few days chastened us **after their own pleasure**. . . ." (Hebrews 12:10). This is contrasted with God's chastising us **for our profit**. This rings painfully true to the experience of us parents. How often are not our screams of rebuke and our blows of chastisement, personal rage and displeasure, with no purpose in the child's welfare whatever.

We are inclined to overlook that, in those places where the New Testament expressly addresses the duty of parents in child-raising, e.g., Ephesians 6:4 and Colossians 3:21, Scripture warns fathers against provoking their children to wrath. Colossians 3:21 adds, "lest they become discouraged," i.e., broken in spirit. This evil is the abuse of parental authority—the exercise of authority cut loose from love; a harsh, selfish exercise of discipline. Many children are ruined by laxity; I wonder whether as many are not ruined by this tyrannical, love-less rule. Every disciplinary act must be done by us parents (and by the Christian schoolteacher!), consciously, out of love for the child as covenant child of God. Every disciplinary act must be done, consciously, with the purpose that the child be turned from sin unto holiness. Every time the parent raises his hand in discipline, he must remember that his hand is the hand of God (cf. the Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 104).

Concerning this discipline, parents must be patient. Patience is a marvellous perfection of God in His dealing with us sinners; and it must characterize us. Our children are sinners; they are bad sinners—no one knows this like a Reformed believer; we also know whence they came by their sinfulness. Without becoming tolerant of sin, we must be patient with our sinful children. Thus, also, we will have hope, when, at times, we do not see the fruit that we desire in them.

Parents ought never to lose control of themselves in discipline, not even when

the children have sinned grossly. It is possible for us virtually to destroy our children with rage, with condemnation, with ridicule, and with beating. We should call to mind our own plea of the Heavenly Father, in Psalm 38:1: "O LORD, rebuke me not in thy wrath: neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure."

Rebuke must be wisely mixed with praise of the children when they do well. Some parents refuse to praise, or reward, their children, as a matter of principle. This is a mistake. Let God, once again, be our example: He praises and rewards His children, for doing that which is their duty and for doing that which He Himself works in them. We all know that this is a strong incentive to obedience, glad obedience. So it is with our children. Praise encourages them. How discouraging, if all they ever hear from us is criticism. God is the best Pedagogue: not for nothing is the Fifth Commandment the first commandment with promise (cf. Ephesians 6:2).

If we are willing to discipline, we are ready and eager to forgive, when, by the discipline, the Holy Spirit has worked repentance in the child. We must express forgiveness to the child, "God forgives you; and I forgive you." Then, we must forget about the fault.

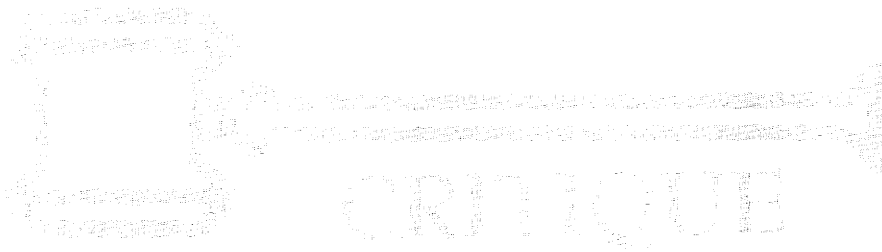
Finally, if one of our children, when he grows up, shows himself an ungodly young man, or herself, an ungodly young woman, who despises and rebels against our admonition, we must follow the "way of Deuteronomy 21:18-21" with him, or her: ". . . Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders . . . and they shall say unto the elders of his city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die: so shalt thou put evil away from among you; and all Israel shall hear, and fear." The Israelite parent brought his wicked child to the elders, to be stoned to death. Today, in the church, parents are to bring their unruly child to the elders, to be excommunicated out of the church and to be cut off from the fellowship of the saints, if he does not repent. Never are Reformed parents in the position that they wring their hands helplessly; never may they allow the church to be corrupted by unbelieving, lawless young people.

We love our children as covenant children, for God's sake, not at the expense of God's glory. Our friendship with them is in the Lord Jesus, not regardless of Him. Not every one of the children of believers is a covenant child of promise (Romans 9:8). When one's own child, by unbelief and unrighteousness, denies Christ, the parent faces the choice: my Christ or my child; and he chooses Christ. Then, Christ sends the sword into our very family "to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother . . . and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Whoever, then, "loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:34-39). Of course, the resort to church discipline may have as its happy outcome the child's repentance and salvation; and for this the parent never ceases to hope and to pray.

This is Reformed, Biblical child-rearing: love them; live with them in friendship; and discipline them, taking the Fatherhood of God as pattern.

If God's Fatherhood of us cost Him His own Son, we cannot expect our child-rearing to be easy, painless, and cheap.

But it is possible. Good rearing and a good family-life are possible, still today. It is required of all parents who name the Name of Christ. The possibility is not ourselves, not at all. The possibility is the blessing of God—sovereign, covenant grace—besought fervently in prayer, for "except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it" (Psalm 127:1).



One-of-a-kind-Teens?

by Ben Wigger

The Apostle Paul writes under the direction of the Holy Spirit in his epistle to the Romans in Chapter 12, Verse 2 that "Ye be 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".

Now the word conform means to make similar and to bring into agreement. So Paul is saying quite simply not to become like the world in everything that we do, but to become like the Will of God. We must do God's Will and not the things of this world.

Perhaps you find yourself saying right about now that this whole idea is easier said than done. After all, you say, the world always seems to be so much more appealing than conforming to God's Will. The idea that the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence would seem to apply here. Our human side always seems to desire all the "good" things that the world offers. And this is basically the battle that we all have to fight for our entire lives.

From what I remember from my teen years it also seems that young people quite often have a very real problem with this whole struggle. The battle starts early in our lives, and the teen years usually see the warfare reach a peak.

There are times when the rebellious nature cries out against all who represent authority in our lives. The last thing we want to hear is parents, brothers, sisters, friends, teachers, ministers or elders telling us we are in effect conforming to the world.

Young people often cry out that they just want to be left alone and given a chance to be themselves. I just want to be me is often the way it is put. Now there is nothing wrong with simply being yourself. We are all, after all, different. There are no two of us exactly alike. We are all one of a kind personalities.

But I am afraid that more times than not a teen's cry to be left alone is just an attempt to be conformed to this world and

not to the Will of God. There are times when we all need to be left alone; this is understandable. But in the long run, this approach really offers no solution to any of the problems that teens face.

Teens may come to the point of being obsessed with "being myself". And any young person who plans to do just that by throwing off and disavowing all the contributing elements that went into making him just who and what he is, is mistaken. This is an unattainable goal, and it could be a very dangerous decision to try to accomplish. For you could quite possibly be ensnared by the sinfulness of this world.

Young people think sometimes that they can attain an original personality or a distinct identity by rejecting all of the influence that shaped them into being what they are.

A young person can only be successful in an attempt to become what God wants him to be by taking what he has been given and meshing it with what he has learned from his educational process. Each one of us owes so much to the world of our environment. The acceptance of each one's heritage is essential to make a young person grow. We have to take both what we are and our heritage and interweave them together.

God has made us such that there is really no way that any of us can separate who we are from our past, they simply must go together. The Old Testament shows this so clearly. God was revealed time and time again throughout history as the God of our fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There was a covenant established between God and His Church. There was a continuation as well as a heritage. The nation of Israel was known as the people of God because of this very promise. And that truth is still ours as Church today. We are God's promise to make Abraham's seed as the sand of the seashore and the stars of heaven.

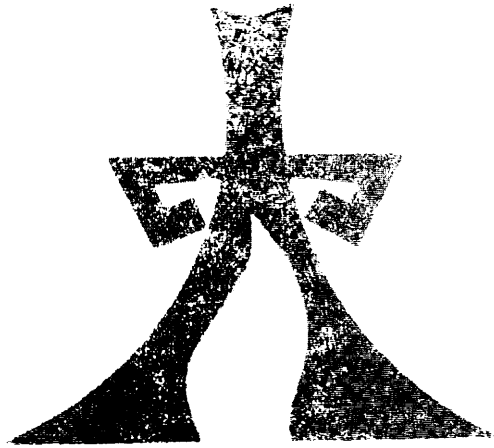
As God's people we can no more forget the past and its effect on us any more than a young person can forget his past when he tries to overcome the struggle of being himself. There would be little left of us if we tried to subtract everything that had been added to us over the years by those who have known us.

We can not remove what we are, no matter how hard we may wish to do so. This is not to say, however, that we are stuck with the outcome of who we are even before we begin the struggle, as if there is nothing we can do about what we are. The responsibility rests with each of us to use what God has given us to produce good works to the glory and praise of His name, just as a sculptor uses clay or marble to create forms that are a joint product of the material and the artist.

We are unique in that we are both an individual and a part of a whole. We can not reject either part without hurting both aspects. The only way we can become a complete person and Christian is to absorb the past into the present.

No person is totally original; after all, we all have natural parents. God on the other hand is completely original. He has no beginning or end. God is also the only one who can create something out of nothing. The greatest genius owes a debt to those who have gone on before him, he simply builds on their work. What we are we owe to those in the Church who have gone on before us, we simply build on what they have left to us. Our parents have, for a large part, given us this heritage as they were commanded by Scripture (Ps. 78:5). And we will in turn have to pass this on to the next generation.

We are badly mistaken to trample underfoot the heritage of the past simply because it comes from the older generation, for we are really a product of that heritage. To try to wipe the slate clean, we would really be wiping out the very things that have been given us, by God, to work with.



Truth vs. Error

REV. R. C. HARBACH

GOD'S ETERNITY

"His name shall be called . . . The Mighty God, The Father of Eternity" [Isa. 9:6, Heb.].

Naturally, God is the Father of eternity. No one who believes that God **is** His attributes has any trouble with that. Nor does any one who believes the doctrine of the trinity have any trouble with the idea of the Son given being both The Mighty God and The Father of Eternity. For the child born is in His divine nature Immanuel, or With Us God! Nor does anyone familiar with the Bible's self-explanatory principle, Scripture interpreting Scripture, have any trouble with the English translation of the text. The English properly presents the divine Son, Immanuel, as The Mighty God, for in the very next chapter the prophecy is that the elect remnant in true conversion shall return to Him, and there, too, He is denominated The Mighty God (10:21)! So the translation, to be correct, must not be weakened to "mighty hero," or anything else than **The Mighty God.*** The same goes for the literal translation of the Hebrew, The Father of Eternity. This is correct, for in Isa. 57:15, where we read that "the High and Lofty One, whose

*Scripture plainly teaches that Christ is God. He is called **my God** (Jn. 20:28), **our great God** (Tit. 2:13, Greek), **O God, Thy God** (Heb. 1:8, 9), **your God** (Isa. 40:9), **God manifest in the flesh** (I Tim. 3:16), **God over all** blessed for ever (Rom. 9:5) and **the true God** (I Jn. 5:20).

name is Holy, inhabits eternity," the word is the same as in 9:6. God gave the Son to come into this world a child born for us. God gave Him these names: Wonderful! — which He is in both His divine Person and in the union of the two natures; Counselor! — so that He is wonderful in the union of sinless human wisdom and omniscience; The Mighty God! — wonderful in the union of weak humanity and omnipotence; The Father of Eternity! — wonderful in the union of man with eternity!

God, with this attribute of eternity is called "the everlasting God" (Gen. 21:35), "the King eternal" (I Tim. 1:17), "the eternal Spirit" (Heb. 9:14). The Son in His divine nature is "from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2). In His office of Mediator He was "set up from everlasting, or ever the earth was" (Prov. 8:23, 24). God's attributes (God himself) are said to be eternal. His power is eternal power (Rom. 1:20). His mercy is from everlasting (Ps. 103:17); His love is an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3). God's purpose is eternal (Eph. 3:11). God's covenant is an everlasting covenant (Gen. 17:7). God's election is from eternity. "God . . . from all eternity elected some to everlasting life" (Westminster Shorter Catechism, A. 20, quoted in Funk and Wagnalls Dictionary!) Webster defines the word **eternal**: "without beginning or end of existence. 'The eternal God is thy refuge.' Dt. 33 . . . Unchangeable; existing at all times without change, as **eternal** truth." Some theologians have used the word **eternality**, referring to the eternalness of God.

In the **Reformed Dogmatics** we are taught that God, being the Eternal One, in His eternity may not be conceived in terms of time, "as if eternity were time without beginning and without end. For eternity is not time. There is a qualitative difference between time and eternity." Eternity is not time extended infinitely in both directions. (In my public school days, we were taught this, especially in geometry class: a line was said to extend in both its directions infinitely. This is Deism!) Time can be measured. Eternity "is 'from everlasting to everlasting . . .' Time is a creature . . . God is the Self-existent One. In this work, time is conceived of as (a river) moving out of (in the stream of) the future (on) into the past. Time, then, does not move from past to present to future; but out of the future into the present and on into the past. This was Augustine's view of time. He held that the future becomes present, and the present becomes past. Only of the eternal, unchangeable God can it be said that "He is." From His firm and absolute being, in which He is always constant in Himself, He sees all things sliding along beneath Him like an ever-rolling stream. God lives in an "eternal now." He alone can say, I Am! "He alone is the eternal I AM." He is "the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb. 13:8).

H. Bavinck wrote: "In God there is not time. He is what He is from eternity. There is in Him 'no variation, neither shadow cast by turning.' . . . He is without beginning . . . end . . . succession of moments; He cannot be measured or counted in His duration . . . Eternity is identical with God's essence . . . He is . . . 'His own eternity.' " (So also said Charnock.) "God is eternity itself." (Gill). Archibald Alexander Hodge (Presbyterian) wrote on "His eternity: By affirming that God is eternal we mean that His duration has no limit and that His existence in infinite duration is absolutely perfect. He could have had no beginning, He can have no end, and in His existence there can be no succession of thoughts, feelings or purposes. There can be no increase to His knowledge, no change as to His purpose. Hence the past and the future must be as immediately, as immutably . . . with Him as the present. Hence His existence is an ever-abiding, all-embracing present, which is always contemporaneous with the ever-flowing

times of His creatures. His knowledge, which never can change, eternally recognizes His creatures and their actions in their several places in time, and His actions upon His creatures pass from Him at the precise moments predetermined in His unchanging purpose.

"Hence God is absolutely unchangeable in His being in all the modes and states thereof. In His knowledge, His feelings, His purposes, and hence in His engagements to His creatures . . . 'The counsel of the Lord standeth forever . . .' (Ps. 33:11)."

Scripture is wonderful in its teaching that God is King forever; His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom; He Himself is the living God who lives forever and ever. His name, The Ancient of Days, cannot mean ancient **in** days, or **through** days, or **because** of days. For He is ancient before, after, above, beyond and over against days. The Ancient of Days is no more ancient now that He was in the days of Adam, or when the universe was created along with the creature **Time**. "Father Time" becomes ever more ancient as ages roll on. Not so The Father of Eternity, the Ancient of Days, who has no beginning of days, nor end of life, but abides continually (Heb. 7:3), even after time shall cease to be. An archdeacon (whatever that is) in the Church of England said that this name (Ancient of Days) "has no reference to the **eternity** of God." The very opposite is true. It can express nothing else but His eternity. The Ancient of Days is the Creator, not a creature of days! The Ancient of Days is "from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2), or, literally, **mimee olam**, "from **the days of eternity**." So the name means "The Ancient of the Days of Eternity." The Ancient of Days sits on the throne of Judgment (Dn. 7:9, 10); He is King with an everlasting dominion (v. 13, 14); He shall come in final judgment, after which the saints shall possess the kingdom (v. 22). Surely The Ancient of Days is the infinite and eternal God!

God's knowledge is from eternity. "Known unto God are all His works **from the beginning of the world**" (Ac. 15:18), or, as the original has it, "from eternity." What Augustine said of **time** could just as well be said of eternity. If no one asks me, "What is eternity?" I know well enough what it is, But if anyone does ask me what it is, I don't know how to explain it. I know that I believe it, but it is hard to understand and harder yet to express in words. Amazing, isn't it, not only that we cannot comprehend eternity, but that we cannot conceive of it, yet we want to believe it, do believe it, delight in believing it, long for it, inasmuch as we do comprehend that there is an eternity!

It is terrible for the wicked to contemplate this. For God is the "living God, an everlasting king, (whom) the nations shall not be able to abide (in) His indignation" (Jer. 10:10). But what a comfort this is to the saints! For Christ has taken and borne all the eternal wrath and hell due me, and fully satisfied for all my sins. Further, the Holy Spirit assures me of eternal life. With all the saints I exclaim, "This God is our God forever and ever" (Ps. 48:14).

Christ Himself, as God, is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, who has the first and the last word, since He is the entire Word that God shall ever speak to this world. He is the Beginning and the Ending, Himself from everlasting to everlasting, **God**, and so has no beginning and no end. He Himself says this, "saith the Lord **God**," (the latter word added in the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Latin, Syriac, Arabic and Ethiopic versions.) He is **God** who is, who was and who is to come! God to eternity! the Lord God the Almighty! (Rev. 1:8). Angels sing of Him everlastingly, "Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come, Thou art holy! holy! holy!" (4:8). And to this "all the people said, Amen!"

God's Promised Gift to Mothers
Legacy to Daughters

by Mrs. Dewey Engelsma

In the main, this was a speech I gave at a Hope Prot. Ref. School Mothers Circle program.

To begin I'm asking you to please bear with me because I'm definitely not your conventional speaker. I cannot produce for you a Masters in the educational field, nor a degree of any form, not even a diploma in child psychology. In fact, I must admit, I'm still a student in that school and I'm not always getting a passing grade either. Just ask my self-appointed teachers, (any of my children). Although lately I have noticed that as the children get married and grow older, and their own families become larger, my standings are moving up a bit.

As for a public speaker, I have doubts about that too. A while back, I read a Dale Carnegie brochure and it stated that in order for a person to be a success, be he or she an executive, salesperson, or speaker, you never start from the negative. Now that's against me too. I'm starting with a negative. I know I will **not** be able to answer your unique personal questions because I have not found the answer to all my own, not yet. So, the only legitimate credential I can hold before you is that I am a mother!!

When I was asked to talk on some phase concerning "Mothers", I didn't hesitate for long to say I'd be willing to try. Not because I feel that I have a monopoly on that role, 12 children. One to three, six to sixteen, quantity is not the measuring rod for the ideal mother, let me assure you. Mere multiplication of births in no way infuses qualifications. To be truthful, there were plenty of times when I was quite convinced that these consecutive numbers were a detriment to my latent abilities to function as an ideal mother. For example, first, I'm remembering eight youngsters, a very pregnant me, with my better half too, living through the up-and-downheaval of the stomach flu, all at the same time. A one bathroom disaster! And then, this with shame, the week we had a family friend, a man, visiting our home. This was, also when we had children ranging from teenagers to a nurser. Well, I really went all out to see that everything went according to what was expected in the well-organized, efficiently managed home. And for the first four or five days I ran a tightly reined ship. All meals were on time and the children behaved rather well, normal at least. The disagreements were mild and surprisingly, even the ten minute allotted time in the bathroom was recognized. So I mentally complimented myself. But this up before six and to bed at midnight was such rigid scheduling!!! I was tired. I became irritable. I weakened and so did our household. Still, all in all, we did have a wonderful visit. He is a kind, humorous, understanding Christian and we love him dearly. We were sorry to

see him go. Before he left he bade us a fond farewell and presented me with a gift of appreciation. And then he said, "You're a good cook, a nice mother, and I learned something else about you too, **you have feet** of clay," which was his way of telling me, **I am a sinner and it shows!** So, why did I consent to speak? This was exactly the extra incentive, that push, that I myself needed in order to finally crystalize my own Biblical convictions. But more too, I wanted to put an end to the continual proddings that were being given me by my many daughters, flesh born, marriage-given, adopted Chinese, Malay, Indian, all dearly loved children. Now I would have to formulate and set down some basic Scriptural truths concerning "God's Promised Gift To Mothers". I was especially confronted with this subject every time we were in Singapore and that was understandable, because this was exactly the reason why the women had been asked to accompany their husbands. We had to gain the confidence of the young sisters who were too shy, far too modest to discuss their problems with their own male leaders. The first thing we did when we arrived was set aside four nights for meetings with sisters only, much to the dismay of the fellows. They insisted that they, too, needed information on Christian marriages. So to appease them, Rev. Kamps and my husband held some informal meetings with them in the apartment while we gathered at River Valley Outreach (the church building). Now, each meeting lasted at least two hours and the discussions took the form of question and answer sessions with the questions written out and handed in anonymously. At that time, in order to be free and more frank, they chose to hide their identities. Oh, I could have assured them that wasn't necessary, at that time I couldn't tell one from the other (no way). Even tonight I can well recall my utter confusion at seeing that expanding circle of identical Oriental faces before me. Today I'm happy to say that each girl is a special individual face with a name and she feels confident to question, or as they say, share, on a most personal relationship.

Although we received over 65 questions, but just a few dealt with courtship (boy and girl situation). Example: "How can a girl get a special boy to notice her?" "Is it permissable to hold hands if engaged?" "How can I tell if a certain boy is the right one for me?" -this type, all more or less in a lighter vein. But by far the majority concerned marriage and surprisingly not too many were about the husband-wife relationship either. Almost all centered on marriage and children. Example: "Must we have children in order to live a full Christian life?" "Do we have the right to determine when to conceive?" "What about our government restriction on large families?" "Career or children?" "A babysitter to continue education?" "Babysitter if she is a good granny?" "Babysitter if husband's income is terminated by illness?" etc. And give Biblical proof! It soon became apparent, these young women also aspired after marriage. And their comments gave testimony that they believed the marriage vows had to be taken with a fellow Christian in the Lord. But children. . . what should we do about children?

True it is, children do tend to interfere with furthering an education and in maintaining a career. It is an undeniable fact that the cost of even a single child is phenomenal, not only monetarily but also in the loss of our personal freedom.

It just isn't necessary to enumerate all the other varied reasons and excuses that we entertain for limiting families. They run the gamut from the pitiable impious to being religiously absurd. The majority are as familiar to the older woman, with her society accepted five or six children, as they are to the bridal gowned maiden.

Although the motives and methods be as ancient as Pharoah and Onan or modern as Lee and Upjohn, yet, all have this common denominator. Our father was an Amorite and our mother was a Hittite.

And these be the parentage we own, these are the kindred to whom we give honor when we imitate their devious practices.

We are guilty of violating our spiritual betrothal when sometimes we become so enamored with Self and share such intimacy with her twin sister Pride as to gift them with our wedding band.

We are sinners! God knows. When His Spirit breathed Word blows away the straw (Jewish straw? American straw? Chinese straw? Dutch Reformed straw?) we discover it is always the same age old wail of the flesh, "How can I escape the judgment God has inflicted on me?" "I will multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children and thy desire shall be to thy husband and he shall rule over you." Gen. 3:16.

"Thy name is Eve. . . ." Thus, we have been re-christened. Formerly we had been named "woman" which symbolized our initial creation, "womb-man", built by Jehovah God from the rib of man. So in the garden, Adam could say, "This living creature which has been brought to me is the companion which I need, for this is bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh." An ancient Jewish writer commenting on this transition of a rib into a woman wrote: "It was, as if Adam had exchanged a pot of earth for a precious jewel." That was before the fall.

But now, your name, my name, is **Eve** (life-giving). In Genesis 3:20 we read, "And Adam called his wife's name Eve because she was the mother of all living." Now we ask, "How can that be?" The sentence of death had just passed upon woman too. "For in the day that thou eastest thou shalt surely die." Adam and his wife were immersed in death, yet he gives to her the name "Life-giving". Remember, though, Jehovah god had found them, by His voice (called) them (out) from their hiding place, compelling them to stand before Him to damn them to hell as they deserved!! No! No! Even before God sentences them for their transgressions, He reveals His covenant with them. So we can say they were placed on the porch of Grace and through the slightly opened door, could see, by faith, into the House of Life from where the Light of the Life Giver, the Seed shone upon them. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her Seed. It shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise His heel." Genesis 3:15.

So Adam comforts himself in his wife, because now he shall through Eve produce a posterity in which they shall be victorious.

The secular definition for mothers reads "anyone who gives birth." But we're not here to discuss "anyone". Our only interest lies with one specific class of mothers who by giving birth are mothers included in the covenant relationship which God Himself establishes. It was promised first to Eve in Paradise and then revealed more brightly as we stand with Abraham on the porch and the door is opened even wider and the light envelopes us. "I will establish my Covenant between Me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy Seed after thee."

We do believe this truth! We have been gifted with faith to believe our God gathers His children from our children. So, I must be bold to say we really do not have the option to choose what kind of a mother we'd like to be. The world spreads before us a career mother, a part-time mother, which results in the making of the latchkey child, or today's newest innovation, surrogate mother, the free-lance mother. But we haven't the right of

choice.

Why not? Because each believing daughter of Eve, has stood before the face of Jehovah God and acknowledged that this child is God's child, heir of His kingdom and only entrusted into her care and keeping for a time. And, too, we have also stood before God and His church and vowed to be the kind of mothers which this Covenant relationship demands. WE have promised to nurture, which means instruct and correct, to bring up these children in the truth and way which God prescribes in His Word.

And here is when the magnitude and the awesomeness of such an undertaking overwhelms us. Reflecting on this high and lofty command we are almost tempted to give up, for there is no denying that the lion's share of child-raising, the essential day by day care, the nurturing, falls to Mothers. That, too, by God's order. We are created to bear and nurse them, care and train, even exercise authority over them, on behalf of and in place of the father.

But God, Who is rich in mercy, does not leave us to our own natural resources. As He took Eve from her hiding place, discarding **her** apron of fig leaves, to clothe her in His covering of the Promise, so Christ strengthens and gladdens believing Eve in the Church today, too, by proclaiming that her children are His heritage, to praise Him in time and for eternity!

True it is that this blessing does not consist in removing the chastisement. The sorrows of conception, the afflictions because of sin, are still with her. Isn't it through our children that we see our disobedience, our own rebellion, our own pride, mirrored and magnified!!? What mother hasn't mingled her tears with her punished, weeping child to confess, "I, too, am guilty." But this is the burden, this is the sorrow that **compels** us. Together we run to the cross to seek forgiveness. Blessed Eve and her daughters sanctified in Christ.

Eve is called to life-long years of service, for she has promised "to the utmost of my power." Because teaching or instructing ranks highest among the duties that Eve renders to her children first, by her example, and secondly, by the Word, it is necessary that she herself be taught aright where to go. And that is to His Word. Job 36:22 "Behold God exalteth by His power: who teacheth like Him?" So we go to learn from Him. Here we will follow the direction and reflect on the analogy given by Miss Katie Gunnink in one of her Bible Study series. We must sit at Jesus's feet. Oh let's not deceive ourselves. Sitting at Jesus' feet is not an easy task. How often in our nervous, busy lives isn't it much easier to get our housework done to produce, to organize, to promote, to buy, to sell, than to sit quietly even for an hour in a day to study our lessons for the next society meeting. How often is our prayer time a hurried recital of petitions that costs nothing in terms of time or effort, instead of the pouring out of our souls in praise, devotion, wonder, confession and longing?! To grow in the knowledge of God, to learn of Him through His Word through the means of grace which He dispenses, to sit quietly at His feet and fellowship with our Lord takes tremendous effort. It takes the sacrifice of self-Eve!

Let's stop and ponder this. . . . When God gives us, or a child, some physical handicap we are anxious to get better, eager to improve, so that we think nothing of spending an hour or two daily in strenuous physical therapy. And now, I'm not even asking to count the hours spent in personal relaxation. Then what a sad commentary on our spiritual values. We are so involved amassing, what shall we eat? what shall we drink? or where withal shall we be clothed? that we have no time and do not make time to commune with our Redeemer: Who saves us, not only from death, but from eternal damnation.

Yes, Eve and her daughters need their spiritual therapy to protect them from the world, the devil, and then, too, our most insidious, deceptive, enticing enemy; our **flesh.**

I especially like the way Martin Luther summed it up in one of his sermons on Good Works. "If parents (mothers) rightly train their children to God's service, they will indeed, have their hands full of good works. For what are the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger, the sick-if not the souls of your children? With these children, God makes a hospital in your own home (Here is where God requires us to be workers in the house or as the Dutch has it "housekeepers" -Titus 2:5). God sets you over them to wait on them, to give them the food and drink of good words and works. He sets you over them that they may learn by your example, through your nurturing they may learn to trust God, to believe Him, to fear Him, to set their whole hope on Him, to honor His name —never swear or curse— to mortify themselves through prayer and fasting, to work, to go to church, to go to catechism, to wait on the Word of God, to observe the Sabbath. He sets you over them that they may learn to despise temporal material things, to bear misfortune without complaint, to love not this life, neither fear death.

Just think how full your hands are in your own home with your children who need all these things like a hungry, poor, impoverished sick soul."

Arduous work, never ending spiritual activities —and this, Eve, is the God ordained directions for your life— in this way of obedience is Eve's blessedness, her happiness, her salvation!!

"Notwithstanding she shall be saved in child bearing, if they continue in faith, and charity, and holiness." I Timothy 2:15

So I conclude. . . . In your striving for spiritual growth, so that you may daily follow Him, joyfully bearing your cross, may I earnestly counsel you to imitate the Ideal Mother, who was "Most Highly Favored", Mary, mother of Jesus.

Oh pray! Pray for abundant grace to be able to say amid all the adverse circumstances pertaining to conceiving, bearing, and nurturing children.

"Behold the handmaid of the Lord. . . be it unto me according to Thy Word." This is truly the expression of a heart embodying true faith, firm hope, and ardent love from which emerges that priceless gift for Godly Mothers, my will at peace with His will for me. And Mary was graced to minister to the needs of the "Giver of Eternal Life."

"Whosoever shall receive this child in my name receiveth Me." Blessed Eve and her daughters as they journey on their pilgrimage through this wilderness toward their Jerusalem-home until the day when Eve is carried over the threshold and through the opened door into the house of many mansions!

Mother? Oh no! Bride! The Bride of the Prince of Life. Eternally Blessed I and the children Thou hast given!

The Scholarship Fund Committee is offering scholarships for the 1984-85 school year. An essay of 300 words written on the topic, "The position of the Minister/Teacher in the face of state regulation", is required. An application must also be filled out. If you are interested in an application contact:

Mike Lotterman
1382 Su-Lew Dr. S.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Applications due June 1, 1984

BIBLE STUDIES

by Deane Wassink

In the previous two articles we considered some of the problems connected with Bible study, solutions to those problems, and principles involved in proper study. It remains for us to consider the tools that are used for Bible study.

When we speak of tools we understand that someone uses them. For example, a hoe is a tool that is a great help in cleaning a garden. But, if that hoe is not picked up and used by someone, if someone does not work with it, it is useless. So it is with tools for Bible study. We must use them. We must **work** with them. Are we repelled by that? We should not be because work that leads us to a greater understanding of the God of our salvation, builds our faith, and brings glory to Him.

The tools necessary for Bible study are few though without them one cannot do an effective job. They are as follows:

1. A good quality Bible. I know that a good Bible is rather expensive but it is well worth it. You will use it for many years. The covers, binding and paper must be the sort that is not easily ruined. Once you get a good Bible **use** it as a tool. Write in it. Underline in it. Develop a system of reference in the Bible — perhaps with different numbers or colors to mark certain texts or topics. By using your Bible in this way you will find it much easier to find texts that you try to recall. Not only does your reference system help, also the fact that you use the Bible over many years helps you remember just where to look on the pages.

Just a couple more points about finding a good Bible. First of all, shop around for the style of type and layout you find easiest to read. Don't be easily satisfied, because you plan to live with your decision for a long time. Secondly, though you may want study helps in your Bible, for example a wide margin for notes, I would advise to stay away from highly detailed reference systems in your Bible. Though one might wish to have a chain reference Bible (or something similar) as a secondary reference, I have found them cluttered and bent in a Premillennial direction. In fact reference systems often try to lead the reader to agree with the basic theological tenets of the originator. Finally, when it comes to a personal study Bible, make mine King James. The Authorized Version is in my opinion the wisest choice. It is one of the most accurate. It is also the version used in our churches and schools. I can testify to the confusion of trying to switch versions having been raised on the American Standard. Other versions can certainly be helpful in understanding a text. But, I can guarantee that you will find your study of the Bible will be more meaningful and applicable if you insist on making yours King James.

2. A good dictionary. I would hardly dare to estimate the number of times a teacher advises his (or her) students to "use a dictionary." The dictionary is the most basic tool of communication and

understanding. Do not be too proud to use it. Even the most gifted scholars have a good dictionary sitting at their right hand. Dictionaries are constructed to include the meanings of the words in the King James. In fact, many words would have been omitted long ago as being archaic except for the fact that they are in current use in the Bible. One of the primary complaints against the A.V. (or King James Version) is the fact that its language is archaic. That is not a valid objection as far as understanding a text is concerned. Yes, it means work. But, we have committed ourselves to work. And, we should use the dictionary even with familiar words in order to have a clear understanding. Also, you will find that the more you take the time to study out the meaning of a word, also of an archaic word, that it will be easier and easier to understand what is being said. So, use your dictionary. It is an essential tool for your study of the Bible.

To be continued.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND

by Francis Quek Kok How

This article was a letter in response to Rachel's request for advice as she was contemplating college. Since I sent her the letter, several people (Rachel included) have encouraged me to submit the contents of that letter for publication in the **Beacon Lights**. With some minor editing, therefore, I present for your perusal my answer to the spiritually motivated question of our sister.

Dear sis Rachel,

In the Name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Author and Finisher of our faith, Who for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame and is set down at the right hand of the God, greetings.

I want to address the question in your last letter concerning whether a girl should go to college. I have told you that I feel that she should if the door is open to her. Since I have no wisdom in and of myself, and our fellowship must be around the word of our God, I shall share with you what I believe from that Word is pertinent to your question. There are three reasons for my position. Firstly, Christians have an obligation to develop in their talents; secondly, the call to Christian motherhood is a high calling; and lastly, women are called into service in passages like Prov. 31 etc.

When we speak of talents, the parable of the talents told by our Lord Christ comes readily to mind. In Matt. 25:14-30, we have an account of this parable. I am not going to deal fully with the parable as that would take up the entire letter. (For a thorough treatment of this passage of Holy Writ, I recommend Prof. Hanko's 'Mysteries of the Kingdom'.) We need to note, first, that the parable is about the kingdom of God. This is attested to by Matt. 25:1 which prefaces the parables in the chapter. This being the case, we do not have here an exhortation to exploit what we know of as Common Grace. Indeed, there is no such thing. The agents of the parable are the people within the church of our Lord. Second, take note that the 'talents' mentioned in

our text do not refer to gifts as such. This is evident in that these talents are given according to the several abilities of the servants. That which is given according to one's abilities clearly cannot be the abilities themselves. What is true, though, is that each of us have been given certain abilities or gifts. For those of us who are physically in the church, we have been given far, far more than those that are outside. We receive the teaching of the word of God over the pulpit. We bask in the benefits of the word of God which have been fixed in the hearts of His servants to confess them in our creeds. We hear and speak daily of the Christ. We have many abilities physically and intellectually. We can do many things. By ourselves, we can only use these things against the Lord. Paul says in Col. 1:21 that naturally we are **alienated and enemies in [our] minds by wicked works.** This means that man can only use these gifts that God has given to him in sin and rebellion against God. We use our mouths to curse, our minds to think wickedly etc. Even the gift of holiness which He had given to us in Adam we have in Adam abused and lost so that we no longer are in the image of God but the image of the devil.

Our 'talents' are given to us according to our gifts and several abilities. They are those duties to which God has called us in His church, our homes and all our lives.

I said earlier that the servants are those who are physically, or outwardly in the Church. We must look at the parable this way because the third servant spoken of is cast out. He is a **wicked and slothful servant.** He would rather let his 'talents' rot in the scrap heap of disuse rather than use them for the glory of God. He goes his way and is consumed in his own lusts. When the Master returns, this servant is unable to bring any acceptable fruit. His abilities have been employed solely in the service of himself. The other servants are children of God by grace. By grace they believe and love their Master. By grace they are true citizens of the kingdom of which the account is a parable. By grace they use their talents in obedience to the glory of God. The unconverted person cannot do this; but the child of God must.

Let us see the practical implications of this in your case. Certainly the passage speaks, first of all, of spiritual things. I believe that it teaches us to use whatever God has given to us for His glory by grace. We are therefore to develop our gifts and abilities to the fullest extent in contemplation of this; and, college is a means unto this end. It is obvious that God has not given to all the zeal or ability to attend college. I am not saying that anyone who does not attend college behaves like the third servant. What I am saying is that if God has given you the ability and interest in anything, you should develop in it so that you can serve God better wherever He is pleased to place you. College does not make an able person. It simply serves to sharpen whatever a person already possesses from God. For example, a person studying mathematics need not be one who will be a mathematician all one's life; but, one's mind may be thus trained and disciplined to think analytically and logically. There are other ways that this analytical and logical mind can be inculcated; but, if God opens the door for this through college, we should use it. I found my studies in engineering helpful to me even in my understanding of scriptures. It is not that spiritual things may be learned by mere human intellect; but, God does use the gifts He has given to, and polished in us for His purpose. (I have not attained neither were already perfect, but I press after a fuller knowledge.) You have a special gift of singing. This was demonstrated only too eloquently at the singspiration where you performed. The raw gem should be polished for the glory of God.

We come to the calling of a Christian mother. This is a rich 'talent' or avenue of service which God is pleased to give many women in His kingdom and covenant. We read in II Tim. 1:5 of the training which was given Timothy in his youth by his mother and grandmother. I believe, that Paul mentions them in conjunction to their common faith with Timothy to stress this. Consider, too, the command to **Train up a child in the way he should go.** These are spiritual teachings that the mother should give to her children. A girl should therefore prepare as well as she can every area of her life to the fullest extent of her abilities in contemplation of this awesome responsibility.

There are those who say that since a Christian woman's calling is often to be a wife and a mother in Israel, it is neither wise nor economical for a girl to go to college. Stop for a moment to consider that statement. Does it not imply that the calling of the Christian mother is less than what it ought to be? A godly girl should reason thus: "I do not know what God has in store for me. It may even be a single life. However, it is true that most Christian women are called to be helps meet for their husbands and mothers of their children. This is an awesome responsibility and it is incumbent upon me in my youth to be as well prepared for it as I can." I do not doubt that Christ trains many women for this task without college. It is also true that He gives us gifts severally as He will. She that has less shall not lack and she that has more shall not have too much. (Indeed of her who has more shall more be required.) We are in an age of advancement and change. It would often be that our children will go to a higher level in school than we have ever attained. College experience would be an asset for those who have it. It is beneficial for a mother to be able to discuss with her children their problems in a well worked out manner from experience. Education also helps one to think carefully and objectively. It enables one for example to know, after research, what drugs contain what chemicals with what side effects when administered. This would definitely be useful should the Lord see fit to give one a sickly child to care for and love.

The wife is called in the Bible a help meet for her husband. It may be that her husband would be one who runs a business where she can help in keeping book etc. If he works for another and faces problems in his place of work she must be to him a comfort. Again, all these things do not require a college education; but, it would be presumptious for one to whom God has given an open door to ignore it.

Finally, Prov. 31 speaks of a conscientious wife who does all she can to aid the family both financially and spiritually. **She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. She stretcheth her hand to the needy. She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. . . . She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. . . .** I am not advocating that a mother should go out to work at the expense of the welfare of her children. The principle here is that she should make use of whatever abilities she has to the improvement of her family. She should know how to sew, how to cook, how to tend to her home. These things are important. She is also to develop her abilities as well as she can in whatever

way she can. Today, we no longer make tapestry. We no longer plant vineyards, weave our own cloth etc. There are other things we can do. During the years before the first child comes, she may go out to work so that she may stretch out her hand to the poor and lay up savings for her children. It may be that the Lord may even withhold children from the family. He may give them few or many. There may be years after the children are grown. In this age of the computer she may even run a business from her home or take a job in data entry from a home computer linked to some company's machine. In your case, you could teach music either at home or even in your Christian schools. I know all this sounds idealistic; but, the principle of Prov. 31 is that a godly woman works hard at whatever God has given her ability to do for the welfare first of her family, and also of the saints.

Now, after we have seen the whole picture, I shall state what I believe the principle should be. A girl and young woman should conscientiously prepare herself to the best of her ability, through whatever doors the Lord has seen fit to open, for whatever the Lord has in store for her. Because you have asked me particularly about college, and your gifts obviously equip you for that, I have written very much to that theme. It is not necessary, and often God does not open the way, for one to go to college. What is important is your attitude. Whether you go to college or not, your desire should be that you will utilize what gifts God has given to you to the fullest of your ability for His glory. There are those who fear that a young woman will be so lured away by the glitter of economic success and 'fulfilment' that she shuns motherhood after college. There is definitely that danger. The problem is not that college is wrong. It is the spiritual outlook of that person which is at fault. If one feels that there is a danger of that happening to oneself, then one may be wise to flee from it by avoiding college. That would be an act of humility knowing one's own weaknesses. That is something you have to decide for yourself before God. Likewise, you have to decide for yourself whether God has given you both an open door and the necessary interest.

There are those too who bring upon the child of God no little confusion by despising the use and cultivation of all gifts. These are spoken of in Col. 2:18-23. They require of saints a **voluntary humility . . . intruding into those things which [they have] not seen, vainly puffed up by [their] fleshly mind[s].** They think that they have the prerogative which only God enjoys of fathoming the intents of one's heart. They accuse any who seeks to apply oneself of pride. They even go so far as to question why you would want to know more of the Bible as though it were an evil thing. You know of whom I write. I tell you that the things they impose upon you **have indeed a shew of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.** Pay no attention to them. They are really **not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment minister-ed, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.** They know not how our glorious Lord utilizes the several abilities of all of us to cause the Church to increase in the Lord.

This is a matter for you to pray as the psalmist in Ps. 143:10 **Teach me to do Thy will for Thou art my God, Thy Spirit is good; Lead me in the land of uprightness.** Whatsoever therefore thy hand findest to do, do it with thy might.

I shall end here. Please feel free to write me if I have not been clear in anything. I am at your disposal. The grace of the Lord abide in you always as you seek His will.

Your Brother in Christ,
Francis Quek

WHO AM I?

Adam, God made out of Dust,
But thought it best to make me first.
So I was made before man,
To answer God's most Holy plan.
A living being I became,
And Adam gave me my name.
I from his presence then withdrew,
And more of Adam never knew.
I did my maker's law obey,
Nor ever went from it astray.
Thousands of miles I go in fear,
But seldom on the earth appear.
For purpose wise which God did see,
He put a living soul in me.
A soul from me God did claim,
And took from me a soul again,
So when from me the soul had fled,
I was the same as when first made.
And without hands or feet or soul,
I travel on from pole to pole.
I labor hard by day, by night,
To fallen men I give great light.
Thousands of people young and old,
Will by my death great light behold.
No right, no wrong can I conceive,
The Scriptures I cannot believe.
Although my name is therein found,
They are to me an empty sound.
No fear of death does trouble me,
Real happiness I'll never see.
To heaven I shall never go,
Or down to hell below.
For when these lines you slowly read,
Go search your Bibles with all speed.
For that my name is written there,
I honestly to you declare.
Who Am I?

The answer to this puzzle is mentioned only four times in the Bible.

This puzzle was written by a woman in California on a challenge by a man who offered a $1,000 prize to the person who created a puzzle he could not solve. The man did not solve the puzzle. Can you?

The 1984 Convention will be held
AUGUST 6 - 10
at
CALVIN COLLEGE

The Convention Theme is:
"WALKING IN NEWNESS OF LIFE"

Idea	**Romans 6:4-10**	**Rev. Slopsema**
Manifestation	**Romans 6:11-14**	**Rev. Joostens**
Fruit	**Romans 6:21-23**	**Prof. Decker**

Sponsored by
First Young People's Societies

0147
ARIE GRIFFIOEN 09
1392 SU-LEW S.W.
GRAND RAPIDS MI 49504