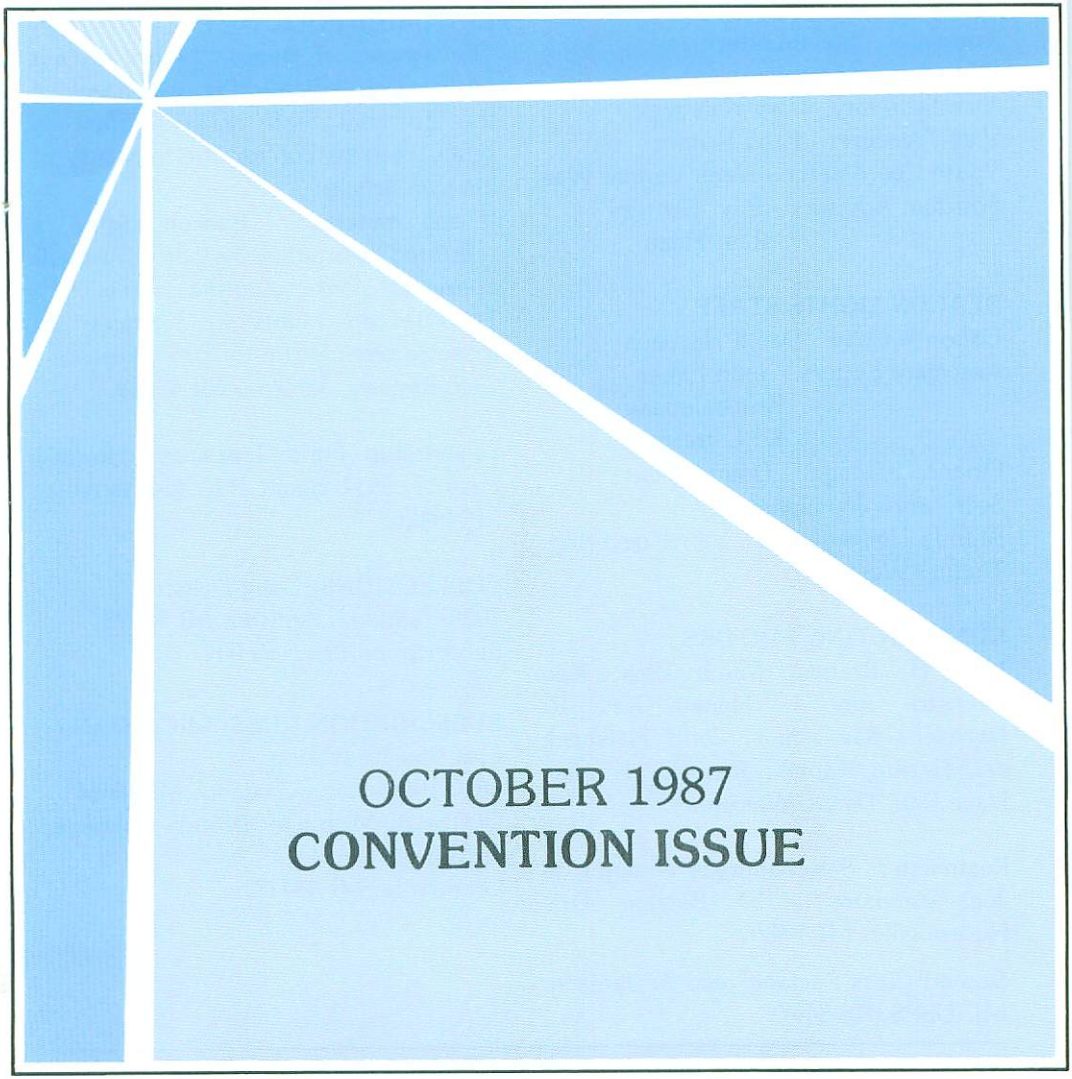
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOLUME XLVI NUMBER 8



OCTOBER 1987

CONVENTION ISSUE

BEACON LIGHTS

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD
President - Bryan Van Baren
Vice-President - Greg Holstege
Secretary - Robin Kuiper
Treasurer - Steve Lotterman
Librarian - Karen Kuiper
Vice-Secretary - Jory Kalsbeek
Vice-Treasurer - Brad Kuiper
Youth Coordinator - Hank Vander Waal
Spiritual Advisors - Rev. Gritters
Rev. Haak

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF
Editor-in-Chief - David Harbach
Associate Editors - John Faber
Bruce Jabaay
Ed Lotterman
Finance Manager - Doug Dykstra
Secretary - Joy Ophoff
Brenda Holstege, Lisa Van Koevering, Thelma Westra

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Mrs. H. Brands, Mitch Dick, Ken Feenstra, Rev. C. Hanko, Rev. R. Harbach, Rev. Heys, John Kalsbeek Jr., Bernie Kamps, Rev. D. Kuiper, Dave Rau, Deane Wassink

Postmaster: Send address changes to Joel Zandstra, 6157 Balsam Dr., Hudsonville, MI 49426

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: Nancy Van Baren
6066 Wilson Ave. S.W..
Grandville, MI 49418

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.

The **Beacon Lights** is available on cassette tape. Write to: Dirk Westra, 7960 Ronson, Jenison, MI 49428

Scholarship Fund Treasurer: Howard Pastoor, 5511 Bauer Rd., Hudsonville, MI 49426

COLLECTIONS: Doug Dykstra
7928 Parklane, Jenison, MI 49428
Subscription Price $5.00

SUBSCRIPTION DUES: MICHIGAN
Lisa Van Koevering
3810 100th Ave., Zeeland, MI 49464
OUTSIDE Michigan: Brenda Holstege
7663 Bliss Court
Grandville, MI 49418

Contents

Lessons From the Life of David: David and Goliath - Rev. R. Hanko 1
Convention Impressions - David W. Linker 6
1987 Convention - Stephanie Rawson 6
Lessons From the Life of David: David and Bathsheba - Rev. K. Koole 7
Impressions of the Convention - Lori Feenstra 13
Convention Impressions - Amy Lotterman 14
Minutes of the 47th Annual Prot. Ref. Young People's Convention 15
Lessons From the Life of David: David and Absalom - Rev. W. Bekkering 17
Conventions - Sherry Koole 23
Convention Impressions - Jodi Brummel 25

Lessons From the Life of David
DAVID AND GOLIATH

by Rev. R. Hanko

I like very much the theme you Loveland Young People have chosen for this year's convention, "Lessons from the Life of David." I like your theme because it gives me the opportunity to bring to you the Word of God and to bring it from the life of one of God's saints. There are few of God's saints whose lives are as worthy of study as David. The fa that the Bible records the life of David .n more detail than the life of any other person in the Old or New Testaments is a good indication of the importance of David's life as a source of Gospel-lessons for us.

We must remember, however, that these lessons from the life of David are not just little moral examples telling you that you must be good boys and girls, but these are the lessons of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Gospel which speaks of salvation through the dying of the Lord Jesus, and which calls us to thankful obedience, a Gospel which speaks also to you young people. That means, of course, that these are not lessons which you may choose to hear or not to hear as you please, but lessons you **must** learn as blood-bought children of God and followers of the Lord Jesus.

The story of David and Goliath is especially appropriate for our study this evening, since it speaks of the crowning event of David's life as a young man. In this history, therefore, God is speaking to you directly as young men and young women and telling you, not what you will be someday when you are older and married and fathers and mothers and officebearers in the Church, but what you ought to be **now**.

In turning to this history, I am not going to tell you the story of David and Goliath. It is a story that you learned on your mother's knees, and though it bears re-telling time and again because of its significance for us, I am going to take for granted this evening that you know the story and get right down to the business of seeing how it applies to you and me and what lessons we may learn from it.

David as a Type of Christ

The first lesson from the story of David and Goliath is one which really

applies to the whole life of David. In this first lesson I am not going to tell you how you must be like David, but how David is like Christ - a type of Christ, as we usually say.

David is one of the clearest and most beautiful pictures of Christ in the whole Old Testament. That's the reason, by the way, why his life is recorded in such detail in the Bible. He is a picture of Christ as the great captain of God's people, the warrior-King who fights against and delivers them from all their enemies. Very obviously the story of David and Goliath is part of that picture.

But why begin there? Do **you** know why that must be the first lesson from the life of David, that David is like Christ? Understand, my dear young people, that only when you see first in David's victory over Goliath what Christ has done for you, will you have any real reason to want and try to be like David and to pattern your life after his. Then too your desire to be like David will be the desire to be Christ-like, and that, as you know, is always the essence of the Christian life for us.

Goliath represents the enemy against whom Christ fights, and against whom we fight in Christ's name. The whole description of Goliath in the first part of I Samuel 17 shows us that he was a great champion, the hero of the armies of the Philistines. When you translate some of the data given in our KJV into modern English then you will realize how strong and fearsome he was. He was about nine and a half feet tall, his armor weighed around 150 pounds, and his spear-head alone weighed nearly 17 pounds. The picture, then, is of one who was, in earthly terms, all but invincible.

You know whom he represents, don't you? He is in one man a picture of the power and dominion of sin, which is the power and dominion of Satan and his dark hosts. In Ephesians 6:12 he is called "the rulers of the darkness of this world" and "spiritual wickedness in high places." I want to come back to that a little later on when we talk about Goliath as the enemy against which you must fight, but for now let us go on.

Against him and all that he represents Christ goes to battle in the person of David. What a picture we have here of the battle Christ fights on our behalf as our great warrior-King! In the first place you might notice that like David against Goliath He fights **alone**. He Himself says this in Isaiah 63:5; "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me."

Another important part of the picture is that David goes to fight against Goliath virtually unarmed and naked, and yet with perfect confidence in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, and, in the face of what appears to be certain defeat and death, conquers. No more than David could go to battle wearing the armor of Saul, could our Lord fight with the weapons of this world against the enemy of His people. "Put up thy sword into its sheath," He said to Peter. He too in the face of apparent defeat and death, when He hung naked, mocked and dying on the cross conquered so completely that He destroyed forever the power of the Wicked One. And He conquered by the Name of Jehovah of Hosts when He cried from His cross, "My God, My

God." Paul speaks of this conquering Christ in Colossians 2:15 when he says: "And having spoiled principalities and power, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it (i.e., in His cross)." Who cannot see that Christ in David as he cuts off Goliath's head with Goliath's own sword, and despoils him of both sword and armor?

Don't you love this David? As you watch him and listen to him, so bold and fearless, doesn't your heart go out to him? And yet if our love for him is to be more than mere hero worship, then our love must be love for Christ as we see him in David, and we will love Christ in David not just because He has done great deeds, but because He did them for us. That love is the beginning of a Christ-like obedience in our lives, for it will make us want to imitate David and be like him for Christ's sake. You young people must imitate David, then, not as a substitute for various worldly heroes in sports, entertainment, or fashion, but in thankfulness for what Christ has done and as an example of what it means to love and follow Christ.

David as an Example for Us

That, then is the second great lesson from the life of David. You must be like David in courage, in battle, and in victory for Christ's sake. Let me show you what that means.

The first thing you can learn from the story of David and Goliath is that you young people have a calling and work to do in the cause of God's kingdom. That is true of you as much as of David as a young man in the OT church and kingdom of God. It is not just the older members of the Church or the officebearers who have work to do in God's kingdom, but you young people also.

You are called to be warriors and to follow Christ into the battle. That is the second thing you may learn from David's example, and the second way you must be like him. In fact, this calling belongs especially to you as young people. Just as in an earthly war, it is the younger men who do the actual "dirty work" of fighting, so it is in the cause of God, though that is not to say that fighting for Christ is "dirty work." Nor is that to say you are the only ones called to fight. It is only to say that you young men and young women stand in the front lines and in the trenches against the enemy, and that the calling to fight is yours in a unique sense. For this God has given you in your youth particular gifts suited for that calling, especially your strength and energy and enthusiasm. As we grow older our strength declines and we easily weary of the battle, and God recognizes that, in giving to the church with each new generation new strength and courage by giving to the church its young men and women. You are the ones whom God has given to our churches for that reason. This is God's Word in I John 2:13, 14: "I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one . . . because ye are strong and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

Young people, you must fight in the battle of faith. I was impressed at our discussion groups this morning with your knowledge of the truth and your insights into the truth. I was able to learn from you. But there is more to your Christian calling. You must fight for the truth and to put that truth into practice by way of resisting the enemy. You must not hide in your tents as all Israel did when challenged by Goliath.

That was the reproach of Israel (I Sam. 17:26) in those days, and you will be the reproach of the church today if you do not fight.

How the church needs you! How very much do our churches need you! The church today resembles nothing so much as it resembles Israel during the days of Saul, dismayed in the face of the enemy, few if any willing to fight for the cause of the kingdom and covenant of God, easily put to flight by the threatening power of evil. We need you to be strong and to have the word of God abiding in you, that you may overcome the wicked one, and that the church of God may continue to be delivered from many enemies and from the power and raging of Satan.

You will have to fight alone oftentimes. Some of you already know what that means. You will have to fight, so it seems to us, your parents, pastors, and elders, ill-equipped for that battle. You will have to face not only the mocking scorn of the ungodly, as David faced Goliath's mockery, but you will also have to face the derision of those whom you call brothers just like David had to face the sneers of his older brother, Eliab.

Nor is the enemy any less powerful than the great giant Goliath. For you the giant enemy is Satan's power to tempt and to overcome by temptation. It is all the wealth and power and wisdom of the world which Satan uses to overthrow your faith in God and in His Word and to destroy your Christian life. The temptations you face will be as large as Goliath, and those temptations will be armored and invincible against all but God's own help. Never will your own strength be enough. The pleasures and lusts of this world will be as sharp against you as Goliath's spear, and the peer pressure put upon you as heavy as the shaft of that spear. Nor having slain the giant will the battle be over. As for David this was but the beginning of his life as a warrior. And Goliath, too, did not stand alone but came of a whole race of giants, and himself spawned four sons, all giants and all enemies of Israel. You will have to fight that battle everywhere - in your personal life, in your dating and your friendships, in school and at work.

Don't forget either, young people, that that battle involves standing against everyone and everything that is not actively **for** the cause of God. The most striking thing about Goliath is what David says about him when he calls him "this uncircumcised Philistine." And you understand that inasmuch as circumcision was the OT sign of the covenant, Goliath stands for all that is not part of that covenant. And you must remember that everything that is not **for** the cause of God's covenant and kingdom is **against** it, including at times sneering brethren and Israelites who are unwilling to fight. Against such also you will have to stand, if not in open warfare, then at least as a condemning example.

That battle has two aspects, your private personal life and your public life, especially in the church, but the two are very closely related. Fighting that battle in your personal life is the training you receive from God to be warriors in and on behalf of the church. Just as David had first to fight the lion and the bear to learn confidence in God that he might also fight for and with God's OT church, so for you the battle begins with your facing the lion and bear of evil and temptation in your own more private life.

David as an Encouragement to Us

In all this your faith is your only weapon and your victory. For "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even (y)our faith" (I Jn. 5:4). That is all you have. You cannot fight the philosophies of this world in the college classroom with argument, logic and learning alone. You cannot fight temptation by your own will-power and strength. You may not resist evil with evil, or blasphemy and scorn with railing and reviling. No more than David could wear Saul's armor can you wear the armor and use the weapons the world uses. That is the case, not just because you are young and unproved, but because those weapons are not enough to overcome the giant:

Not human strength or mighty hosts,
Not charging steeds or war-like boasts
Can save from overthrow;
But God will save from death and shame
All those who fear and trust His Name.
And they no want shall know.

Even David, though he went armed with a slingshot did not make it his weapon apart from Jehovah. As He said to Goliath: "Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield: but I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied. This day will the Lord deliver thee into mine hand . . . and all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear."

Armed only with faith, that gift of God, you cannot and must not be afraid. The giant of sin and temptation still roars and shakes his spear, but your faith is faith in Christ and in His victory. He has already conquered. In the cross the enemy is now defeated and all his power destroyed. By faith His power and victory are yours. Remember David and so many other OT heroes of faith, 'Who **through faith** subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. You too are more than conquerors in Him, that is, in Christ by faith.

And for your further encouragement there is an implicit promise here that God will use you for the good of His church. At the time of David's victory over Goliath there was no champion in Israel who dared to face the giant. Not Saul, great warrior that he was, not Abner, mighty captain of the host, not even Jonathan, that man of faith and child of God. But after David's victory there arose many champions in Israel, encouraged and strengthened by his example who slew the sons of the giant and worked to deliver God's OT church. So God will use you for good in His NT church as young men and young women of faith.

Remember too, that when you fight this battle faithfully, you fight in the cause of Christ Himself. He is on your side. That is the assurance of complete victory over all enemies for us.

Did we in our own strength confide,
Our striving would be losing,
Were not the right man on our side,
The Man of God's own choosing.
Dost ask who that may be?
Christ Jesus, it is He;
Lord Sabaoth His name,
From age to age the same,
And He must win the battle.

He wins that battle not only for us, but through us as we war the good warfare of faith.

CONVENTION IMPRESSIONS

by David W. Linker

The 1987 Y.P. Convention was a great experience. We stayed in the beautiful Rocky Mountains of Estes Park. This was a perfect location to gather together and have fellowship with one another. The facilities were good and there was always something to do, like swimming, mini-golf or other sports.

The lectures on the life of David were very informative and provided an excellent opportunity for us, as young people, to see how God worked in the life of one of his most beloved servants. I think we all learned a great deal from these lectures.

The discussion groups also provided a time for us to share each other's ideas and to voice our opinions on the different topics.

The host church did an excellent job of organizing activities. We had volley ball and softball tournaments and we went on hikes as well. Many of us enjoyed the bus trips to Bear Lake and Trail Ridge. They are beautiful places to behold God's power and majesty in His creation.

This year's convention was a great success and I'm sure we are all looking forward to next year's convention when we can once again meet and have fellowship in the Lord.

1987 CONVENTION

by Stephanie Rawson

Colorado is a long way from England, but this year I was fortunate enough to attend the 1987 Convention held at the Y.M.C.A. in the Rocky Mountains in Loveland.

The mountains provided a beautiful setting for the Convention, where the splendour and beauty of God's creation could be seen all around us.

The discussion groups which were held were very helpful and a refreshing change to what I am used to in England. It was good for me personally to meet with so many young people of like faith, as out here in England, we as a church feel very isolated and have only a few young people.

I was very impressed with the way in which the Convention was organized, the activities planned and the way in which everyone had such a lot of fun, and good fellowship together as a group.

On the whole the Convention was great. I had a "smashing" time and I have brought a lot of good memories home with me. I would like to say 'Thank you' to all the people who made my Convention experience one which I shall always remember.

Lessons From the Life of David
DAVID AND BATHSHEBA

by Rev. K. Koole

It was with a great deal of appreciation that I received Loveland's invitation to address our young people, to return again to Estes Park after fifteen years, this time not as a conventioneer but as a speaker.

From the topic assigned - 'David and Bathsheba' - it is evident what the Host Society intended that we deal with this evening, namely, the sexual aspect of our natures. What does the life of David, and in particular the incident with Bathsheba teach us about this aspect of our natures - its powers, the assaults against it, the grievous sins to which it can so easily lead us? And, what is our calling with respect to chastity and control?

SEX! SEX! SEX! One wonders whether our society has anything else on its mind these days but Sex! Not Love, but Sex. The trouble is the world is putting forth a concerted effort to make sure that that's all we think about as well. For this reason we must deal with it. It permeates the very air we breathe it seems.

Now, I am a bit of a prude, and I still wince at the bald use of these terms. I am no friend of the open, free use of the word 'sex' and derivations thereof, as though we are speaking of something as common as food and water, eating and sleeping. This matter belongs to the private aspect of life, and we must speak of these things accordingly. In the course of the speech, however, I am going to have to use the term and forms thereof rather frequently. It is in the nature of the case. This is where the battle rages the hottest, where the assault is being made, where the enemy advances. The strategy and deceptions of the Enemy must be exposed. Silence on these matters will simply yield this territory to him. This we will not do.

The first thing that strikes us is that David was no teenager when he committed his sin with Bathsheba. He was middle-aged. He was closer to 47 than to 17. This does not mean, of course, that David's sin has little to say to teenagers at this point. Rather it simply tells us that sexual sin is not a sin peculiar to the youth, as though once you get past 25 years of age, temptation in this regard becomes a matter of past history. Rather, what David's sin tells you is that this is a matter you are going to have to deal with all your life long. We all must.

The point is, it is as youth, teenagers, that you must being to deal with this power, with the reality of one's sexual side and desires. That is simply the biological fact of human development and growth. Here is a new facet of one's person and identity, the sexual. And as a teenager one must begin to deal with it. But you must do that as **Christian** teenagers, in a way different from the world.

Further, it is a power, an inner

power. That a saint of David's stature, a warrior so seasoned in the battle of faith, should succumb to this sin, should be so completely overwhelmed by this temptation, certainly speaks of its power. It stands as a warning concerning the precautions we must take in this regard.

However attractive sexual satisfaction may seem to you, the terrible fruit of David's doing in this regard, and God's severity in dealing with him, ought to bring us up short. This history warns against sexual uncleanness in all its forms. And do not forget that sexual uncleanness does not need a partner. It can take place in the privacy of one's own home. We must stop to consider tha for such unlawful satisfaction or desire for it there is a price to pay, a terrible price. That's one of the main lessons of this chapter of David's life.

Now, in this chapter of David's life there is another name involved, though it is often overlooked, and that is the name of Uriah, Uriah the Hittite. Uriah is the gleam in the gloom.

Every indication is that Uriah was a young man; not a teenager perhaps, but not much older either. Bathsheba was the wife of his youth. I point out to you that Uriah showed tremendous sexual restraint. When David called him home from battle for deceitful reasons, he could have gone home to Bathsheba. That was his right. And do not think that he did not have the desire. But he would not; no, not for God's sake. He exercised restraint. He is the example for good. He showed by his chaste conduct that the sexual can be harnessed and controlled. To say that the sexual side of our nature is powerful and persistent is not to say that it is ungovernable. Uriah demonstrates that. Uriah found grace to abstain and to control. David on the other hand did not find that grace. He did not seek it. He gave himself to this sin. And with devastating results.

The question is, how did it all come about? What led to this whole sin syndrome?

In the first place, let's understand where David's first sin lay. David's first sin was not lust, sexual desire. Rather, David's first sin was not being in a spiritual frame of mind. His first sin was being spiritually careless. Thus he was unprepared for the Devil's assault.

This is the point of that seemingly insignificant fact recorded in II Samuel 11:1. There you read "And it came to pass . . . at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; . . but David tarried still at Jerusalem." Notice, when kings went to battle, David did not! He loitered in Jerusalem. David, the warrior king, decided to take a spiritual vacation from the battle of faith. He becomes spiritually sluggish, careless, and puts pleasure before duty. It is no wonder that he is easy prey to sexual temptation. Idle hands are the Devil's workshop, so is an idle mind. Lack of spiritual preparation and activity makes one a sitting target for this kind of temptation.

That's how it goes. We are bored. We have nothing to do, i.e. no interest in spiritual things. So we look for something to do, something to interest us, something to stimulate us. So, we turn on the T.V., we read a book, we go to the magazine rack. And we are sitting targets for the sensual, the suggestive, the impure.

There is only one line of defense against the assaults of sexual tempta-

tion, and that is spiritual preparation. You may be sure that when David got up from his bed that night, he did not get up from his knees in prayer. He had not bothered praying, or if he had you may be sure it was one of those thoughtless assembly-line prayers to which we are all so prone. He went to the roof-top defenseless.

How foolish, young people, how foolish we are if we think that we can go thru life, even thru one day in our society, and think that we will not have to deal with some kind of suggestive sexual temptation. How foolish not to anticipate the Enemy's line of attack, and to fail to take spiritual precautions against it: to fail to pray for grace to turn my eyes from beholding vanity, for spiritual strength.

The simple fact is that we live in an age when the whole of society is one great roof-top on a hot night. And if you are looking for something to excite you sexually, you can certainly find it. I do not have to tell you where. You know; in the movie theatre, on the magazine rack, at the peep show, for that matter in the back seat of the car. It's there. And it's all meant to stimulate and excite.

I suppose it could be argued that David was not on the roof-top looking for Bathsheba; she just happened to be there. (I am not convinced, however, that his intentions were at all innocent). But there she was; and so he looked. What else was he supposed to do? Not look? Yes! Precisely, young people, not to look; turn his head; and get off that roof. And then he should have gotten on his knees and prayed for the grace of forgiveness and of self control. That's precisely what you are to do when confronted by this temptation. You are to turn your eyes from beholding vanity. You put away the magazine. You turn the page. You lay it aside.

What our calling is in this regard, God's Word makes very clear, "Flee fornication." (I Cor. 6:18) This refers not only to the deed, but to the desire. It is a sin which will pursue us. Sometimes the best defense is with our feet. Certainly it means that we are not to let ourselves thoughtlessly, carelessly to be led into circumstances where our passions are stirred and the flame fed.

Young people, you do not flee it in the back seat of a car feeding each other's passions either.

Neither do you flee it by listening to the driving rhythm of that godless rock music. You are not naive are you? You understand that music. It pulsates with the pulse of aroused blood. That is its purpose. That's its words. It's meant to arouse the sexual passions. And it will. To date, and to listen to that stuff, and then to think you can escape sexual sin and temptation is sheer folly. It will simply put you on the roof top. And what will be brought forth is sin.

You think that is a small matter? Look at David, and consider, and be wise.

You people, do you pray? Do you pray over against this sin? Do you understand the seriousness of this sin, and its power? This history of David should make it plain.

Another thing that we learn from this chapter in David's life is to distinguish between lust and love. They are not at all related.

The world identifies the two. This is one of its great evils. They sing "Love! Love! Love! We are drunk with love!" But what they mean is "Sex!

Sex! Sex! and Lust!" Their love is completely defiled. And the distinct impression left is that apart from the sexual there is no real love.

Young people, that is a great lie. The truth is that the sexual is reserved for marriage, and for marriage alone. There it is a good gift. There it is an expression of love; not outside of marriage. Outside of marriage all it is is fornication and uncleanness, not love.

The question we ask is, what is love?

Let me put it into simplest terms - love is the power of attraction; it attracts you towards something in the other. Why do you love someone? Because you find something attractive in that other. That's a vital element of love.

But there is another element in love, (that is, love worthy of the name), and that is, **what** do you find attractive? What attracts you? This is going to determine what kind of love you are involved in, whether it is true and Christian love, or some perversion of it.

As young men and women, what are you attracted to? What are you looking for? Why do you say you love her? Is it because of her looks? Is that what attracts you? Is it his body? His or her status? Or is it simply their personality? Or athletic ability or popularity? Is that all it is? Can that be true love, love worthy of the name 'Christian'?

The answer of course can only be a resounding 'No'! Love, true love, is always coupled together with faith. It has to do with Christ. True love sees what is spiritual, what is godly, and is attracted to it. True love is attracted to the 'Christ' in a person.

Now when we say that the spiritual must be involved, we are not saying that there is not something about the total person that attracts us to one more strongly than another. There is of course. Personality is involved. But the point is, if we do not perceive the spiritual, the person does not display godliness, then the person is not for us. If your attraction to someone has nothing to do with spiritual, and you do not even trouble yourself with looking for it, then what you have is not love. What you have may be human affection, or it may even be lust, but it is not love.

Here again we have David's sin and evil. He certainly was not attracted to Bathsheba because of her spirituality. I am not saying you understand that Bathsheba was unspiritual. But that was not David's interest. The man did not even know her name! He had to ask his servants who she was. He knew only one thing about her, she was beautiful to look upon. And that's what he wanted. So he lusted; he took her; he committed adultery with her; and he sent her away.

It was a matter of self-satisfaction, that's all. It was not love. There was nothing spiritual about it. And sin followed.

Young people, what is it that attracts you? What are you looking for? Godliness, spirituality?

Or again, what are you interested in displaying? What do you want people to be attracted to in you? Godliness? Spirituality? Can it be seen in your clothing, in your speech, in you? As disciples of Christ you are not ashamed of that are you? Young people, remember that it is in the sphere of chastity, modesty, and godliness that love can flourish, not in immorality.

There is more to learn from this chapter in David's life. A chief lesson is, there is only one way to deal with this sin in its many forms, and that is by confession, not by cover-up! This is exactly why David's sin grew to such terrible proportions. He decided to deal with sin by cover-up. And he multiplied sin upon sin. He became involved in lying, betrayal, encouraging drunkenness, and at last even murder; anything to hide the evidence. That is how this sin works.

This is not to say that this sin will lead us to murder, (though in this connection abortion is a prevalent sin today and a temptation, and is nothing but murder), but it will lead to further sin, especially cover-up. In the end, unconfessed, this sin becomes a fire that never cries 'Enough', and it can all but devour one. There must be confession, and repentance, and abstinence. That is the only way to deal with it.

Cover-up will never work. Oh, it's true that you may keep it from becoming public knowledge. That is possible. But the point is, you are never going to be able to deal with it in such a way as to be free from it, from its power, its guilt, to put it aside, and to find peace.

This was what David found to his great grief. Rather than confession, he tried cover-up, and he failed miserably. It led eventually to Uriah's murder, to David's shame and remorse to the end of his days.

God, of course, prevented any cover-up. He doomed it from the beginning. Bathsheba conceived and became pregnant. Public knowledge was inevitable. The deed could not be hid.

And now here words of warning must be sounded. As you well know fornication and sexual immorality does not end up in pregnancy everytime. That can be avoided. But does that change anything?

As you well know the world has perfected its means whereby she can engage in this sin of sexual promiscuity and prevent the consequences, namely, unwanted pregnancy. There are such things on the market today as 'the pill', and 'condoms', and what not.

(And whoever thought I would be talking publicly to youth about such things as 'condoms'. But these are being advertized publicly. And you are the focal point of the advertizing push. So we are forced to speak of them, like it or not. You are well informed as to what is available.)

I simply want to point out that this is the world's method of dealing with this evil. They want to engage in the sin, and escape the consequences. You understand, such is sheer ungodliness. It's the Devil's solution. But it changes nothing. The defilement remains.

If you think this is a way of concealment, you are the more the fool. God is not mocked. To resort to this method can be no more successful in the end than David's murder of Uriah. There is no cover-up.

Even if David had persuaded Uriah to go home to Bathsheba, so that in the end Uriah thought the child was his, the cover-up would not have been successful. Why not? Because of those final ominous words at the end of chapter 11. "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord."

That's the point. The Lord knew. He always does. And the Lord would deal with him. He always does. All things are open to His eyes.

The bottom line, young people, is,

sexual immorality is displeasing to the Lord. And in particular not turning from the sin is displeasing. How displeasing is evident from the consequences in David's life. The child died, and he had endless troubles in his home. The Lord brought home His deep displeasure with impurity.

The Lord shows it today too. That is apparent from the epidemics of sexual diseases prevalent today, the severity of them; AIDS for instance. What are they but the judgment of God! And even if one does not contact the disease in their sin, the displeasure of God certainly remains the same.

And so you understand, beloved young people, there is no cover-up. And we must not resort to cover-up either. Rather we must seek a **covering**. And the covering we must seek is the blood of Christ. That is the only covering for this sin.

That is the only way to deal with it, confession; confession of sin, repentance, and praying for grace to possess our vessels in holiness. It was only when David did that, acknowledging his guilt, that he found peace, was able to break with the way of sin, and was able to discover the way of true love again.

Let us also briefly state that for this sin there is forgiveness. God forgives this sin too in a wonderful way. Once we have confessed and repented of it, we do not have to go about with a burden of guilt and despair.

Consider how abundantly God forgave David, even of his murder of Uriah. God did not disown him. God went to him with the gospel, exposed the sin, called him to repentance, and assured him "The Lord hath also put away thy sin. Thou shalt not die." This is not the unforgivable sin. We are all guilty in some form or the other. We must not despair of God's mercy.

Now it is true that there were temporal consequences for David, and rather severe ones at that, death and family troubles. But in that regard notice three things. First, the severity was in accordance with David's position as king, his high position. The Lord was showing that He was no respecter of persons.

Secondly, there was not only adultery involved, but murder and cover-up as well.

Thirdly, the punishment was a temporal punishment. It was not eternal punishment. Ultimately, it was chastisement, not a curse or condemnation.

The point we must notice is, that to continue in the sin of sexual uncleanness is a dangerous business. There must be repentance before it leads to worse and worse things. If it does, the severity of the consequences will grow accordingly. God's name and holiness, after all, are involved.

So, young people, have nothing to do with this sin in any of its forms. Recognize its power; leave it as a deadly foe. Your bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Keep them sanctified. Do that for God's sake, and for your own happiness.

One might ask, do you mean to say that there is no room for courting, for romance? No, there is room for courting and for romance even. But it is to be chaste romance. The two are not incompatible.

There is something altogether wonderful about the blossoming love of youth. Scripture itself takes note of that through Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba, "There be three things

which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: The way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid." (Prov. 30:18, 19) That's a godly young man with a virtuous young maid. And this latter is more wonderful than the three which preceded it.

Young people, if David were here this evening speaking to you, what do you suppose he would say? How he would urge you to learn from his sin, from his folly, and thus avoid his griefs. How he would urge you not to be weak like himself, but to be strong like that young Uriah, who was the gleam in the gloom. Indeed, may the God of David give you grace to lay these lessons to heart.

"Hence we gather how weighty a burden is borne by all judges and rulers of the people, for if any sin is committed through their negligence, or timidity, or indolence, they must themselves give account for it, as if they had given the signal for licentiousness."
— John Calvin

IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONVENTION

by Lori Feenstra

The 1987 Young People's Convention, sponsored by the Loveland, Colorado, was located in a very beautiful area, Estes Park. With the mountains all around, you were once again reminded of God's greatness and glory.

It was great to see old friends and meet a lot of new friends too. The hardest part of all was saying goodbye, knowing you probably wouldn't see them again until next convention.

I really enjoyed the time spent in devotions with the chaperones and also the singing every morning before breakfast.

The discussion group topics were good but it seemed that the younger conventioneers didn't say much and the older ones had to keep the discussion going. It is probably a matter of going over the topics before the convention and being prepared.

The three speeches on the "Life of David" were interesting and well prepared. The ministers did a good job.

The Loveland Young People's Society did a very good job and I would like to thank them for all the time and work they put into this convention. It was a good experience for young people of the same faith to be together in Christian fellowship. The Lord willing, we will all meet again next year to grow spiritually in the grace and knowledge of God.

CONVENTION IMPRESSIONS

Amy Lotterman

I think that everyone who attended the 1987 Convention will agree with me that it was quite an unforgettable convention. The two most distinguished unforgettable facts are probably the terrible Y.M.C.A. cafeteria food and the large amount of people who got sick. It was quite a convention!

Since this convention was my first, I really didn't know what to expect. I think it went pretty good with the exception of just a few things. First, on Monday and Friday there were a few transportation problems. There weren't enough suitable vehicles to take everyone and their luggage up and down the mountains in one big trip. A lot of people got sick of waiting around with nothing to do but wait. However, we did survive! Secondly, many people were saying that there was far too much free time.. I definitely agree with that. The first couple of days my friends and I were kind of bored. It took a lot of time and walking to find out where everything was at the camp. We did manage to stay occupied, but it would have been more fun to be involved in more organized activities. This gives people the chance to meet others. During the free time most of the established groups of friends didn't mingle. Thirdly, there was the matter of discussion groups. They weren't set up very well. We should have had 30 minutes instead of 15 for discussion purposes. Also, the 20 people who represented the 20 groups (and had to report on what their group came up with) didn't have a very attentive audience to speak to. It was boring. Most of the 20 repeated the same things as the others and it took forever to get through all twenty. This part should have been dropped.

The highlight on Thursday was the special awards ceremony. Everyone had a good time. Each convention in the future should have something special like that!

Approximately 60 people from the Grand Rapids area, including myself, will remember especially our delayed stay in Loveland. This was necessary because of our cancelled flight into Chicago on Friday. Thirty of these people left Saturday afternoon. I was among the other 30 who left very early Sunday morning. Although I had a good time at the Convention and in Loveland afterwards, I was glad to get home to my own bed and good home cooking!

God gives us always a full measure of good things. All that God gives us is good. By faith we embrace this promise and are assured that He makes all things work together for our salvation. — Rev. Herman Hoeksema

MINUTES OF THE 47th ANNUAL Protestant Reformed Young Peoples' Convention

Minutes of the 47th Annual Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention, held at the YMCA of the Rockies, Colorado, August 10-14.

Hosted by the Loveland Young People's Society.

Theme: "Lessons from the Life of David"

II Samuel 8:14

Speech Topics:

I. David and Goliath

II. David and Bathsheba

III. David and Absalom

Monday, Aug. 10

In the early afternoon, the conventioneers gathered at Loveland Church for registration. We then went to the YMCA and settled in. Devotions were held at 5:00 and were followed by an outdoor supper.

In an outdoor amphitheater at dusk, we watched a slide show about hiking. Afterwards, we returned to the dorms for devotions and a restful night's sleep.

Tuesday, Aug. 11

Devotions were held in the Hyde Chapel at 7:00 and then we went to breakfast. Discussion groups were started after breakfast. The topics of the first two groups were "When to be on your own" and "Christian Work Ethic." The second group of topics were "Communication in the Christian Family" and "Peer Pressure."

The Delegate Board meeting was held at 11:00 and went as follows:

Art. 1: Dirk read from Psalm 124 and opened the meeting with prayer.

Art. 2: Roll was taken of the delegates and alternates.

Art. 3: The minutes of the 1986 Delegate Board meeting were read and approved.

Art. 4: Steve Lotterman announced the Scholarship recipients of 1987.

Art. 5: Phil Van Baren read the Financial Report. The balance on hand as of May 1, 1987 was $6,932.34. The floor was opened for discussion.

Art. 6: A motion was made, supported, and passed to accept the Financial Report.

Art. 7: Nominees for Federation Board officers were announced. The floor was opened for additional nominations.

Art. 8: The nominations were closed.

Art. 9: Delegates voted on the nominations.

Art. 10: A motion was made, supported, and passed to adjourn.

Art. 11: Hank Vander Waal, lead us in closing devotions and prayer.

The convention picture was taker after lunch. The young people then participated in planned activities, while the young adults could go hiking.

At 5:00 we gathered for devotions and ate supper.

The first speech was given by Rev.

Ron Hanko on "David and Goliath." A bonfire and free-time filled the rest of the night.

Wednesday, Aug. 12

The morning began with devotions and breakfast. Afterward we boarded buses for the day's outing. The young people went to Bear Lake. The young adults rode buses up a mountain to a place called Trail Ridge, some 13,000 feet in height. This trip was especially nice for those of us who only see the "flat" lands back home.

Everyone gathered at North Shore Park in Loveland for supper. The speech was held at Loveland Church. Rev. Koole spoke on "David and Bathsheba." The buses took us back to the YMCA.

Thursday, Aug. 13

The last of the discussion groups were held after breakfast. The topics of the first two groups were "Christian Liberty" and "Good Stewardship." The last two topics were "The Christian's Attitude toward Military Service" and "What Makes a Good Convention?" After discussion groups, mock awards were given to various chaps and conventioneers.

East vs. West games were played in the afternoon.

The Punch Bowl started at 5:45, with the Banquet dinner afterward. The setting for the Banquet was of a Western style. Our special number featured the Revs. R. Hanko, Koole, Bekkering, and Cammenga. They dressed in red bandanas and cowboy hats and sang a re-make of "Home on the Range" to "Oh Give Me Some Sleep." I think this song expressed the feelings of most of the chaps at this point quite well.

The last speech was held after dinner. A quartet from First Church in Grand Rapids, Tim Kaiser, Jim Mulder, Chuck Doezema and Chris Vink sang two songs for us. Rev. Bekkering spoke on "David and Absalom."

The new Federation Board officers were announced as follows: Vice-Pres.: Greg Holstege; Vice-Sec.: Jory Kalsbeek; and Vice-Treas.: Brad Kuiper.

The rest of the night was given to free time.

Friday, Aug. 14

We gathered for devotions and breakfast for the last time. We packed up after breakfast, exchanged goodbyes and left the YMCA.

I would like to say a **special** thank-you to the Loveland congregation for providing food and housing for the 60 young people from Michigan who were stranded an extra, unexpected night. Your hospitality was very much appreciated.

Thanks also go to the Loveland Young People's Society for making this an eventful and memorable convention. Above all, may our thanks go to our gracious God for giving us the opportunity to once again gather around His Word as young people, that we may grow in His grace and knowledge.

"Christ declares that He did not come to make mankind free according to the flesh, as the world and all men would like, but that He is concerned with another type of freedom, an eternal freedom, namely, freedom from sin."

— Martin Luther (on John 8)

Lessons From the Life of David
DAIVD AND ABSALOM

by Rev. W. Bekkering

This is a rather sober lesson in the life of David. We see David, that great man of God, staggering under the heavy hand of God's chastisement because of his own sin. Yet we see in David the grace of God in Christ Jesus. The beauty of grace is humility and submission to God's way. We also see God keeping His promise to David. The promise on the one hand, of the establishment of God's everlasting covenant with David. Recall when David wanted to build a house for the Lord and the Lord told him that it was not his work to do. God Himself was going to build a house. He was going to use David in the building of that house; He was going to build His eternal house through David and his seed, our Lord Jesus Christ. In connection with that God gave to David a very wonderful promise, that God would establish His covenant with him and his seed. If his children would violate that covenant then God would chastise them. Yet God would never forsake David. Here we see that lesson coming through, even though David had rendered himself totally unworthy of the Lord. David must have himself felt the filthiness, vileness and the worthlessness of himself because of his sin. Yet God's wonderful promise is kept.

God gives another promise to David. This one is found in the immediate context that we are considering. This promise is a more sobering promise, and yet it was a promise of the word of God that David had to deal with. We find this in II Sam. 12:10-12. After this, the prophet Nathan had come to David because of his heinous sin with Bathsheba and concerning her husband, Uriah. Now the Lord gives this word of promise to David, "Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife. Thus saith the Lord, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbor, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun." Notice God says, "I will do this thing...". In all the inexcusable wickedness of Amnon and Absalom, God is wielding the sword of His justice upon His servant David.

We see in this a very powerful lesson that each one of us does well to take to heart as young people. This lesson runs through the whole of Scripture, but we find it specifically in Gal. 6:7-8, "Be not deceived; God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." We see in this history that God is no respecter of persons. That makes this

more intensive for us. We, as young people, can see how that would apply to us, but what about that great hero of the faith, David, the man after God's own heart, who had fallen so miserably into sin? God shows that whatsoever any man sows that shall he also reap. This is a principle out of the word of God. Young people and all of us, we had better believe this word of God. Be not deceived! Satan is out to deceive us into thinking that we can sin without receiving the consequences of sin, and that you can enjoy the lusts and pleasures of this world without the fear of the consequences. Be not deceived for God is not mocked. That is the lesson that runs through this sordid history of David's life. We see that lesson applied to David, and applied through his son, Absalom, and applied to Absalom himself.

Let us take a look now at Absalom. I don't know what impression you have of Absalom. My impression of Absalom changed through the study of this history. In my mind Absalom was not such a bad guy; he had many good attributes. What caused me to have a rather favorable impression of Absalom was that heart-rending cry of David when Absalom died, "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! A guy like that can't be all bad, can he? When his father had lived with him all of his life and had suffered at his hand, and yet he lamented him terribly. As we look at Absalom more carefully, we see that he is a wicked scoundrel. If we look at some of the high points of Absalom's life, which are really spiritual low points, we get a little glimpse of this man Absalom.

Absalom was cool. He was popular; he was witty. Absalom was good looking, and he had a charming personality. If Absalom were here at the convention he would be one of the most popular figures. In II Sam. 14:25-26 we read this about Absalom, "But in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absalom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him. And when he polled his head, (for it was at every year's end that he polled it, because he hair was heavy on him, therefore he polled it:) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight." Absalom was a fine looking man. He had all the external attributes of the finest young man in Israel, and yet Absalom had a lack. It seemed as though Absalom had everything going in his favor. He had good looks; he had money (he was the king's son after all); he had popularity; he had power, and yet there was one thing that Absalom lacked.

David saw in Absalom a deep spiritual weakness. Yet David seemed weak to deal with the sin of Absalom. David let Absalom literally get away with murder.

Now we look at Absalom and the figure that he cuts before us of a fine looking young man. We see that he was noted for his beauty, i.e., his external beauty, but inwardly he was ugly. Absalom was a vain man. We see his pride and vanity in the matter of his long hair. He cut his hair only once a year, and it seemed to be a big occasion for him; he cut off his hair and he weighed it.

Absalom here represents for us a negative example of young people. All week long at Convention we have been watching the girls take their time with their hair. Everyone wants to look nice, and that is all right. But there is a point

where there is a sinful pride when these things become ends in themselves, as certainly it was for Absalom.

Absalom was concerned solely with his beauty, his honor, his glory, his power, and his secret plan and goal and desire that was all consuming - that one day he would have his father's throne. Only one thing mattered for Absalom, come what may, and let God's will be hanged, that he sit upon the throne of Israel. It seemed that Absalom had everything, and yet there was one thing that he lacked.

Absalom had a problem - he was not the son of David that was in line for the throne. Amnon was. Absalom eyed Amnon. How could he get around or get rid of Amnon? Well Amnon set himself up for the fall, and Absalom was only too willing to help him in his fall. Amnon wickedly lusted after Absalom's younger sister, Tamar, who was also Amnon's half-sister. Through Amnon's subtle trickery he set up the circumstances where just he and Tamar could be alone, and then he raped her.

Tamar, as Absalom's younger sister, came to live with him after she had been dishonored in Israel. With respect to Amnon, Absalom set the matter in his heart and in his mind. Here was Absalom's attitude toward Amnon as recorded in II Sam. 13:22, "And Absalom spake unto his brother Amnon neither good nor bad, for Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar." Absalom did not deal with that horrible sin in the right way. There was provision in Israel for a proper dealing with such sin. But Absalom saw here a way to get rid of Amnon, and an excuse for sin. Absalom give Amnon the "cold treatment", but underneath there was a burning hatred. Here is another negative example for us. Sometime we cutely say, "I don't get mad; I just get even". Well that is exactly what Absalom did. For two years hatred filled his soul, and finally he set up the opportunity to vent himself of that hatred and to clear the way to the throne.

Absalom planned a party. He invited all the king's sons to come. Absalom, because of his power and wealth, had many means at his disposal. We read in II Sam. 13:28 & 29, "Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous and be valiant. And the servants of Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded." You see Absalom did unto Amnon as Absalom had commanded." You see Absalom had the power to carry out the evil desires of his heart.

Sin was really no problem for Absalom. Is sin a problem for you? It should be for God's people. Sometimes we plan sin and carry it out, but that sin gives us a problem.

Absalom's purpose and goal to get to the throne of Israel was one step closer in the death of Amnon. After Absalom killed Amnon he fled to Geshur where his grandfather on his mother's side was the king, and he stayed there for three years. During Absalom's absence David longed for him. Here we see a strange twist in David's moral character. Oh, we can understand the love of a father for such a son as Absalom with all of those promising attributes. And yet David could not have helped but notice that there was a great lack in Absalom's

spiritual life and sensitivity. Fianlly through the help of Joab, Absalom is brought back to Jerusalem. But he was restricted under house arrest in Jerusalem for two years. With that Absalom was not satisfied of course. This was not aiding him in the fulfillment of his dream to sit on the throne of Israel. So Absalom brought it about that he had contact with the people of the kingdom. Through subtilty, treachery and deception he stole the hearts of the men of Israel. He did not win their respect as David had, but he stole their hearts.

Absalom sat by the gate of the city and when any came with a controversy to be judged by the king. Absalom would inquire concerning the matter and would assure the person that his cause was good and right, but there was no man appointed by the king to hear these things. Then Absalom would further his campaign for the throne by saying, "Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!" II Sam. 15:4. Absalom used this method to cast a bad light on David's performance as king. No doubt there was some basis in fact that there was weakness in David. In this devious way Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.

Soon after Absalom saw that he had the hearts of the people in his hand he made his next move toward the throne. This next step of Absalom was the height of pious hypocrisy. This next step of Absalom, more than anything, turned my heart and mind against him. Here Absalom used religion as a covering for his wickedness. Absalom needed permission from the king to leave the city so he came to David with this religious request: "I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the Lord, in Hebron. For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord. And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose and went to Hebron." II Sam. 15:7-9.

Absalom's next step came quickly. Following right upon the king's permission we read: "But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron." Absalom used the wicked false front of spirituality to gain his end. Have you ever done that? Some Sunday evening you want to go somewhere, but your parents ask you where you are going, and you answer that you are going to the Singspiration or that you are going to another church this evening, but then you go and do the evil lusts of your flesh. This is a serious matter. Here we have a powerful negative example in Absalom.

Now that Absalom had not only the hearts of the men of Israel in his hand but he had a great host to fight for him, he marched into Jerusalem and committed adultery with his father's concubines on the house top in the sight of all Israel.

In the light of these things, we look at the death of Absalom and David's reaction to it. We hear David lamenting, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! How is it that David could have such a grief in his heart for this wicked son of his? When David said, "Would God I had died for thee", he meant that from the bottom of his heart. Because David was a man after God's own heart and

that if he would die he would go to glory. But the deepest fear of David's heart was that if his son continued in his evil ways - surely this man was going to hell. And finally when Absalom died in his rebellion and sin it was a horrible grief for David. Can you imagine what a thing this would be for parents? The apostle John writes in III John 4, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." That is true in the church for godly covenant parents. What greater joy can there be than to hear that you, their children walk in the truth? Not that you are rich; not that you are famous but that you walk in the truth. In sharp contrast to that we see David trying to reconcile himself to the predestination of God and to the promise of God that He would raise up evil against David out of his own house, and he has to commit the soul of his son Absalom to everlasting desolation.

Joab, the general in David's army, came to him with a strong rebuke by showing that David loved his enemies and hated his friends. There was something wrong with David's judgment at this point. We see in this whole history of David in relationship to Absalom a rather strange mixture of the power of God's grace and abject human weakness. We see things in the life of David in this period that we simply cannot reconcile. We see a sad figure in David. David had lost his moral courage to discipline his children, because of his own great sin. David's sin, though it was forgiven by God, sapped the spiritual strength and energy of this great man of God. Be not deceived young people, God is not mocked. God does not deal lightly with sin. He takes every one of my sins and your sins utterly seriously. God teaches us that lesson here in the life of David.

What was David's reaction when Amnon raped Tamar? We read that when king David heard of all these things, he was very wroth. That is all we read. He was very wroth, but he had lost his moral energy and his spiritual courage to discipline his children. What happened two years later when Absalom carried out his wicked purpose and killed a brother in Israel, Amnon? Again David did not call for justice, but he allowed it to remain in Israel. But God did not forget it!

We say again that we see a strange mixture in David. Maybe not so strange. You know your own sin, and sometimes to be consistent you have to close your mouth with respect to righteous judgment. Maybe this is not so strange, but a realistic picture of the child of God, weak and sinful, walking as a pilgrim, not finding here the perfection that he was looking for, but bearing with humility, as David does, the mighty hand of God because of his sin.

David, unlike Absalom, submits himself to God, because he knows that what is happening is according to God's will and way for him. Trusting in the grace, mercy and wisdom of God, David does not set himself in rebellion against the things that are happening, but he humbles himself and bears it. Here is a powerful positive lesson for us. How do things go in your life? Is everything going just the way you want it to? Are there things happening in your life that you don't like, and that are connected with your own sin and your own foolishness? So what are you going to do about it? Are you going to say, "I don't care what God says? I'm going to do my own thing"? Are you

going to be like Absalom rather than David?

David humbled himself before God. He saw his son rising up against him and he could have called an army, but he did not have the moral strength and courage at that time to do it. David fell back on the mercy and grace of God to help him. In II Sam. 15:30 we see a sad, heart-rending picture of the great king of Israel as he was fleeing Jerusalem before Absalom. "And David went up by the ascent of mount Olivet, and wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot...". David went in humble submission to the will of God. That sad train had not gone very far into the wilderness when they met a scoundrel named Shimei. Shimei has a whole mouth full of curses for David. One of David's men said, "Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? Let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head". But David said, "so let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so?"

David saw the promise of God being fulfilled in his life. Both the promise of God's covenant, and the promise of the visitation of God's judgment upon him came true together. And David humbled himself before God.

Be not deceived, God is not mocked. We can't sin without the consequences of sin. Never let yourself think that for a moment you can sin and God won't see and God won't know and God won't care. We have a wonderful God, a God who sees all and knows all. A God Who holds us by His grace in His hand. He calls us by the word of His gospel this evening to holiness and whole-hearted commitment to glorify Him.

We close by looking at the last words of David. After David has borne it all and fought the fight and kept the faith he wrote in II Sam. 23:1-5 "Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue. The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain. Although my house be not so with God; yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."

David came to the end of his life and he saw his own great failing. David has spoken the word of God. He saw that the man who was to be king in Israel must be just, and one who ruled must rule in the fear of God. David confessed that he had come far short of that. The king must be as the light of the morning reflecting the glory of God, but David said that his house was not so with God. How then can David have any comfort? Have you ever felt, young people, so utterly unworthy of the grace of God? Have you ever felt so filthy, vile and worthless because of your sin? Have you ever nearly despaired of the mercy of God to save a sinner like me and you? What is there in David that he can go that next wonderful step and say, "Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant,

ordered in all things, and sure''? This wonderful God has established with David and with you that everlasting covenant ordered in all things. Is there anything outside of the ordering of God as He leads His people to glory? To answer that just look at David, who says, ''for this is all my salvation''. Not any work that I could have or should have done, but the everlasting covenant of God is all my salvation. There is a lesson here. Believe this word of God! This is not a license to sin. The Holy Spirit will never allow the child of God to say, ''Now that I am secure in God's covenant I can go and sin as I please''. Oh no, this word of the gospel breaks down our hearts and makes us humble and thankful, and renews us in the zeal and energy to live to the glory of this great God Who saved such a wretch as David. This is all my salvation and my desire although he make it not to grow, said David. That means that in this life David didn't see all these things growing, but he saw them by faith in the new heavens and the new earth. What a wonderful encouragement for such vile sinners as you and me!

CONVENTIONS

By Sherry Koole

In recalling conventions that I have attended,
I can understand why they are **so** recommended.
The mem'ries I have of those in the past
Will always be with me — those memories last.

We gathered together in all different places
Renewing old friendships and seeing new faces,
Some coming from here and some coming from there
All coming to grow in the truth that we share.

We had many good times for fun and for pleasure
Yes, many the memories I always will treasure.
But also we grew in our love of the Lord
Through the speeches we heard and discussing His Word.

This convention is really no different than most
Except maybe the mountains, which in part are your hosts;
They'll surround you each morning at the YMCA
They're a beautiful sight to wake up to each day.

The theme or the topic for this year's convention
Has already been drawn to all your attention;
"Lessons From the Life of David" you'll find
Is the topic we chose with young people in mind.

Each speech spoken at this year's convention
Draws an aspect of David's life to attention;
Each speech gives a lesson, I think you'll agree,
That can easily apply both to you and to me.

David, an elect and God-fearing man,
Grieviously sinned as both you and I can.
He called on his Father to forgive and to save
And God in His mercy this son David forgave.

We are, too, at times tempted again and again
And it's easy to yield to temptation and sin.
But God as our Father is with us each day
To guard and to guide us unless we should stray.

Thanks be to God for His protecting care,
Thanks be to God for the truth that we share,
And thanks be to God for conventions, too.
To Him give all glory; for to Him it is due.

LOVE FROM ABOVE

A young man prayed for a maiden to love
And the good Lord answered his prayer;
He made her his wife
And the rest of their life
There was peace and harmony there.

A maiden prayed for a worthy young man
To love — and to love her always;
Her petition was heard
And their mutual word
Held firm to the end of their days.

Young maidens, young men, it is safe to begin
The affairs of the heart with a prayer,
For a knot triple tied
Is most like to abide
If the good Lord's sanction it bare.

—Dewey Westra

CONVENTION IMPRESSIONS

by Jodi Brummel

The 1987 Y.P. Convention in Loveland left many great memories. Many of us had a good time staying over the weekend with families of the Loveland church. This gave us a chance to get to know the family, and make a few new friends.

I want to thank all the people in Loveland who put in many hours of free time to have a Convention there. I hope that they are rewarded by the thought that everyone had a good time and grew spiritually from it. For some of us it is the only time in the whole year that we get to be around that many P.R. teenagers. This makes it a special time, because we can discuss the truths.

I thought it went really smooth putting the numbers on our name tags and using that for discussion groups. Everyone could have a chance to say what they thought because there was a good amount of people in each group. The topic for the Convention "Lessons From the Life of David" was a good one. The ministers who gave the speeches really got their points across clearly and the discussions were beneficial.

Bringing up the Convention and then saying the word 'food' could get some kids talking for weeks. I appreciated home cooking when I got back, but I still would give that up to be back at the Y.M.C.A. with everyone for another week of fun and fellowship.

I love the mountains and like the idea that everywhere we went, we could see them. I'm happy we could go hiking up in them at least one afternoon. That is something that does not happen at many conventions, and was a memorable event. It was nice that there was miniture golf, swimming, and sports to do in spare time (except I couldn't do any of them because of my sore arm).

When it comes down to it. I had a great time and can not wait for the next Convention, to see everyone again.

Should the Lord Jesus appear now to any of us in His majesty and glory, it would not be to our edification nor consolation. For we are not meet nor able, by the power of any light or grace that we have received, or can receive, to bear the immediate appearance and representation of them. His beloved apostle John had leaned on His bosom probably many a time in his life, in the intimate familiarities of love; but when He afterward appeared to him in His glory, "he fell at his feet as dead."

John Owen

The three convention speeches are on cassette tapes. These tapes may be ordered at a cost of $4.00. Orders should be sent to the church:

Loveland Protestant Reformed Church
709 E. 57th Street
Loveland, CO 80537