BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOLUME XLVII NUMBER 1

One of the most contemptible of complaints is that made by those who endeavor to change the confessions of the Reformed fathers and the denominational standards which clearly define the teaching of Scripture.

JANUARY 1988

Apostates Flatter For Personal Advantage

BEACON LIGHTS

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EDITOR'S NOTES

by David Harbach

'Tis the Season by Rev. Russ Dykstra was originally intended for the December issue but because of delays I had to put it in this issue. The article does focus on the Christmas season and the fact that the world is selling us the idea that everyone must seek his own pleasure during the holiday season. And yet the article is appropriate for every month of the year when it warns us not to take our eyes off from Christ.

In Rev. Harbach's article **Apostates Flatter For Personal Advantage**, he explains the 16th verse of Jude, which emphasizes the world of wicked men who are "murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts."

I have decided to put the index in this issue in the hope that the December issue would come out in December.

"A man that depends on the riches and honors of this world, forgetting God and the welfare of his soul, is like a little child that holds a fair apple in the hand, of agreeable exterior, promising goodness, but within 'tis rotten and full of worms."
Martin Luther.

"TIS THE SEASON"

by Rev. Russ Dykstra

'Tis the season, indeed. Need any one ask, What season? The world of the J.C. Penneys, the K-Marts, the Yonkers, etc. has been reminding us of the coming, the arrival, and soon (none too soon for many), the end of the "Holiday Season" — Christmas and New Year's. It seems the whole world, at least all North America, echoes the refrain. 'Tis the season, we hear, to be jolly. It is the time of year when we have opportunity to show how much we love and care for mom, dad, brother and sister. How? Buy them the dress, micro-wave, shirt, electric drill, game, or toy of their dreams. Not to do so would imply a **lack** of love. 'Tis the holiday season, time for parties, parties, parties, where family and friends come together for one reason: to have a good time. And no party is complete without the party mix, candy, favorite dips, and of course, wine, whiskey, or mixed drinks. For students it is a real holiday season only if you go somewhere or do something special. And you have worked so hard, you owe yourself a vacation — perhaps skiing in the mountains, perhaps sunning yourself in Florida — but however you treat yourself, it's a necessary part of the holiday season.

Those are some of the messages vividly displayed on the television screen every 6 or 8 minutes, blared over the radio, and splashed over the pages of the newspapers and magazines. The world is **selling** the season. By that I do not mean that they are selling many material **goods** — new radios, gloves, whiskey, etc. They are doing that, too. But what they are really selling us is an **idea** — the **idea** that this season is a time for all men to enjoy life in a special way. Another way to put it is that everyone must seek his own pleasure in life. Every effort must be made to reach that goal. To do this one must spend money, much money. Caution is thrown to the wind as presents, vacation trips, and party supplies are put on charge accounts. Pay later, enjoy the holiday season now.

This attitude and practice has swept over the church world as well. The millions of dollars spent to advertize and sell this idea have been quite effective. It is sad, but true, that we rush to the stores on the heels of the world buying the items that will make us and our family and friends "happy." Notice that I wrote "we;" I am as guilty in this as anyone.

How did this happen? How did we allow the world to influence us to this extent? The answer is simple: the world persuaded us to take our eyes off from **Christ** and to put them on material things. The way this was done is remarkable for its subtlety, which points to the work of Satan behind it all. For first of all, Satan and his allies seized two ideas connected with Christ's birth — the ideas of a gift and of joy. These are, you would agree,

important ideas in Christmas — the gift from God of the Savior and the joy of salvation. But the world isolated these ideas, carefully modified them, and magnified them to the exclusion of all else. The result is that men madly pursue a perverted joy and gift-giving that has nothing to do with the coming of Christ. The **spiritual** gift of God's Son and the **spiritual** rejoicing in salvation has become a rejoicing in **material** gifts and **earthly** pleasures. For this joy, Christ is not needed or even desired. Santa Claus will do this much better. And while we are at it, why call this the Christmas season, let's call it the holiday season instead. There you have it. Christ is effectively covered up at Christmas. The world of the ungodly has not changed. They wanted nothing of Christ as an infant; they hated Him as the Christ of God; they killed Him with the full knowledge that He was the Son of God. No, the world has not changed. We have.

Clearly what we must do is tear our gaze away from the material gifts and rid ourselves of the notion that this season is here for earthly joys and pleasures. Then we must set our eyes steadfastly on Christ. He is **the** Gift, the "unspeakable gift" from God. In this Christ of the Scriptures is true rejoicing. Properly celebrated, our Christmas will not be empty of joy and laughter. Look at the happiness described in Luke 1 & 2. The joy of Elizabeth and Zacharias and of Mary spilled over into songs of praise. Even the unborn baby John jumped for joy in his mother's womb. But their rejoicing was in **God**, and in the salvation He would realize in His Anointed Son. That joy must be ours. And that joy does not last a season, nor does it need a particular time of year to be expressed. In fact, this joy is eternal, and the praise we sing to God now we will sing eternally in perfection.

What will be your joy this Christmas? Let us stop imitating the unbelieving world, and instead, rejoice with the Church of all ages in the Wonder of Christ's birth.

"Grant, Almighty God, that as we must in various ways carry on a warfare on earth, we may be animated by the power of Thy Spirit, so as to go on through fire and water, and be ever so subject to Thee, that relying on Thine aid, we may never hesitate to face all perils of death, all troubles, all reproaches, and all the terrors of men, until having at length gained the final victory, we shall come to that blessed rest, which Thine only-begotten Son hath procured for us by His own blood, Amen."

-Prayer of John Calvin

OPINIONATING IN LOVE [1]

by Mitch Dick

The greatest opinion we can make is made in the company of another. And that companion is LOVE. My conviction in these next articles, therefore, is that I Corinthians 13 applies to our opinion-making. Faith, hope, and the greatest of these, charity, that is, love abide. So these all including love must abide in all of our conversation. I trust also that the reader agrees with me.

In a previous article we discussed wise opinions and wise opinion-making. This dealt with the **content** and with the **timing** of our opinions. Rather than be imprecise, we must always try to say that which we think (the key here is **think**) is true. And rather than being hasty in our speech and/or saying too much, we, as wise opinionators, try to speak **at the right time**. But just as important as the **content** of our opinions and just as important also as the **timing** of them is the **way** we state them. This manner is not simply a mechanical technique. It is a living and personal attitude. And this manner, this attitude has to do with the standard of love. The subject is this important: for if the right attitude is behind our opinions then we are loving the one(s) to whom we speak and keeping God's commandments. But if our attitude is **not** that of love, then we are submitting ourselves and our opinions to another standard, to the standard of the Devil and to his rule of hate.

Two Examples of Self-Serving Opinions

Let me give the reader and fellow opinion-maker examples of un-loving opinions. Carl and Bill are talking about cars. John comes up to them and without even waiting to hear what they are talking about starts talking, and in a boastful manner, about girls. Not only does John show a lack of wisdom in his not waiting to hear what was the subject discussed, but he shows his lack of love for Carl and Bill in this way: he hurries to assert himself, for he is proud (boastful).

Here is another example close to home. I was talking to my partner on the way to work a while back. We passed a mobile home and I blurted out in so many words: "That place sure is a dump. I think all mobile homes are, in quality, a great step below houses with foundations." My partner then looked at me and said: "That's your opinion, friend. Our family lives in a mobile home, and we've enjoyed it quite well these past several years."

Of course I had not known he himself lived in a mobile home. Nor, in fact, did I know really anything about which I was talking. Mostly I was talking just to hear myself or just to fill, with anything, the gap of silence that had fallen. I realize more now that holes or gaps in communication can only be patched by **love**, and not by any old words (even **true** ones) said in any old way. And, experience in faith teaches us, one must take care to be

filled with the Spirit and brimming with love before he assays to speak and pours a cup of lukewarm convictions or battery-acid opinions into the lap of another.

Less obvious but no less worse examples than the above of our not loving others with our opinions can be multiplied faster than rabbits, bacteria, and crabgrass can be.

But let us continue instead in our next article by rightly dividing the Word. And this, in order that we might think on what is true and praise-worthy about the loving opinions we can make.

Focus On Christian Women
RESPONSIBILITIES OF CONCEPTION:
VI. Spiritual Training Mentally

by Mrs. Brands

Every so often there will be a parent who sends his child off to school with the admonition, "I don't care what grade you get in reading or in math . . . but be sure you get an 'A' in Bible!"

This is inconsistent training. This is what makes other parents react by saying that Bible need not even be in the curriculum. Schools are there for the training of our children in the mental academics of society today and our mental life, too, is fundamentally spiritual. Parents—though they may use schools—remain responsible also for the mental training of children.

It may sound frightening to parents who feel they are not natural "students" to be told they are responsible for the mental training of their children. And so it becomes essential to clarify what we mean. Just what does "mental training" of our children include? And the answer is that this means basically two things: (1) training in the skills needed for communication and (2) training in submitting every thought to God. We'll discuss these two points rather briefly but hopefully enough to make them clear.

I. Training in Communication Skills

Training mentally means training in the skills of communication. Not only is communication the means by which the mind is developed to start with, but it is the means by which the mind continues to develop and is also that which makes the development of the mind worthwhile. There are four areas of skills involved in communication: listening, talking, reading and writing.

How . now, is the development of these skills a **parent's** responsibility?

A. **COMMUNICATION AND TEACHING OF THIS SKILL BEGINS AT BIRTH.** Intelligence is not merely "natural gifts" from pre-birth but "acquired gifts" gotten through training which may later, by grace, be multiplied through personal self-discipline and diligence.

From a purely "natural" viewpoint, even apart from spiritual godliness intelligence is developed through communication. The mother who loves her baby and who expresses this love through physical tenderness and in talking to her child is, usually unwittingly, giving her child the foundation of mental I.Q.

Various studies have strongly supported this fact. In one study, several orphaned children in an institution were given to retarded teenagers to be raised; these retarded children loved their orphans so much that these orphans all attained normal intelligence, far exceeding the other orphans in the same institution who were raised by busy adults of good intelligence. Another study compared the intelligence of two groups of tribal children, those from uneducated mothers and from educated mothers; it found that when children reached school age, the children of the **uneducated** mothers far excelled the others in intelligence. . . and the reason was, once again, that the educated mothers gave their children less personal attention, less time, less love.

So, you see, parental intelligence is **not** the main issue in teaching intelligence and communication skills to the child. The issue is 90% love! It is love, shown in personal attention, time spent with the child, talking with the child, that makes children develop mentally.

B. **PARENTAL TRAINING IN COMMUNICATION CONTINUES AS THE CHILD MATURES.** It includes at least these aspects:

1. **Talking** with the child about every part of his life;

2. **Listening** to the child and encouraging him to talk about his life;

3. **Reading** to the child , encouraging him to read. We shouldn't limit this to stories but should read broadly in all areas, including school textbooks. How many parents read occasionally with their children from a science book or history book or encyclopedia? If your child doesn't show a natural interest in reading the BEACON LIGHTS, for another example, perhaps you can encourage him by sharing your reactions to certain articles, or even reading together!

4. Helping the children to write and encouraging them in any **writing** they do which is worthwhile. At home, write Thank You notes and letters and diaries, to start with.

Some parents skip the schools, keep the children home and do all of the mental training themselves at home. This is fine to a point; sometimes this is the best way. But if the parents can't do it all alone — and most parents cannot — then they must instead be constantly encouraging the children as they develop mentally in school beyond what the home can teach. Communication skills, the basis of mental skills, are a spiritual necessity.

(Note: if you are thinking lots more could be said here, you are so right! This is only a skinny skeleton of ideas that could take a large book to develop.)

C. So far, I have ignored the spiritual aspect of this mental training. Even non-Christian books explore the ideas written so far.

But for the Christian parent, **THIS MENTAL TRAINING IS ALL SPIRITUALLY MOTIVATED AND CONTROLLED.**

First of all, the various communication skills are all taught from the

motivation of true love, of godly love. We speak to our children and we train **because we love God** from our hearts and this love of God must be expressed in our speech. We train our children **because we love them also** and our love for them must find expression in speech. Between covenant parents and their children there can be a rich fellowship of communication, a sharing which is unknown in the world. Such sharing is spiritually natural within the covenant.

Such love, if it is genuine, always works also towards excellence. Love is not motivated by competition but rather wants to give its very best, no matter how this compares with others. This is also why a parent may not, as we said at the outset of this article, encourage his child in Bible study while permitting sloppy work in other areas of his life. God is Ruler in all of my life and I must in everything do my best out of love for Him and for others.

Second, spiritual training mentally means that we constantly submit every thought to God. It means that we continually ask of everything we think, "Is this what God thinks? What does He say?" We check whether our thoughts are correct by comparing them with the Scriptures; we scrap them when they are incorrect; we change our thoughts to match God's thoughts. We have no right to think and say and write anything we please but must conform in all things to His Standard. This makes Christian writing more difficult than non-Christian writing, for a non-Christian can write anything at all and feel acceptable! But while a Christian's speech and writing may take more effort to be acceptable, it is also oh!, how much more worthwhile! If done in faith, it is accepted by God Himself! It will last for all eternity! "only what's done for Christ will last!"

Does this idea frighten you? It is an awesome truth. . .but truth for all that. For the truth is also that **no one, not one** among us can understand every thing perfectly! Although we are called to try, always try, to understand all things in the light of God's Word (thinking God's thoughts after Him), yet we can never do this perfectly. So this frailty on our part becomes also one of the mental ideas we teach our children. We do our best—yes, our very best—and leave to God the final results. He can take the weakest sincere effort and multiply it to great strengths. The **worst** spiritual training we can give our children is the pretense that we know everything, for then we're living a lie! But God promises to bless all our honest efforts to the final glory of His Name.

"If we are disposed to avoid every kind of contentions and fighting, let us learn, first, to moderate many things by gentleness, and next to bear with many things; for they who are excessively severe and ill-tempered carry with them a fire to kindle strife."

John Calvin

CHOOSING A COLLEGE

by Jon Huisken

Many young people are deciding, about this time of year, where to go to college. In the process of making this decision of where to go, many of you are going to have to face squarely the question of what type of institution you will attend: will it be a Christian college or a secular one. My preference is for the former, the Christian college, and the purpose of this article will be to demonstrate why.

To write an article addressing this question and have it apply to different groups of people in different places is a difficult charge. For several reasons. First, our churches are located in diverse settings—both rural and metropolitan—which means that access to college may be near, within commuting distance, or far which may necessitate living on campus or in housing nearby. Second, our young people have diverse interests which means that depending on one's vocational and/or educational goals, choices of colleges may be limited to those who offer a specific program. Third, our parents have diverse expectations and requirements of higher education which means that some may take the attitude that the college down the road is good enough or it may mean that some will want "the best" for their sons or daughters.

Fact is, our young people have pursued higher education both at secular colleges and universities. No one has insisted that one ought to have priority over the other. As noted above, many considerations come into play here, and they should. And, parents and their sons and daughters will need to discuss these matters together and come to their individual conclusions. What I write here is based upon my own experience and is my own opinion. All I can hope for is that you consider what I have to say in making your decisions.

Parenthetically, may I say that I am somewhat perplexed by the lack of interest of our young people in higher education. My concern is for our young people as they pursue their life's work. Given the costs of raising a family and the costs of educating our children in Christian schools, our young people ought to aspire to good jobs so that they will be able to afford these costs. Society is such today that the need for some advanced training of some sort, whether that be technical or liberal arts or some sort of apprentice position, is almost mandatory if one is to get some job other than what are called "junk jobs." That concern is deepened when I think that there is sometimes a downright disdain for education. What one gets in education, you see, is about God and His revelation, and when I see and hear attitudes expressed that disdain that, I get concerned. The Reformed person has always valued education. That was the theme of the great reformers—Luther and Calvin to be sure—and that ought to characterize us as well. Perhaps we need some attitude adjustment here. We need people of discernment, people who can lead, people who can analyze, criticize, and deal with the issues of contemporary society. That has little to do, you see, with one's vocation (we get hung

up many times, don't we, on going or not going to college because we think we need to know what we're going to be or do before we go.)

That we are supporters of Christian education there is no doubt. Our entire educational system is testimony of that. That commitment, however, has never been extended to higher education. There has been much talk about establishing a Protestant Reformed college, and that fact would help, no doubt, in one's decision about where to go to college. But that idea is not very practical today. To establish a teacher training program, for example, as some have suggested is practically impossible to do. The State of Michigan, for example, has not approved any new teacher training programs in the last 15 years. And, the one proposal it did have from an already established institution was rejected. So what's left to consider are public institutions, private institutions which have become secular, or private institutions, which still actively proclaim a Christian perspective. So, given the options, how's a person to decide?

In order to answer this question for myself, I was forced to go back to my own upbringing in an area of the country (yes, contrary to the thinking of many Michiganders, there are other legitimate states in the union) where my parents had to decide already at the elementary level where we were to go to school. There were two options: the local Christian school or the local public school. There was never any doubt (and that was confirmed again by my father in recent discussions) where we were to go. Public education was not an option as long as there was an existing Christian school. Why was this so? The most obvious reason was that one was Christian and the other was not. But, even more, given the fact that this school was parental, my parents had the opportunity to say something about what went on in that school. And, they exercised that option. Not always with good results, I might add, but voice their views they did anyway. I am convinced that, in my case, that that voice did make a difference. The school administration and the faculty were aware of the fact that we were there and some things were different because we were. I can recall vividly, for example, the removal of a history teacher because he taught evolution. I can recall also that some of us were recruitment targets for dramatic productions, only to have the faculty back off when they knew our position.

I see no reason, now, why that same thinking ought not be applied to the selection of a college. But, it seems that many of us lose our conviction here and turn to preference. The line of reasoning we use to send our children to local Christian schools seems to end at the conclusion of high school education. It seems, then, that any college or university is fair game for our children to attend.

I know that there are reasons given for that approach to choosing a college: finances, closer to home, program of study, etc. And, I will admit that oftentimes these considerations are real and need to dictate how our decisions are made. The question I want to raise, however, is whether the question of Christian vs. secular college or university is drawn in here. Do we, as parents, and do we, as students, make that a primary consideration in our college choice? My hope is that we will and that we do.

Why so? The answer follows

directly from what has gone before: the choice is between an institution that is Christian—Christian in its mission, Christian in its perspective—or an institution committed to a secular perspective and a secular mission. What you can expect from a secular college is a secular perspective on history, on man, on the world. What you can expect from a Christian college is a Christian perspective on history, on man, and on the world.

This is not to say, however, that you will be able to agree with everything that is taught. But, at least, the people with whom you deal will approach problems and solutions differently and you can expect your professors to understand what you are trying to say.

If the decision, then, is to choose a Christian college because it is that—Christian—there are going to be certain things that are necessary for you as a young person to understand. First, you will have to be a person of discernment. You are going to encounter new ideas, and perspectives, and beliefs, and philosophies with which you don't wholly agree and you will have to be able to sort what you can embrace and what you can not. Second, you will have to be a person with courage. Courage to speak your mind and courage to hold on to your beliefs whether that be in classroom discussions or in "bull sessions" with your peers.

The results can be very positive. If you come to college with convictions and with the ability to articulate, tactfully, those convictions, the result can be that you will be strengthened in those convictions. Just the fact that probably for the first time in your life you will not be able to rely upon the old phrase, "I don't believe that, because my church doesn't believe that" and will have to defend yourself can be a refining, sharpening experience.

So, I come back to the beginning. We have never insisted that a Christian college be a requirement. In some cases, that would not even be possible to require. Some programs just are not available at a Christian college; many technical and vocational programs are offered only at the local community college. But, where there's a choice, I would urge our young people to attend a Christian college. There is much to be gained, I believe, it they do. What, for example, would one who is going to be a medical doctor or a nurse prefer in his training, a Christian perspective on health care or a secular one? Or, if one is going to be a teacher, what would be preferable, a Christian perspective on education and on the child, or a secular one? The list could go on.

Some final words for anyone who is going to college. Keep in touch with your parents, your minister, and anyone else who can help you through the difficulties of college life. We often think that once you become a college freshman, you automatically become an adult. My experience has shown that much maturing goes on during college years, and the more help and guidance you have, the better off you'll be.

As for me, I've talked with many young people and am willing to help, even if you are going to some other school "down the road." My view of where to go may be somewhat biased after spending nearly twenty years at Hope College, but I believe that I am open enough to help you wherever you choose to go.

Truth vs. Error

APOSTASY IN THE LAST DAYS
18. Apostates Flatter For Personal Advantage

by Rev. Robert C. Harbach

"These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh gret swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." — Jude 15.

Jude continues to record the marks of apostates so that they may be recognized when they appear in the church. The text may be translated, with paraphrase in parentheses, as follows:

"These are murmurers (grumbling against God, v. 15) complainers (finding fault with their lot, v. 11c), leading (their lives) according to their lusts, and their mouth speaks extravagantly arrogant things, admiring persons for profit."

With these words Jude enlarges on the character of these evil seducers. They are not only very wicked (v. 15), but very weak in character. The terms "godly" and "ungodly" do not appear in their vocabulary as the modern world scoffs at and scorns these very expressions. Men of the world think in terms of their own private kingdom goverened by their own will, their own appetites, their own fantasies, which are their only law and legislature.

Murmurers are infected with a near-leprous sin. Murmuring is the pus of discontent, the scum and slime of impatience. It flows from an ulcerated mind. These mental mutterings are the initial smolderings of this evil which flare and reek to high heaven (Jn. 6:61, 64) long before they explode in noisy outbursts of annoyance and dislike. To murmur is to groan and grumble in complaint under the breath and that, first of all, against God. Since the Fall, man has been mentally muttering and arguing against God. Don't we, even as true Christians, mutter against God a great deal of the time? When we do, we slip from our faith in the sovereignty of God. (Murmuring is the beginning of apostasy.) We become so filled with pride that we cannot endure to hear of God's absolute sovereignty. We want to be free to act according to our nature, but can't stomach it to have God free to act according to His. But the truth is that there is no reason, except for that expressed in Matthew 11:26, as to why God chooses some and rejects the rest. However, that (God's eternal good pleasure) should be good enough for us. God is not bound to give account of any of His matters. (Job 33:13). Besides, "Who are thou, O man, that repliest against God?" (Rom. 9:20).

But man in his pride does not want

to hear anything of restraints placed by the Creator upon man the creature. There is much about God that he can accept, even "love," but not His right to and exercise of legislative power. The idea of heaven is acceptable, but not the way to get there. Over the latter, a lot of murmuring smokes and simmers. (Psm. 106:24, 25). It is pride, conceit and self-love which causes murmuring. We begin to seethe and rage within when the spotlight of praise leaves us half in the dark. The proud man's discontent shows because he puts too high a price on himself. God's blessings are estimated at a very low rate by him who evaluates himself too highly.

Since murmuring is chiefly a sin of grumbling against God, it is in effect an attempt to dethrone God, to rob Him of all His attributes, to eclipse His sovereignty and clip the wings of His providence. We make ourselves a party over against God. This is to step out of the sphere of reality, making God an ethereal, misty abstraction, and man a hot air bag hanging in empty space. Man a party over against God — it just does not jell with reality! But in this stance of pride prayer is displaced in favor of dictating and prescribing to God as though He does not understand what is best for us.

Complainers commit a deistic sin, as though there is no providence; complaint is anti-providence. It is an unconscious expulsion of God from His own universe. Complaining implies that we view God as having gone off to abandon His world to leave it in poverty and us in want. It is a finding fault with one's lot. (v. 6; Phil. 4:11). People today complain because all do not equally "share the wealth," because all are not maintained at the same rate. They complain of what they regard as the unfair imposition of the universal strait-jacket of the class struggle. They complain of the Brahmins at the top, the worker/farmer middle class, the serfs at the bottom of the scale and the Pariahs, the Untouchables below "bottom." They complain of what they conceive to be the wrong social structure: capitalists, bourgeoisie and proletariat. Since levelling is so evidently not God's providential dispensation, the complaint (against God) is that the "social planners" must equalize humanity. But isn't it useless and stupid to complain that some must rule while others serve; that some must be men of high degree and others men of low degree; that one be gifted with wealth, another with skill, a third with strength and wisdom? If God Himself had no ontological unity and diversity, but were only one in person as well as one in being, He would be solitary, without company or fellowship. We, too, would famish for human fellowship if all men were of one stamp. Suppose your present lot is in a low station in life. There remain until Providence promotes you. Already you enjoy some improvement. You live, not on your former paternal allowance but, on your current salary, small as it is. But look forward with hope. Jacob left home with little more than a walking staff. On his return he had become "two droves" (Gen. 32:10). Joseph knew why Benjamin had a larger portion at his table; his brothers did not. So the Lord knows why He gives to one and not to another. Shall we not leave that to Him without complaining?

One of the most contemptible of complaints is that made by those who endeavor to change the confessions of the Reformed fathers and the denom-

inational standards which clearly define the teaching of Scripture. They complain about those who uncompromisingly remain faithful to the theology of the Reformers. (Compare **God's Covenant Faithfulness**, G. Hoeksema, Editor). If they cannot openly advocate revolutionary freedom from what they deem the impediment of church creeds, they agitate for deletion, dilution and truncation of the articles of the historic orthodox Christian faith.

". . . walking after their own lusts." Libertines in the church are proud of their ecclesiastical connections, yet are not concerned with maintaining a strictly Christian testimony, for, like the wicked world abroad, they are proud blasphemers, great carousers, gamblers, self-lovers, money-lovers, pleasure-lovers (II Tim. 3), and lovers of many women (I Kings 11:1a). Like the rest of the world, they live "in the lust of uncleanness" (II Pet. 2:10). This sinful lust is illicit desire, which, like a leech, is always sucking on something to comfort and fill itself. It should be understood that the most vigorous direction of the soul is in desire. Fallen man lovingly and avidly consults the dictates of his desires more than any other faculty of his being. All his actions and pursuits begin in his desires. These desires being corrupt do corrupt and sway the other faculties, so that it may be said that all sin is expressed in lust. (I Jn. 2:16, 17). To walk after their own lusts they must deviate from the precepts of God's law. They do so to fulfill their inordinate desires and inclinations to pleasure and personal profit. (Eph. 2:3). They live in the **tyranny** of their lusts, "**slaving** for various lusts and pleasures," (Tit. 3:3, Gk.). Lust becomes their slave-master which has them goose-stepping in a course and causeway of lusts (Eph. 2:2, 3). In it they deliberately "make **provision** for the flesh" (Rom. 13:14). They have a handy supply of "porn" in the form of video cassettes, magazines, photoprints, etc. They do not flee lust, but fondle it. They do not "put off the old man with his deceitful lusts" (Eph. 4:22).

"And their mouth speaketh great swelling words." Out of their ungodly character come ungodly deeds and hard speeches consisting of great swelling words in extravagantly arrogant things. They boast of their superior knowledge: **they** have the word of **knowledge** (I Cor. 12:8, Gk., **gnosis**). From this pretence they were called Gnostics. Tertullian said of them, "They all swell with pride and make ostentation of deeper knowledge; their very women, how conceited they are!" (Compare Mary Baker Eddy of Christian Science; Myrtle Fillmore of Unity; the Fox sisters of Spiritism; Helen Blavatsky and Annie Besant, Theosophy; Ellen G. White, Seventh-Day Adventism; Alma White, Pillar of Fire). Their mouth speaks extravagantly arrogant things (v. 16, Gk.). For a sample of apostate arrogance read the pamphlet, compiled by Keith Brooks, published by Moody Press, **The Spirit of Truth and the Spirit of Error**, the section on "Current Religious Movements From the East."

In great swelling words the modern false ecumenical movement exhorts the Church to keep pace with the progress of mankind, taking the lead toward the realization of the universal brotherhood of man, seeking Christian unity among the followers of the different world religions, showing unbelievers in the world the way out of their ignorance, withal moving to a

mutually acceptable one-world religion in a one-world church.

"Having men's persons in admiration because of advantage." They are extravagantly arrogant in their own self-admiration, yet very cleverly they go on "admiring (other) persons for profit." Into their own exclusive self-admiration society they will admit those who will bring them profit. (Think of Absalom, II Sam. 15:2-5). So our politicians flatter the people, kiss the lowest and basest, entertain the vilest and most offensive for their own profit at the public expense.

Admiration of persons to gain advantage is the sin of anthropolatry, worship of a human being, man or woman (cp. Rev. 13:4; Jer. 44:17, 25). Blow-hards get blue in the face over matters not very combustible. Princes of mediocrity praise those of their own persuasion above men of known worth and high integrity. This extends to adulation of the pope. But see Job 32:21, 23. These apostates scheme their way into places of ecclesiastical leadership, wheedle their way into an attractive pulpit, aiming for a position offering a fabulous salary. So the present apostasy inevitably leads to the future one-world kingdom of Antichrist.

JEWELS

Not ours, but His - the precious jewels of His Kingdom fair.
He owns them, loans them to us
For a little time to dwell with us on earth
That for their place with Him we might their hearts prepare.

Then, following our King's command,
We cleanse and polish each most precious stone.
With tears and prayers for daily strength to ready them
Unto that day when they'll appear
Before their Father's throne.

Not ours, but His - someday they shall be found
As shining stars for Him in Heaven's Holy Place.
As pure and brilliant jewels they shall shine-
The bright adornment of His glorious Crown.

by Sue Looyenga

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BJ	Bruce Jabaay
BK	Bernie Kamps
CEC	Current Events and Comments
CRIT	Critique
DH	Dave Harbach
DL	David Linker
DR	Dave Rau
DW	Dirk Westra
ED	Editorial
GH	Greg Holstege
JB	Jodi Brummel
JD	Jim Daling
JMF	John M. Faber
KE	Kristin Engelsma
KH	Karen Hanko
LF	Lori Feenstra
LVK	Lisa Van Koevering
MBL	Mary Beth Lubbers
MD	Mitch Dick
MHB	Mrs. H. Brands
MKK	Mrs. Ken Kuiper
NVB	Nancy Van Baren
PHCH	Prof. H. C. Hoeksema
PS	From the Pastor's Study
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RGL	Rev. G. Lubbers
RGV	Rev. G. Van Baren
RJH	Rev. J. Heys
RK	Rev. Koole
RM	Roxanne Maatman
RRC	Rev R. Cammenga
RRCH	Rev. R. C. Harbach
RRH	Rev. R. Hanko
RRVO	Rev. R. Van Overloop
RWB	Rev. W. Bekkering
SK	Sherry Koole
SO	Sarah Ondersma
SR	Stephanie Rawson
TVE	Truth Vs. Error

Singspirations for 1988:

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April 10	Hudsonville
June 19	Hope
August 7	First Jenison CRC
September 18	Southeast
October 16	Southwest
November 20	Faith
December 18	Hudsonville

Mass Meeting:

March 20	Faith