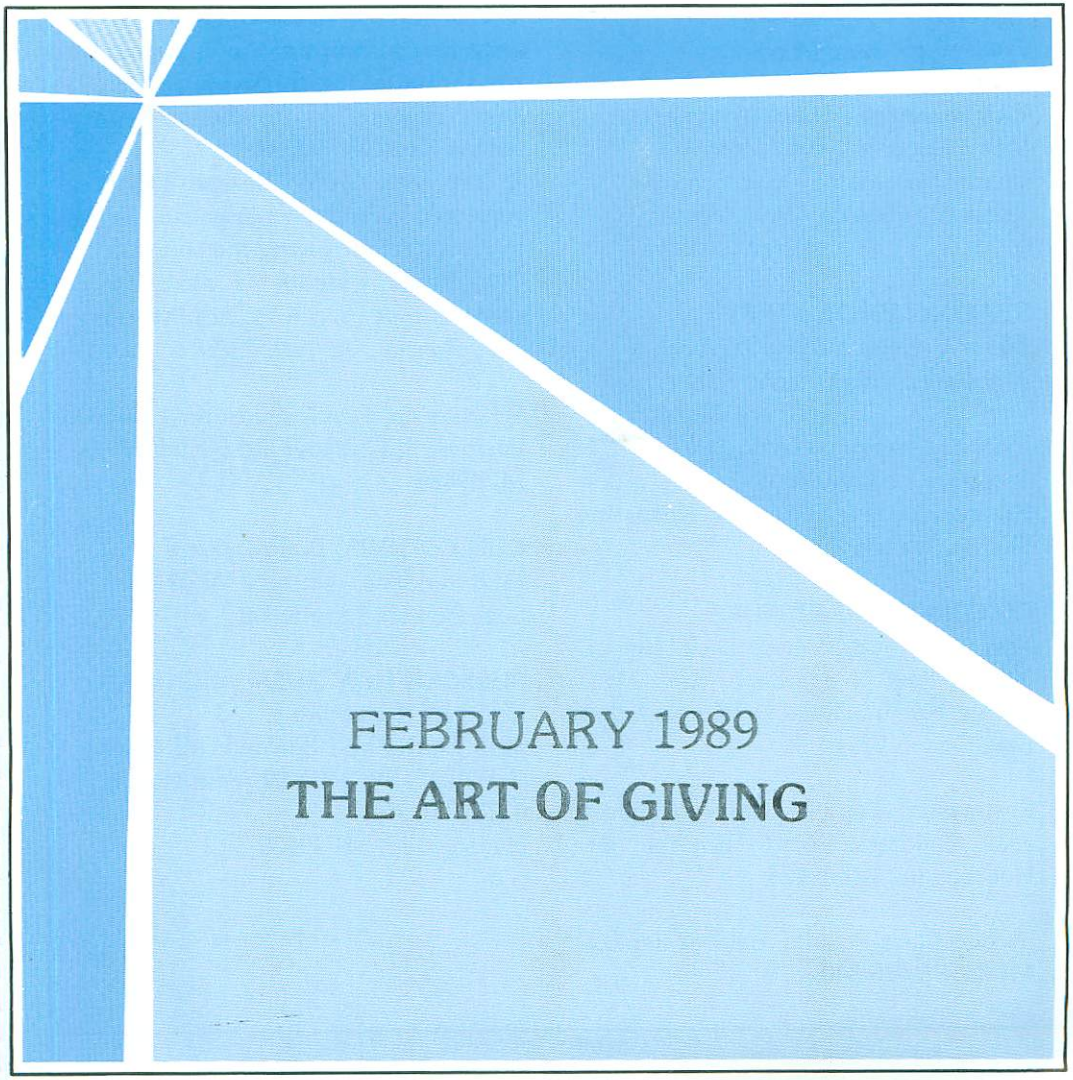
BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOLUME XLVIII NUMBER 2



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

EXECUTIVE BOARD
President - Greg Holstege
Vice-President - Jay Kalsbeek
Secretary - Jory Kalsbeek
Treasurer - Randy Corson
Librarian - Sherri Huizinga
Vice-Secretary - Sharon Hanko
Vice-Treasurer - Todd Feenstra
Youth Coordinator - Dan Schipper
Spiritual Advisors - Rev. Gritters
Rev. Dykstra

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

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Mrs. H. Brands, Mitch Dick, Rev. C. Hanko, Rev. R. Harbach, Rev. Heys, 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: Ruth Bleyenberg
3581 Peck, 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 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: Pam Kuiper
4127 40th Ave.
Hudsonville, MI 49426

Contents

Editor's Notes - David Harbach 1
EDITORIAL
Witnessing to Co-Workers - Bruce Jabaay 2
Proper Use of God-given Wealth - Rev. W. Bruinsma 4
The Implications of Public Confession - Abraham Kuiper 7
Dear Monica Ruth, - Carol Brands 10
TRUTH VS. ERROR
3. God's Controversy With Israel
Hosea 4 Verse 6 - Rev. R. C. Harbach 12
What's Happened - Ruth Bleyenberg 16

EDITOR'S NOTES

by David Harbach

In this issue you will find a reprint of chapter XI, "The Art of Giving" from **The Implications of Public Confession** by Abraham Kuiper. The Beacon Lights staff is working with a local printer in the Grand Rapids area on reprinting this stimulating volume for young people of a Reformed background. Plans are to make this book available to our consistories as an ideal gift for those who make public confession of their faith. We are sure there will be others who will want a copy of this worthwhile publication. Look for it, then, in the near future, D.V.

Sometimes it is difficult to gather enough articles together to make an issue for our young people's magazine. And then too, a variety of copy is always enjoyable while reading a magazine, which is difficult to provide when there are so few people submitting a variety of copy for printing. Now is your opportunity to put that pen and pencil set you received for a present to good use. The staff is looking for a variety of copy suitable for printing in the Beacon Lights: poems, puzzles, biographies, quizzes, historical figures in the church, the life of missionary young people, Christian life of young people from around the world, etc. So get the lead out of your pencil and onto paper - send in your copy to the editor today. Thank you!

Editorial
WITNESSING TO CO-WORKERS

by Bruce Jabaay

Witnessing, no matter when - where - why - how, is very hard work! To do it right you must: be humble; be knowledgeable in the scriptures; and do it boldly all for the honor and glory of God. Hopefully, we try to witness at all times and in all places, for we are on a pilgrim's journey for our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. When we are at home or church, witnessing seems to be a rather natural thing to do. If we are amongst unbelievers or "weak Christians", witnessing is not so popular and seems rather difficult to do. We must take courage and remember "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified" (I Peter 3:14). How we witness to a faithful follower of Jesus Christ and how we witness to others may differ quite a bit. A believer knows the "law of God", but an unbeliever is a "law unto himself". When witnessing to unbelievers, we must "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear" (I Peter 3:15).

Many of you young people have a job or had a job where you are or were required to work alongside an unbeliever or "weak Christian". Maybe you became quite close to one of these people and did things together that were non work related. Well, how did you deal with it? Did you go along with the rest of the world or were you "reproached for the name of Christ"? An unbeliever will not stand back and listen to what a believer has to say. "They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God heareth not us" (I John 4:5, 6). The world will see us both through words and deeds. If we are not reproached, then we are not witnessing. This reproach may come in subtle ways such as: not being included in outside events; or them being sure to point out our shortcomings. More obvious ways for someone to reproach us when we witness are as follows: mockery or sarcasm; ignoring us; anger or hostility; and purposely blaspheming our Lord. The world hates the godly and wants you and me to join in on their mockery of God's righteousness.

How do you go about witnessing in an atmosphere such as the work environment where our Lord's name is seldom used, other than in vain? Do you merely exist in your own little world and ignore the testimony displayed by the unbeliever. Maybe you tell yourself that you can witness by your deeds and that it doesn't do any good to "cast pearls before swine". Well, if you don't say anything, that unbeliever may not even know you hate

that ungodly testimony that he displays. (Maybe you even smile a little when that person smiles at you while bearing his ungodly testimony). Never let anyone think you approve of or don't care about their sin. Always be up front with your co-workers. Let them know you are one of God's children and that you seek to glorify Him alone. Once they know how you feel there is no need to squirm every time you witness their ungodly behaviour. However, don't forget to remind them you are a Christian by your daily walk and talk. There are always new situations that arise, where you have to give the Christian point of view. Also, remember "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

It is so true that most of us do not witness nearly enough, but when we do witness let us be careful how we do it. Our witness is the confession of our faith given to us by the Holy Spirit. The inworking of the Holy Spirit comes through faithful Bible reading, prayer and hearing the true preaching of God's Word. So be sure you know what God's Word says and pray about your witness that it will be faithful and God glorifying. Don't be Phariseeistic! Never glorify yourself by pointing out the bad in your co-workers and the good in yourself, or how you have the truth and they do not. Use God's Word faithfully and never waver from it. Do not compromise with the human point of view. There are many who think it is not fair for God to chose His people - "Would a righteous God do such a thing?" (His Word tells us He is righteous and that He does chose His people). "Would a righteous God let an innocent marriage partner suffer?" (Marriage is a picture of Christ and His church and God's eternal counsel is God glorifying. We all deserve the "wrath of hell".) Be sure that you never condemn anyone! Be sure to point out that you are a despicable sinner saved only by the grace of God, and you have been called to be a faithful witness for your Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. If your co-worker wants to point out your sin, listen to him and then turn to God's Word and confess that sin if need be both to God and your co-worker. Let your co-worker know that everything belongs to God including all honor and all glory!

In summary, I would like to give you some suggestions that may help you to be a faithful witness to your co-workers:

1. Create the right atmosphere. Be a faithful worker that devotes all this time and effort toward his job during working hours. Spend nonworking hours (breaks, lunch and after work) in a manner that is God glorifying. Don't seek after all the worldly pleasures or spend time criticizing others. Do things or talk about things that give you a chance to show the Christian perspective on life.
2. Take the first opportunity that comes along to witness. Never deceive a co-worker or hide your Christianity. The longer you wait to witness, the harder it will be and also less effective. Your life must be a constant walk with God or your co-worker will ask whether that witness is really sincere - I think we all would!
3. Never judge anyone. We are only witnesses for God and above all - miserable sinners! God uses our feeble means to display His truth to others.
4. Monitor your Christian attitude. If you do not feel comfortable at work as a

Christian or are back-sliding as a Christian, you must do something. Non Christians may tend to dull your "spiritual senses" - you must constantly be on guard. Look for employment that will best "create the right atmosphere".

5. Above all, earnestly and zealously pray and read your Bibles!

PROPER USE OF GOD-GIVEN WEALTH

by Rev. W. Bruinsma

The ten year old boy burst through the door erupting with excitement, "Mom, the neighbor gave me two dollars for shoveling the snow off her sidewalk!" He opened his hand to reveal eight shiny quarters stuck to the palm of his glove.

"Pretty good," his mother responded with a smile. "Why don't you put the money in your bank and save it for something you might want later?"

"But Mom, I want to use it for something right now! What should I spend it on?"

"Spend it on what is in your heart," was the retort the child heard from around the corner in the living room. It was Grandpa or "Packie" as everyone called him.

"What did you say?" the child inquired of his grandfather.

I said, spend it on what is in your heart!" replied Packie, amused that he had caught the attention of his young grandson.

"What does that mean?"

"You figure it out."

Later, after removing his winter clothes, the boy returned to his mother and asked her what Packie had meant by his statement. She explained to him that when Packie was a young man there were times when two dollars was a whole weeks wages. She related to her young son a story of her childhood. "One time when I was a small girl my mother was given some Christmas cookies by one of our neighbors. The next day when we opened our lunch bags at school we each had one sandwich, and on the sandwiches were the Christmas cookies. Grandma was too poor to buy anything to put on the bread, so she used the cookies."

"I think Packie wants you to understand, first of all, that the money you earned is a gift of God to you. Secondly, I think he wants you to understand the need of using your money properly and responsibly. Do not spend it on something frivolous and unnecessary."

Her son walked away pondering the wisdom of his aged grandfather.

Six years later this same child had grown into a young man. His muscles had grown large and firm from the many hours of labor spent on the farm.

He had been earning regular wages for some four years already. and therefore was able to pay his school tuition with a little left over.

"Say Mom, I was thinking of buying a good used car." contemplated the youth.

"Are you sure you really need one," his mother warned. "You are free to use the second car whenever you need to go someplace."

"Yah, but I have a little extra money. What else can I use it for?"

"Use it for what is in your heart," boomed a voice from the living room.

"Packie, don't lay that one on me again. I have already heard all your stories of the Depression. Besides, haven't you ever heard the saying, 'you are only young once, so enjoy yourself?' "

"In what book of the Bible is that one found?" questioned the old man.

"Come on, Packie, all I did was ask Mom if Dad would let me buy my own car. Don't get heavy on me. Lighten up a bit."

One month later the old man died. All the family was around his bed as he breathed his last; all, that is, except one. The young man was out of state on a canoe trip and was unable to make it home on time to be near his beloved grandfather as he passed from this life into heaven. Even though the youth knew that what he was doing at the time of his grandfather's death was far from wrong in itself he felt badly that he was out doing something frivolous while his grandfather lay in bed wrestling with his last enemy.

Years later, after he was married and raising his own family, the young man remembered his grandfather's advise and attempted to apply it to the use of his God-given wealth: Spend it on what is in your heart. Elaborating on what his mother had explained to him when he was ten, this is what he discovered Packie had meant.

First of all, I must believe in my heart that everything that I have, including my money and what it buys, comes as a gift to me from God. The money I earn is just a means which my heavenly Father provides me and my family to live in this world. Never can I boast in my own ability, foresight, drive and achievements. God is the Giver of every good gift and every perfect gift (James 1:17). He owns the earth and all it contains (Psalm 50:12), and He imparts to every man as He wills (Deuteronomy 16:17). And when I in my vain imagination begin to think (as I so often do) that by my own arm of flesh I have acquired all my possessions, then I better ask myself some questions. Who provides me with the talent and ability to do my work? Who gives me my strength and my health day by day? Who has worked out all the circumstances of my life - the place I work, even the country in which I live, etc. - in order that I am able to earn a living for myself? God, of course! In my heart must be found a deep awareness that all I have and will acquire is **God-given** wealth!

"Use your money for what is in your heart." This means, secondly that all my wealth is only vanity and vexation of spirit. I intend to keep Solomon's words in Ecclesiasties 2:4-11 above the desk where I work on my finances.

"I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits: I made me pools of water to water therewith the wood that

bringeth forth trees: I got me servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house: . . .I gathered me also silver and gold, and peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: . . .So I was great and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me. And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, . . .Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor I had labored to do: and behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."

All my wealth is here today and tomorrow fades away into nothing. Money and pleasure are like the illusive butterfly which lands but a moment then quickly flutters away. Naked we came into the world and naked we shall leave it. We took nothing into this world and it is certain that we will take nothing out of it (Job 1:21).

How then will I use my wealth properly? Using my sanctified and Bible-guided common sense I will distinguish between what is truly need and what is pleasure. Is it not true that I often find myself saying I need something when really the proper word would be I **want** something? Is it not true that too often I find myself saying "yes" to my desires and "no" to what is required of me? It is so easy to spend my wealth on comforts and pleasure and so difficult to give to kingdom causes. Is it not true that often I feel it easier to give to a kingdom cause if I get some sort of fun or pleasure in return? What are my needs? The Bible is clear enough. The father must labor by the sweat of his brow to care for the needs of his household and the church (I Timothy 5:8; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Ephesians 4:28). I use my wealth for these. The Bible does not condemn the use of my money for recreation. But I must not make this my idol. I must remind myself that, despite what modern psychiatrists say, recreation is **not** a need - it is a pleasure, and therefore must be placed on the bottom of my list of priorities.

Packie was right after all: if my heart is bound up in seeking the pleasures and treasures of this world I will use my money wrongly and the kingdom causes will suffer. If my heart is filled with a love of God and His kingdom then I will use my money properly. How do I use my God-given wealth? Exercise my heart into a deeper love for God and His kingdom. Seek the riches of heaven. Then . . . spend my money on what is in my heart. "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Matthew 6:21.

"But luxury becomes far more evil still, even when means increase, when that which makes you pursue it is the sinful motive to live a life of self-indulgence, in your pomp and vanity to please yourself, and to gratify the voluntary desire and stimulates you.

For then **flesh** rules **spirit**, and you have subverted the order of the living God, Who has called you and still calls you, by your spirit to govern your fleshly desires, and the lust of your eyes," from **When Thou Sittest in Thine House**

THE IMPLICATIONS OF PUBLIC CONFESSION

by Abraham Kuiper

Daily experience teaches us that privileges always involve obligations. It is therefore readily understood that he who attains the full communion of his Church and the privilege of partaking of the holy supper, is also called upon to share the financial burden of the Church. The term "financial burden" must, however, be immediately suppressed and be translated into the Christian terms: a free-will offering. Your promise to contribute for this purpose is one of the important implications of your confession, and although few think of it upon that occasion, it does represent one of the stipulations demanded of you.

Long ago the Lord God said: "Take ye from among you an offering unto the Lord; whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring an offering of the Lord: gold, and silver, and copper." From this it may be concluded that he who does not bring an offering has not a willing heart. One who is unwilling to serve the Lord with his goods may not come to make his public confession. By your confession you promise to love God "with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." You certainly are not doing that when you refuse to lay an offering of your goods upon his altar.

One person is inseparably attached to his money; another transcends the miserliness of that. These two attitudes definitely manifest spiritual conditions. You can observe that this is true from the case of the rich young ruler. We might say that he also wished to make his confession. Jesus asked about his relationship to the law and he replied that he thought he fulfilled the requirements. Then Jesus asked whether he was willing to sell his goods for the sake of the poor. And that demand, you remember, broke his resolve. He went away. He kept his money, but he lost his God.

It is obvious, therefore, that one's readiness to offer freely is most surely a part of one's confession. The Church which neglects to examine those who come to her to make confession in this matter also, does not do her full duty.

"Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it." That is what God said. The statement, accordingly, is a touchstone by which the quality of your spirituality can be tested. The implications of that statement are that you cannot by one gift absolve yourself of responsibility for giving. An especial offering upon the day of confession

does not suffice. You should then declare yourself and ever after show yourself to be willing to serve your God by means of your goods.

Yes, you must both serve and honor him by means of these. "To serve," in this connection, means that you must help to maintain what is necessary for the service of the Lord. "To honor" means that besides this you must periodically give especial offerings. A child faithfully serves his father when his father needs his services. But when his father's birthday comes, the child honors him by some token of regard, of esteem, and of love. It is in that way that you must both serve and honor your Lord with your gifts.

One practical difficulty perhaps militates against the fulfillment of this requirement in the case of those who are just beginning to attend the holy supper. Young men and women frequently have no independent income at this time. Those among the lower classes who "work out" have funds of their own, and those among the higher classes who are granted legacies or allotments have them also, but the others who are many, still live with their parents and have no independent income. Now it is remarkable that in the past the lower and higher classes gradually learned the art of giving, and that stinted giving is most characteristic of the many in the middle class of society. This phenomenon can be ascribed to the fact that those who earned independently were in a position to begin giving as soon as they had made their confession, and that the sons and daughters who live for a time with their parents after their confession missed this desirable discipline For that reason it is important to emphasize that giving depends upon a principle rather than upon the quantity of one's earthly goods.

It frequently happens that sons and daughters do manage to honor their parents by an occasional gift, but that the urge, the desire, and the zeal to contribute to the Lord seldom stirs them. At collections taken in Church they contribute what father or mother has put into their hands. In that way they themselves give nothing. Hence, it is to be advised that children, small tots excepted, be urged to give from their own funds. There is more of true giving in one penny from their own bank, than in ten simply conveyed from their pocket to the collection plate. He who makes his confession must give. He himself must give, even though he must earn what he gives.

"Whosoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it." He must bring it because it is needful, and because it blesses him. Yes, his offerings are needful. The Church of God is expensive; it costs a great deal. Jesus said to the rich young ruler: "Sell all thy goods." In the first place, the service of the Word and of the Sacraments may not be allowed to suffer because of financial embarrassment. The ministers of these must be provided with the needful things. Of them the holy apostle says: "Who goeth a warfare at any time at his own charges?" Later he says: "Who planteth a vineyard and eateth not of the fruit thereof?" And again: "Who feedeth a flock and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" And there are other needs within the Church. The service of education and of mercy should flourish. Your Catechism advises that in order to keep the Sabbath day truly, you must see that the ministry of the Gospel and the schools

be maintained. That is the service of education. And the service of mercy, according to the Catechism, is "to contribute to the relief of the poor, as becomes a Christian." Besides, the Church of God is not an anthill which gathers up for itself only. Hence, the Gospel of the Kingdom must be brought through the Church to those outside of it who do not yet believe. Similarly, the mercies of God must be born through the church to all the miserable without. Remember that there are two kinds of missions: That of the Word and that of mercy. The more bountifully and flourishingly each of these can be carried on the more gloriously is the name of the Lord praised. Indeed, a Church is costly. Ideally the Church should be much, much richer than she now is.

It is needful, therefore, to bring an offering and to bring that offering willingly. That must be done not only because the church needs it, but also because it blesses him that gives. God might have created a Church which needed no money. The life of the Church in the wilderness proves that. Hence, the fact that he has now called into being a church which needs money and which needs much money, has a spiritual significance Our giving is a part of our sanctification. "The love of money is the root of all evil." Anything, therefore, which restrains us from a love of money is a redeeming and sanctifying influence. Our giving must prove that we are Christians and must each year add to the genuineness of our Christianity. That fact does not suggest, of course, that we can earn our salvation by our gifts. Our gifts affect our salvation not at all. If we sold all our goods and gave the money to the poor, and had not love, we would be nothing. Our offerings bless us only when we give them willingly. If we give in order to get praise for ourselves, if we give stintingly, if we give in order to get an honorable place in heaven, our offerings avail us nothing. We must give because of love, only because of love, for God and for our neighbor.

Such giving, however, does most certainly bless us. Our money seems to say to us: "Love me, and forget God and the poor." God calls: "Give me your heart, and give it not to Mammon." Hence, he who is of a willing heart must bring his gifts; and he will bring them. His giving so far from making him poorer, makes him much richer.

Bring gold, silver and brass. These are three metals, and they are listed in the order of a descending scale of value. Accordingly, the statement means that each must give in proportion to the amount of wealth it has pleased God to give him. A man says: "I have saved so large a surplus, that I think I shall retire from business. But has that man frankly asked himself: "Have I, perhaps saved that which rightly belonged to God and to his service? Is my surplus really so large that I can live from it and that I can also help the church to flourish?" For, except he have asked and satisfactorily answered those questions, it is sinful for him to desire retirement. God's demands in this matter of giving are as exacting as that.

The truth is that by nature we are inclined to say: "I and my family must live, must have food, clothing, and shelter; if anything remains after that, let it be given to the church." However, he who thinks that way about it may not make his confession, for it is obvious that to him the service of God

is still a secondary matter. The exact opposite would, in fact, be far more appropriate: 'I and my family need God and His service more than all things else; we shall provide for that first, and afterwards for food, shelter, and clothing." That would be applying Jesus' rule: "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

A tenth of our income should be the least we give. That is little, but it proves that God and his service figure in our lives. After all, giving is a matter of how important we think our bodies and souls, respectively. He who thinks most highly of his body will have little to sacrifice for his soul, for his God. Only he who can confess that his soul is much more important than his body will sacrifice more for it than he does for his body. He only has a willing heart; he only brings his offering.

If you rank among the well-to-do in society, bring gold, not silver or copper. If you rank among the financially poor in society, bring copper. And if your position is between these two, bring silver; bring a nickel or a dime, if you have little; give a dollar, if you have been given much.

Place the Kingdom first in your life, and give as you have been given. If you follow that rule, all your offerings will be pleasing and acceptable to God. Yes, then the widow's mite is most acceptable to him.

Dear Monica Ruth,

by Carol Brands

Dear Monica Ruth,

Early this afternoon, your father and I were still unaware that you would be born yet today. We thought your father could easily meet all his goals for today: copy his secretary's minutes for school board; treat a group of feeder pigs with flu shots; spend an hour hunting with your oldest brother, Daryl; eat supper with the family; do farm chores; shower and attend a school board meeting.

By 2:00 this afternoon, I had my first contraction and began to wonder if our heavenly Father was going to affect those plans of your earthly father. By 3:00 I had finished sorting socks and had made a noodle hot dish for the family and was becoming sure that the contractions were for real. By 4:00 I had taken a shower, dressed and crawled into bed while your earthly father ate a hasty supper and I became positive the contractions were for real, only five minutes apart. By 5:00 your earthly father and I had rushed to the doctor's office and then to the hospital with the doctor following closely behind us. By 6:45 your earthly father had returned home, made necessary calls, orgainzed your brothers and sisters, done his farm chores, showered and shaved, and was back in the hospital by my side. By 7:09 on the hospital clocks, your heavenly Father had brought you into this world.

The hospital reported these facts about you:

1. Birth: 12-6-88 at 7:09 P.M. CST.
2. Weight: 10 pounds 2 ounces.
3. Length: 22 inches.
4. Apgar score: 9 (you were a little blue at first).
5. Sex: female.
6. Siblings: two sisters and four brothers.
7. Blood type: O Positive.

Your father and I added these facts:

8. Ten perfect fingers and ten perfect toes.
9. Eyes squeezed shut to hide their blue color.
10. Beautiful dark and long hair. Beautiful reddish complexion. Beautiful button nose. Beautiful tiny lips. Beautiful rounded cheeks and arms and legs.
11. Hungry and letting us know about it!
12. Name: Monica Ruth.

Your name, Monica Ruth, was chosen in love by your father and me, based on two criteria. We always make sure that we like the SOUND of the names we choose but also that we like what they MEAN. We want names for our children that have spiritual significance so that you can be proud of your name in every right way. Do you know what your name means to us?

"Monica" has three meanings in our two namebooks. (1) "Moon-like". That meaning is okay if you think of the moon as a reflection of the light of the sun just as Christians are to reflect the Light of the Sun of the World, the Son of God. (2) "Solidarity". If you stand solidly on the Rock, Christ and His word, then this name is appropriate, too. "Solidarity" suggest a union of many people based on a common ground. If this group of people is God's people and if the basis for their union is Christ and His Word - our Solid Rock - then this becomes a beautiful name. (3) "An Advisor". All people are advisors, although many fail to realize it. As long as you give Biblical advice which you first follow yourself, this name is all right, too. (4) But when we chose your name, we were thinking of a fourth meaning for the name. To us, Monica is the godly mother of Augustine. She had flaws but she had one great and outstanding virtue: she was a mother of prayer, of tearful and persevering prayer, who pursued her wayward and sinning son until God used her tears and prayers to draw her errant son back to God and to great service for God. To us, your name means: "woman of persevering prayer".

Your middle name was also chosen according to the familiar woman it recalls. "Ruth" means either "merciful" or "friendly". It reminds us of Naomi's kind and faithful daughter-in-law, drawn by God out of heathendom into Israel to become one of the great-grandmothers of Christ. For us, this name means: "By grace, a woman of faithfulness."

Dear Monica Ruth, your names represent our hearts' desire for your character. May God mold you to grow up to be within His Church a faithful, kind and friendly woman, a woman of prayer and perseverance.

Your name represents the prayer of every Christian parent for every Christian daughter!

Good-night, Monica Ruth.

Sleep tight!

With love,

DAD AND MOM

Truth vs. Error
3. God's Controversy With Israel
Hosea 4
Verse 6

by Rev. Robert C. Harbach

When there is a lack of the knowledge of God and of the law of God, ignorance darkens man's mind and heart, and begets superstition and fanaticism. Instead of being edified in true knowledge by the pure preaching of the Word of God, the people turn to dumb images as supposed books for the laity. Their priests or ministers, like Arminius go off to Rome, become thoroughly Pelagianized (Pelagianism, a heresy thrown out Rome's front door, but allowed to sneak back in through its back door), then return to corrupt the students, the young people, and the churches with Romish free-willist humanism. This error spreads throughout the "protestant" churches. What public religious figure in these churches today professes to being Reformed? One leading figure of prominence, surprisingly, every so often, claims to being a Calvinist. But what body of Calvinists will acknowledge him as one of themselves? For he is a purveyor of free-willism, and the free offer of a universal love of God to all, based on a universal atonement.

"Seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children." In forgetting the law of God, they neglected to teach it to their children. Catechetical training was either put off until late in the child's life, or dropped altogether. Satan and the world take over their instruction. Tiny children know all about "dancing class" but nothing of Sunday School or the Christian school. Parents, brought up in the public school system, belong to church social groups which teach drama and provide movies and dance parties. A sign of the times in front of the church reads, SEE YOU AT THE HOP WEDNESDAY. . ." not "at the Bible class", much less "at Prayer Meeting," but "at the Hop." Children are familiar with Michael Jackson, but not with Moses and Joshua. Their parents's music idols were Pete Seeger and Joan Baez. The whole family is drawn into "the New Age" movement: (1) children are unconsciously enticed into it by "the Murfs" of TV, (2) by TV's Saturday morning cartoons which entertain with angels of light and spirits of darkness in eternal combat, a clever format for instilling ancient heathen Zoroastrianism; (3) the entire family has (a) its false prophet, George Lucas, the Billy Graham of "The Force," who by the "Star Wars" instructs further in this heathen dualism where Good-and-Evil is the spirit of

the age—Good never triumphing over Evil, for the two, at the end of a scenario, merge and become one in the occult scheme of things; and (b) its false prophetess, Shirley MacLaine with her reincarnationistic witchcraft; (4) family programs are offered in holistic Yoga breathing exercises at a Jack La Lanne health spa; and (5) also a great attraction: a glorious vacation for young people at a John Denver New Age counseling workshop (at $200 - $500) in Colorado.

"I will forget thy children." This the Lord says to "My people" who are an apostate people, v. 12, 17. "I will reject thee." Here read Matt. 21:41-45; Mk. 12:8-9. Their children, too, would be forgotten and rejected. Read I Sam. 2:28-36; 3:12-14. God has rejected and forgotten those families with their children who have rejected and forgotten Him as they go afar off to be lost in the labyrinths of the modern cults.

Suggested theme and divisions:
Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge
Hosea 4:6
I. The Bad State of Things
II. The Reason for It (and Resultant Judgment)
III. The Worse State of Things

I.C. **Priests wicked and avid in iniquity.** "They eat up the **sin** of My people, and they set their heart on their iniquity." The problem with this verse clears up the understanding of the word **sin**, and of the pronoun **their** before **iniquity.** The word **sin** (hattath) may be rendered **sin - offering**: see Gen. 4:7, and especially Ex. 29:14, 36; 30:10. The meaning then is, these false priests eat up the **sin-offerings** of my people, so much so that they **made merchandise** (II Pet. 2:3) of God's people, and even went so far as to set their heart on **their** (the people's) iniquity, being glad that the people **did** commit so much iniquity, as it meant more sin-offerings they could confiscate.

This is exactly what the sons of Eli were doing. God had provided for the food of the priests out of the sacrifices, the **wave-breast** and the **heave-shoulder** (Lev. 7:34), but they became gluttonous **belly**-priests (Rom. 16:18a). They took their share of breast meat and the shoulder of lamb, but they also went so far as to invent a (new) custom, for their own benefit, that when the people feasted with their families and friends, they sent a servant with a three-pronged-meatfork, which must be jabbed into the pot, and whatever that brought up the priest must have (I Sam. 2:13, 14). The people in their devotion to the Lord let this become a tradition (Matt. 15:3). So the priests, bold to step in first before the people had a chance at their own food, did step in before God Himself, putting themselves first, then God, then the people. But not satisfied with this, with their allowance of boiled meat, they demanded **raw** meat, so that they could have their favorite, i.e., **roasts**, and if the people would not give it willingly, or did so protestingly, in favor of God and His altar, then they took it by force. Thus they insulted God and abused the people (v. 17). The ministers in their lusts became greedy, sensual, and violent. Still not satisfied, they prostituted the women who came to the tabernacle to worship (v. 22), making God's house as bad as **Baal-peor.** So they made Israel to sin, becoming responsible for the people's sin, as well as their own. As for what was their true calling, see Mal. 2:4-9.

In our day, wherever there is sacerdotalism (priestcraft), this same

evil (of Hos. 4:8) continues. In Loraine Boettner's **Roman Catholicism**, read how money is handled in the R.C.C. (it's all in the hands of the priests and bishops, p. 36); how by means of the Mass they obtain money ("High money, **high** mass; **low** money, **low** mass, **no** money, **no** mass!" p. 185); how the doctrine of purgatory brings millions of dollars every year to the church as the people seek relief for themselves and others from the imagined sufferings of the fictional purgatory, "The gold mine of the priesthood" (p. 222); then there is the matter of indulgences (short periods of release from punishment), which are granted for imposed penances and especially for gifts of money and property (p. 263, 264). Indulgences still are an enormous source of revenue to the Vatican (p. 265, 266). So also gambling is a source of substantial revenues to the R.C.C. (p. 393). So the eating of the sin-offerings of the people continues with a vengeance, and, the clergy sets its heart on their (the laity's) iniquity. For "the more iniquities committed, the more of a money flow into Catholic coffers."

The Charismatic movement proclaims what has been dubbed, "The Cut-Rate Grace of the Health and Wealth Gospel." The evangelists (and evangelettes) of their movement minister by way of satellite TV to millions of people, and it takes millions of dollars to run their operations. "Thousands of followers are attracted to" these evangelists "because of the teaching in which they specialize: healing, prosperity, and 'positive confession.' If these ministries decreased or softened their distinctives, they would no longer stand out from the growing throng of independent charismatic ministers and would risk losing much of their devoted following. . .whose contributions support the ministries' multimillion-dollar budgets." There is therefore the temptation and tendency to "preach what one's supporters want to hear . . . . The message that God wills financial prosperity is the one most attractive to" a large, loyal following in the charismatic ministries. If the modern prophet "wants his ministry to continue expanding, he can hardly downplay that message now. Despite . . .criticism. . .he has decided, not surprisingly, to give it more attention in the future." People "want to hear about health, wealth and miracles, and will pay both attention and contributions to those teachers who entertain and excite them by centering on these subjects. They need to keep the itching ears tickled lest the checks stop coming in and their ministries suffer as a result." They know "errors had been taught, but felt they had to give the people what they wanted." When told that this was lying to their audience, "the response was, 'We don't call it lying. We feel that it's a positive influence.' " (**The Health and Wealth Gospel**, by Bruce Barron, IV Press, 1987, pp. 137, 138, 139, 143). In these sorts of ministries, it is not so much the false prophets eating up the "sin-offerings" of the people as it is the eating up of the **sinful** offerings of filthy lucre these people make to them in order, as they are taught, that they may eventually find themselves prospering a hundred fold! Oh yes, these false prophets set their greedy hearts on (count on) the covetousness (iniquity) of their constituencies. The more grasping after health and wealth these masses are, the more they can be milked and bilked to enrich their

leaders. Hosea's complaint is still in order.

I. D. **Drunkenness and whoredom** (11, 14, 18). "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart. . .I will not punish your daughters when they commit adultery; for they themselves are separated with whores, and they sacrifice with harlots; therefore, the people that doth not understand shall fall. . . .Their drink is sour; they have committed whoredom continually; her rulers with shame do love, 'Give ye!' "

Why is this? Why such an appalling condition of things in the church? What is the cause? Verse 10 states both **cause** and **effect**: "**because** they have left off **(ceased)** to take heed to the Lord." That's the **cause**! The **effect** is all the debauchery detailed in the verses referred to above. All this corruption in sin and wickedness has its ultimate culmination in the anti-Christian world-kingdom in its **seductiveness** as symbolized in the Great Whore.

—To be continued, D.V.—

THE ROSE

It is only a tiny rosebud,
A flower of God's design.
But I cannot unfold the petals
With these clumsy hands of mine.
The secret of unfolding flowers
Is not known to such as I.
The flower God opens so sweetly,
In my hand would fade and die.
If I cannot unfold a rosebud
This flower of God's design
Then how can I think I have wisdom
To unfold this life of mine?
So I'll trust in Him for His guidance
Each step of the pilgrim way.
For the pathway that lies before me
My Heavenly Father knows.
I'll trust Him to unfold the moments
Just as He unfolds the rose.

OUR GOD, HIS PEOPLE

He is our God, a wondrous thought!
That we through Jesus have been brought
To occupy this holy place
Where we may see His blessed face.

We are His people, glorous thought!
That we by Jesus have been bought
To be His own, a holy race,
Not through our works, but only grace.

We are His people, He our God.
Let us in love His greatness laud,
And thank Him oft' that we may be
His own because of Calvery.

WHAT'S HAPPENED

by Ruth Bleyenberg

Covenant of Wyckoff, New Jersey
-Mr. & Mrs. Steve Hanko were blessed with a son, Andrew Blake.
-November 27 they met in their new church for the first time.
-The dedication of the church was held on December 9.

Southwest of Grandville, Mich
-On December 18 the Young People sponsored a mass meeting. Rev. Kamps spoke.
-The consistory has accepted the membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Donald Grasman and their baptized son, Vance Alan. They come from First CRC of Byron Center, MI.

South Holland, Illinois
-On December 4 baptism was administered to Larrissa De Jong, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Don De Jong; Erika Kamps daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Earl Kamps; Drew Looyenga, son of Dr. & Mrs. David Looyenga; Susan Stouwie, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Edward Stouwie; Nicole Van Drunen, daugnter of Mr. & Mrs. Steve Van Drunen; and Kara Vander Muelen, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Ed Vander Muelen.
-Robert A. Ensink was received as a member in full communion from Hudsonville P.R. CHurch. He is attending services at Northwest Side Mission.
-The membership papers of Jeanie Van Baren, Mark Zandstra & Rosanne Zandstra were transferred to Peace Prot. Ref. Church.

Southeast of Grand Rapids, Mich
-On December 11 baptism was administered to Daniel Schimmel, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dan Schimmel.

First of Holland, Mich.
-Baptism was administered to Patrick J., son of Mr. & Mrs. Gordon Bonzelaar on November 20.
-Mr. & Mrs. Darle Wassink were blessed on December 21 with the birth of a son, Lance Stephen.

Hudsonville, Mich.
-On November 27 baptism was administered to Sandra Ranae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Ed Hoekstra and Lynelle Ruth, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. John Mulder.
-On November 27 Ruth Miedema and Lisa Koop made public confession of faith.
-Hudsonville Choral Society presented their program on December 4.
-December 18 was the date for the Christmas singspiration.
-On December 25 Lori Bouwkamp, Pam Brummel, Pam Garvelink, Heather Kreuzer, Jeff Lubbers and Phil Van Baren made public confession of faith.
-The Lord blessed Mr. & Mrs. Dave Kamminga with a son, Shane Michael, on December 23.
-The Young Adults sponsored a ski trip

to Traverse City on January 20 & 21.

Northwest Side Mission of Chicago, Ill.
-Mr. & Mrs. Calvin Long held a psalm-sing in their home on December 10.
-Mr. & Mrs. Al Meurer were blessed with a daughter, Jennifer Amelia.

First of Grand Rapids, Mich.
-The membership papers of Gloria Monsma were received from Crestview CRC of Boulder, Colo.
-Baptism was administered to Anna Kristina, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Eric Gustafson on December 11.
-Mr. & Mrs. Lynn Hunter were blessed with a son, Colin Christopher, on December 29.

Grandville, Mich.
-Craig & Sandy Glashower and family requested that their membership papers be sent to Hudsonville P.R. Church.
-On November 16 Mr. & Mrs. Phil Baas were blessed with a son, Casey John.
-Jana Huisken, Dianne Ondersma & Tim Van Dyke made public confession of faith on November 27.

Edgerton, Minnesota
-On November 18 the Young People sponsored a soup supper for the congregation. Proceeds were for the 1989 convention.

Loveland, Colorado
-Mr. & Mrs. Dave Griess were blessed with a daughter, Meagon Joy, on December 5.
-The Young People held a skating party on December 15 for the congregation.
-A Christmas singspiration was held on December 18, sponsored by the Young People.
-Mr. & Mrs. Bob Brands were blessed with a son, Scott Andrew on December 21.

Doon, Iowa
-The sacrament of baptism was administered to Brittany Marie, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Reine Van Bemmel on December 18.

Hope of Walker, Mich.
-The Young People are sponsoring the upcoming 1989 convention.
-The membership papers of Lenora Kalsbeek have been transferred to our Hull Church.
-The membership papers of Bill Buiter have been transferred to our Redland congregation.
-The Young People sponsored a sub sale in December.
-Ed Reitsma made public confession of his faith on January 8.

Faith of Jenison, Mich.
-On December 18, Pete De Kryger, Bill Huber II & Steve Potjer made public confession of faith.
-Membership papers of Mike Potjer were sent to our church in Loveland, Colo.

Peace of Lynwood, Ill
-The Young People sponsored a pizza sale in December.
-The Young People and Young Adult Societies met together for a gym night on Wednesday, January 4 at Illiana's new gym.

Federation Board
-Sponsored a volleyball night on December 8.
-Sponsored a sliding party on January 12.

SINGSPIRATION SCHEDULE

March 19	Southwest (Easter)
May 21	Hope
August	Pre-Convention
September 17	Southeast
November 19	Faith (Thanksgiving)
December 17	Hudsonville (Christmas)