BEACON LIGHTS

BY PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

For the group in Northern Ireland, the opportunity to have two ministers of the Gospel preaching and explaining the Bible for a week was an occurrence to treasure. They listened; they questioned; they discussed. They did not take it for granted.

"Take it not for Granted"
Kristin Engelsma

VOLUME XLXI NUMBER 9 NOVEMBER 1992

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

BEACON LIGHTS STAFF
Editor-in-Chief - Peter D. Faber
Associate Editors - John Faber
Bruce Miedema
Rich Peterson
News Editor - Lora Ellerbroek
Finance Manager - Brian Kuiper
Allen Brummel
Lisa De Young
Kristin Engelsma
Steve Lotterman
Melissa Speidel
Thelma Westra

EDITORIAL OFFICE; Peter D. Faber
4190 Burton S. E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49546

COLLECTIONS: Brian Kuiper
4431 Riverbend Dr. S.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

Subscription Price $7.00

Address Change: POSTMASTER
Joel Zandstra
6157 Balsam Dr.
Hudsonville, MI 49426

Second Class Postage paid at Jenison, MI (USPS046-840)

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 Light** is reprinted by another periodical, we will appreciate your giving the source and forwarding the printed periodical to the Editorial Office.

EXECUTIVE FEDERATION BOARD
President - Tom Bergman
Vice-President - Bruce Hugg
Secretary - Heidi Holstege
Treasurer - Matt Kuiper
Librarian - Susan Overway
Vice-Secretary - Erica Kalsbeek
Vice-Treasurer - Mike Feenstra
Youth Coordinator - Dan Van Dyke
Spiritual Advisors - Rev. Gritters

NEWS EDITOR: Lora Ellerbroek
14320 Pine Creek Drive
Holland, MI 49424

Book Orders: Beacon Lights,
P.O. Box 375
Jenison, MI 49428

SUBSCRIPTION DUES:
ALL AREAS: Joan Hanko
719 Parkside
Standale, MI 49504

Scholarship Fund Treasurer:
Howard Pastoor
0-3829 16th Ave.
Grandville, MI 49418

Contents

EDITORIAL
"Being Sure Today" - Pete Faber 1
Should I Run For President or Another Public Office - Ken Elzinga 2
'Take It Not For Granted: - Kristin Engelsma 4
WRITING CONTEST WINNER
Jerusalem - Ryan Hanko 5
The Right To Kill - Rev. C. Hanko 7
WRITING CONTEST WINNER
The Eagle - Luke Griess 9
Keeping The Sabbath Day - Rev. S. Key 9
Watch Out - John Faber 12
Church News - Lora Ellerbroek 13

EDITORIAL

"BEING SURE, TODAY"

by Pete Faber

"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." II Peter 1:10-11.

We love to procrastinate! Some of us are better at it than others but we all do it, especially when it comes to some sin that is holding us from a closer relationship to Christ. Even then we procrastinate. The apostle Peter here tells us to give diligence; do not procrastinate, work. Work is involved in Christ's kingdom. Christ will not tolerate no work or a little work. Read the parable of the talents in Matthew 25 where Christ condemns the wicked and slothful servant, or Matthew 16:24 where Jesus tells us, that is, His disciples, "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." Work.

'Making our calling and election sure' applies to all believers that God has predestinated and Christ died for. This excludes many. Many will hear this word and will have no part in it, because God has not called and elected them. We must realize from the outset that it is God's work of calling and election. God from eternity, from year to year, day to day, minute to minute has His elect on His mind continually that He upholds us, as the Heidelberg Catechism says, and that He has a place in heaven for us, always thinking of us, and all this from eternity. And as a result of God electing us, God comes to us and turns our hearts that we want Him and His promises for ourselves; He converts us. We then continually from this new heart have the desire to live according to His will and obey Him. Obeying Him as we seen earlier would be denying ourselves, taking our cross and following Him, this is Christ's will and demand for us.

The Apostle Peter wants us to make sure of our calling and election, but how? God doesn't write it in the sky or appear to us but He does command us to give diligence or work at it. To be 'sure', we will be praying, and with our praying we will be studying God's word. With our prayers, studying the Bible, and hearing the preaching of the word, we will grow as the Apostle Peter explains earlier in this chapter "add to your faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness kindness; and to kindness charity."

Many Reformed people, some in our own denomination, have stressed God's work and the work of election so much that we have neglected the word 'add'; "add to your faith virtue. . . ." We have and for good reason been consumed with fighting against the wrong of Arminianism, that it is up to the individual to accept Christ. But we on the other hand have forgotten to stress the striving that must take place. We feel we will be welcomed "to enter in at the strait gate" not have to "strive to enter in at the strait gate" (Luke 13:24). In considering what Christ has done for us we can never be thankful enough that our salvation is complete. We have no part to perform to save ourselves but when Christ walked the earth, He did not just talk about His part. Christ said "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me." Self denial is work. Christ's very example of what He did when here was an example of work. Working is what every minister and congregation should be doing. What work? The painful work of repentance and fleeing from sin. When this repentance and fleeing from sin occurs, and it must, God's work of sanctification in us is illuminated. Your light will shine as Matthew 5:16 says "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,

and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

Young people stop here and think about it for a moment.

Is our calling and election sure? It is if we are continually repenting and fleeing from sin. For when we do this, then God's sanctification in our life will be a true sign that God has called and elected us. Then we can read the rest of that verse in confidence, "ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Therefore let us work "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (I Cor. 6:20).

What could be more important for us to do but work!

So let us be found in Him!

NOTES

The BEACON LIGHTS is looking for a hard-working person to join a young, enthusiastic staff to fill the position of secretary. If you are interested please call Pete Faber at 949-0812 or Lisa De Young at 669-8411.

The January issue will among other things start a question and answer column. If you have a question you are encouraged to write and address all questions to the editor. We will not publish anonymous letters; however we may withhold your name upon request.

The Beacon Lights also welcomes articles by our readers. If you have an article that would benefit our readers, please forward it to the editorial office.

SHOULD I RUN FOR PRESIDENT OR ANOTHER PUBLIC OFFICE

by Ken Elzinga

Mayor, Congressman, Senator, President. What do all these have in common? They are all public offices, called to rule and serve the constituency of the people who have elected them. Should a child of God living near the end of the 20th century aspire to one of these public offices? This is the question we will consider in this article.

Let us turn to the Scripture to look for answers and examples of Christians who served in positions of leadership in Bible times. Think about the judges: Joshua, Samson, etc.; the kings: David, Solomon, etc.; and those in public office such as Joseph, Nehemiah and Daniel. These people can be divided into two groups. The first group includes the judges and kings who were called by God to primarily serve God's people. The second group includes Joseph, Daniel, and others who were called by God to serve the general population of the land. It is this second group that serves as an example to us as we consider our question. How did it go for these men? Were they able to live as God's people in their world while carrying out the duties of their office? They were able to be faithful to God in life, even though there were great temptations to compromise their faith in their work. They did this only by the grace of God that preserved them day by day.

The very fact that there are examples in Scripture of Christians who served in places of authority tells us that we can not rule out this work as a legitimate occupation for a Christian today. If a Christian is blessed with talents of leadership and authority he might consider using them in a place of government where he can use those gifts to exert his Christian influence and ability.

There are, however, several notes of caution that one ought to consider before devoting a life to public office. One of the first things to consider is this. Am I willing to spend my life serving people who have elected me to this office? Sometimes we think of President and lawmakers only

as rulers and it is true that they do rule over us but their work is one of serving those who they rule over. This is true of any position of authority in church, government, or home. Those who are in authority rule, but their rule must be one that always serves for the welfare of those who are under them. A person can't help but wonder if many of those in public office today have forgotten this after they are elected into office. If a person is seeking public office so that he can have others obey his word and command he ought to review what it means before he seeks any public office.

It would be very difficult for a Reformed Christian today to be elected into a public office if he were to let his or her light shine oefore the world. We believe that God has given us the Scripture not only to teach us about God and His plan of salvation for us but also as a means of instruction so that we know how we ought to live our life of thankfulness here on this earth. The Reformed Christian's view of life is so very different from that of the world. This would make it very difficult to be elected into a public office today because the thinking of the world today is not conforming to the Scripture but rather becoming increasingly wicked. I say this even though in this election year we are hearing so much about family values. By using this term of "family values", those running for president hope to gain the votes of the people but if those values were to be defined by Scripture, the effect would be that people would turn their votes away. There is an enormous pressure put on our elected officials to compromise their principles. If they speak out on what they believe to be wrong or right they soon find themselves offending some segment of society and become the scorn and ridicule of the media and the public. This translates into lost votes at election time. As a result many elected officials try to take a neutral stance and appease everyone. I think this results in a weakening of their own principles and ability to differentiate between right and wrong, good and evil. Everything in life becomes relative to today's standards and thinking instead of being judged according to Scripture, our standard for life.

Another temptation that may present itself to a Christian in public office is the temptation to defile one's self with the worldly atmosphere of politics today. Everyone who works out in the world faces this temptation today but those in the political arena face it to a greater degree. In preparing for this article I interviewed the father of one of our state representatives. He pointed out that much of the social life of those in public office is in the form of parties held on weekends, often on Sunday. A Christian who understood and obeyed God's will for the Sabbath Day would not be able to join in many of these activities.

A Christian in public office may also be required to do some works of necessity on the Lord's day similar to those done by policemen and firemen. But if those works of necessity hinder a person from worshiping so often that the spiritual life suffers, we should question if it is proper and spiritually healthy for us.

In spite of these concerns and questions raised it is possible for a Christian to serve in public office. He would have to be strong in his faith and commitment to serve God and not men. He would have to resolve to do what is pleasing before the face of God and not give in to the pressure of special interest groups. He would have to say in his heart what Daniel did in Daniel 1:8, "But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the kings meat, nor with the wine which he drank." He would have to remember what the calling of everyone of God's people is, to be the salt of the earth and to let our light shine before men. This is going to make him stand out like a sore thumb and he will be opposed vehemently by the world. This is the way it was with Daniel too. Yet the Lord preserved him and used him for a great witness to those around him and for the good of God's kingdom. Let's all resolve to live that way where ever God has placed us in this life, by serving God in all we say and do, by being men and women of courage to take our place in this world and by being a light in this world of darkness.

It ought to be obvious that the heart of marriage is love. It is love for one another that brings a man and woman into marriage, and it is love that sustains their marriage. If the love between husband and wife grows cold, their marriage loses its life and often ends in divorce. For that very reason God repeatedly calls husbands to love their wives (and by implications wives to love their husbands.
p. 19, Far Above Rubies, The Key to a Happy Marriage - Rev. James Slopsema

"TAKE IT NOT FOR GRANTED"

by Kristin Engelsma

It all originated as merely a convenient excuse to be able to vacation in the British Isles and Northern Ireland. It was announced that a conference on the Covenant of Grace was going to be held in Northern Ireland, that my father had been asked to speak, and therefore, I would have the opportunity of a lifetime - to travel extensively in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Looking back on the three week trip, the sightseeing excursions and the traveling experiences were admittedly breathtaking and memorable; but it was the week spent at the conference that was unforgettable and from which I learned the most valuable of lessons. For one week speeches were given by Prof. Engelsma and Prof. Hanko on the covenant and the implications of the covenant on our lives as Christians.Christian friendships, covenantal marriages, and a proper walk through life were only a few of the topics covered throughout this time. However, long after the speeches were over, the discussions continued. From simply the aspect of the delivered speeches and resulting discussions the conference was well worthwhile.

But the conference went far beyond these speeches and discussions. For seven days, men, women, young people, and children, interested in learning more about the covenant and Christianity gathered together in Northern Ireland. From places as far away as the United States, England, and Scotland, these people joined with the group from Northern Ireland to discuss aspects of the covenant. Diverse backgrounds, nationalities, and family histories amassed in the basic unity of learning more about God and His will.

The very experience of being able to discuss, associate, and socialize with individuals and families who desired to know more about the true Word of God without having the advantage of the "Christian Protestant Reformed" family background was extremely enlightening. Especially with regards to the group from Northern Ireland - known as the British Reformed Fellowship - I began to realize that many of the things taken for granted here in the United States, particularly by the young people, ought to actually be held as very valuable.

For the group in Northern Ireland, the opportunity to have two ministers of the Gospel preaching and explaining the Bible for a week was an occurrence to treasure. They listened; they questioned; they discussed. They did not take it for granted.

Another outstanding aspect of the conference was the fellowship. Even when not discussing the speeches, the chance to socialize with others who believe in the same God and the same doctrines was something out of the ordinary for those from that area. They opened their homes to us visitors; they took us on outings; they went out of their way to make us feel welcome - the fellowship of the saints was extremely evident. They didn't take it for granted.

It's time for many of us, myself definitely included, to examine those things that are important to us. I, the Lord willingly, will not be quick to take the preaching of the gospel on Sunday or in catechisms for granted. There are numerous others in many areas of the world that would willingly give up so much to hear the diligent preaching of the gospel twice on Sunday. And yet so many of us complain - or simply don't attend faithfully. We take it for granted.

However, whether it be Sunday or not, the next time you are in the company of other Christians, young or old, look around you and give thanks. Many of us have gone to Christian schools, have Christian friends, grown up in a Christian family. It's almost impossible to imagine a life nearly void of all that Christian fellowship. Because of it we grow as Christians in the

Lord; without it, the bitter battle with the world looms larger than is almost bearable. This, too, we must not take for granted.

The trip overseas was the opportunity of a lifetime, but not for the reasons I assumed it would be. I learned much history, saw countless landmarks, viewed splendid landscapes, and traveled through several countries. But all of these dim significantly when compared to the last week spent at the conference.

Look around you - be thankful. God has given us the wonderful gifts of being able to hear His Word preached and explained, and being able to experience Christian fellowship on an everyday basis. Take it for granted? We must not.

WRITING CONTEST WINNER
7th - 8th Grade

JERUSALEM

by Ryan Hanko

The city of Jerusalem is a city that is mentioned throughout the Old and New Testaments. It is first mentioned in the story of Abraham and Melchizedek. Melchizedek was the king and priest of the city of Salem (Salem is an early form of the word Jerusalem). Genesis 14:18

Soon after this the Jebusites gained control of the city and gave it the name Jerusalem. The city is not mentioned again until the story of David.

After David had reigned seven and one-half years in Hebron he determined to make Jerusalem his capital city. About 1000 B.C., he captured the city. After he captured the city, he called it after himself, "The City of David". II Samuel 5:9. He also engaged in a great amount of rebuilding. David made it the religious capital of his nation. He brought the tabernacle and the Ark of the Covenant into the city. During David's reign, the city was mostly populated by people from the tribes of Benjamin and Levi.

After David died, his son Solomon took over reigning in Jerusalem. During his reign, he built the great temple in the city. Solomon also greatly expanded the city walls.

Following Solomon's death and the dividing of the kingdom, Rehoboam and the tribes of Judah and Benjamin remained in control of the city.

During the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, Shishak king of Egypt besieged the captured Jerusalem. I Kings 14:25 & 26. The city was pillaged by the Arabians during the reign of Jehoshaphat. II Chronicles 24:23.

Jehoash, king of Israel, broke down the walls and looted the city. II Kings 14:13 & 14. Uzziah refortified the walls of the city during his reign. II Chronicles 26:9.

Ahaz gave some of the riches of the city to Tiglath-pileser the king of Assyria. II Kings 16:8. Hezekiah also added more fortifications to the city and also made many religious reforms.

Jonathan, a Syrian lord, repaired the city about 161 B. C. The city was surrendered to Antiochus Sidetes about 134 B. C. The Romans then took the city by storm. Julius Caesar appointed Antipater Procurator governor of the city forty-seven years before Christ was born.

At 24 B. C. Herod the great was appointed king over the city of Jerusalem. He built many great buildings and also a temple in the city. The kingship of the city was given at 4 B. C. to Herod Archelaus.

King Agrippa gained control of and ruled over the city at 56 A. D. At 70 A. D. Titus, a rebelling Roman emperor, besieged the city and gained control of it.

The one hundred fiftieth day of the year 72 A. D. found the city in flames. Inner strife had caused a battle within the city walls and as a result the city was utterly destroyed.

The city was rebuilt during the early 600's. Emperor Constantine I (the Great) ordered the city to be rebuilt. Within five years, control of the city changed hands three times. The Persians first captured the city. The Byzantines (under

Constantine I) again regained the city, but they soon lost it to the Muslim Arabs.

Ottoman Turks took control of the city in 1517. In December, 1917, during World War I, the British took the city. Because the British encouraged Jewish immigration to the areas around the city, the city is over ninety percent Jewish in population.

In May, 1948, the British control ended and the Arabs and Israeli peoples fought for control of the city. As a result of this fighting the city is now divided into West and East Jerusalem.

War broke out again in June, 1967 between the same two countries, but this time the Israeli people won control and have kept control ever since. It is now the capital of the nation.

The new Jerusalem is spoken of in Revelation and also in Isaiah 52:1. It depicts the final state of the church. The new Jerusalem will be a restoration of Paradise. The new Jerusalem will depict all of God's great handiwork.

A WORD OF COMFORT

"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me in glory." How blessed is the man that may take this confession upon his lips, and so trust in the God of his salvation! What a glad confession it is! It covers all, life and death, time and eternity. For if we trust that Jehovah guides us with His counsel, we do so in the joyous assurance that His counsel is a counsel of salvation for us. He then so leads us that the way must lead to glory. The way may then be dark and dreary, steep and almost impassable, way of suffering and affliction. And we may not understand the way of the Lord. Nor do we have to understand. We know that both the way and the end are determined by the same love which He revealed in the death of His only begotten Son. And we trust, simply trust following where He leads, asking no question, knowing that all things work together for our good. His counsel is a counsel of love, of perfect wisdom, of never failing power. All is well!

Sunday, August 15, 1943

Consolation
by Rev. Herman Hoeksema

THE RIGHT TO KILL

by Rev. C. Hanko

God has been cast out of our modern society. He is not merely ignored, but definitely rejected.

God's law is considered to be archaic, unsuited for our modern day. it plainly teaches: Thou shalt not kill. But modern man says, I have the right to kill, if it is to my advantage. Our modern society openly declares that man has the right to choose, the right to decide to abort the unborn child.

This is not ignorance, but wicked defiance of God's laws. Scripture tells us that even the pagan who never heard of the Ten Commandments still knows the difference between right and wrong. "For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law are a law to themselves: which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another." (Romans 2:14, 15)

The Supreme Court does not ask whether abortion is right or wrong, but merely asks, what is the will of the majority of the people?

Our present presidential campaign centers to a great extent about this question of the right to kill. The outcome depends to a great degree on public sentiment, whether it has advanced so far that the right to kill is agreed upon by the majority.

A few years ago when we were in Jamaica boys on the street shouted after us, "Yankee go home. You kill babies." They did not rationalize, they knew right from wrong.

Can you imagine what will happen as this sin develops? Already the unborn are being checked to see whether they are normal and well formed, if not, they may be put away. What will prevent the killing of all severely handicapped, or of the aged and infirm who serve no useful purpose and become a burden to society?

Scripture teaches us that lawlessness will characterize the end of the ages. This right to kill is another sign that the end is drawing near.

This is not an isolated instance, but is obviously a symptom of the times in which we live.

Do you wonder that this gun-toting generation kills at the slightest provocation? Do you wonder that stealing is a crime committed by those in big businesses, by those in leading positions of authority, as well as by drug addicts and slum dwellers? Do you wonder that the streets in our large cities are no longer safe to walk on? Or that jails are over-crowded, and that criminals are released without having served their full sentence?

Also the seventh commandment is boldly trodden under foot.

For many the marriage bond has become nothing more than a protection of one's rights. A marriage license is regarded as a mere piece of paper. Many couples live together without bothering about getting married, and without being compelled to go through the trauma of a divorce when they weary of their companionship. Nor are they ashamed of their sinful way of life.

Homosexuals are not condemned for their evil practices, as is required in the Scriptures (Rom. 1:26, 27), but are condoned, defended. Instead of admitting that this unnatural lust arises out of their depraved nature, they are to be accepted in society as living according to their natural needs. Even some churches are accepting them as members in good standing.

The TV programs find their appeal by a strong emphasis on sex. The present day magazines and the modern novels would have no market if they did not boldly describe all sorts of sinful sexual relationships.

But even worse that that, instead of condemning sexual intercourse as sin outside of the marriage bond, young and old are all but

self-seeking, we easily understand such a reaction of horror. But we must not be inclined, over against all the Sabbath desecration of our day, to react in a wrong way by taking a Phariseeistic attitude toward this fourth commandment. It is easy to make Sunday a day of precept upon precept, saying. "You may not do this and you may not do that." But that is not the Sabbath day! The Sabbath is a not day of doing **nothing!** That is how the Pharisees conceived of the Sabbath. To them there was **value** in doing nothing on the Sabbath day. And when Jesus and His disciples **did** things on the Sabbath - picked corn on the Sabbath, and **healed** on the Sabbath - they would kill Him. Violate that law of doing **nothing**, and you are worthy of death.

We must not be Pharisees. The Sabbath is not idleness. Jesus would condemn that phariseeistic attitude by example. It was not an accident that He healed repeatedly on the Sabbath. In Matthew 12, Jesus healed on the Sabbath the man with the withered hand. He could just as well have told the man, "I'll meet you here tomorrow at 9:30, and heal your hand." That certainly was not an emergency, a life-threatening situation. The same is true concerning the incident of the man at the pool of Bethesda, as we read in John 5. That man had had his infirmity for 38 years! Certainly, his healing could have waited a few more hours. And even when Jesus healed him, He could at least have told the man, "Now leave your bed here; come back tomorrow and pick it up. It's the Sabbath." But no, Jesus says, "Take up thy bed and walk." What an offense to the Jewish idea of sitting idle on the Sabbath! But Jesus would teach us that there is no value in doing nothing on the Sabbath. In itself such outward observance of rules and forbidding of all activity is principally no different from the wickedness of those who pay no attention at all to this fourth commandment. Both approaches ignore the fundamental idea of the Sabbath. Obedience to this commandment comes not in a legalistic conformity, but only by an experiential understanding of salvation in Jesus Christ. And well might we ask ourselves the question: Do I understand the implications of my salvation with respect to the fourth commandment of God's law?

The cure for all Sabbath desecration comes only in the way of understanding the fundamental idea of the Sabbath. Many pertinent questions confront not only young people, but all God's people today: How strict must we be in making Sunday a day different from the other days of the week? Must Sunday be void of all activity? May we not do things of pleasure on Sunday, so long as we avoid working for wages? May I participate in sports on Sunday, so long as it is not for pay? The answer to those questions and others may be found in an understanding of the Sabbath as observed by Jesus.

When we see the light of Christ shining upon this fourth commandment, we see that the Sabbath day for us is not a day to do as we please; but that also with respect to the Sabbath day we walk in the perfect law of liberty **in Christ**. And the principle of that liberty is this: God is a covenant God, a God Who lives a life of perfect love and fellowship in Himself; and His people, worshiping Him, enter into the rest of His covenant fellowship. Do you? The cure for all Sabbath desecration comes by entering into that perfect rest of God. The keeping of the Sabbath is a **spiritual** act for the Christian, a work, a labor that requires intense dedication and devotion.

If we would walk in obedience to the fourth commandment, we must begin by seeing in our Lord Jesus Christ the fulfillment of that commandment. Jesus came as the fulfillment of the Sabbath. God's tabernacle was with men **in Christ Jesus**. Christ took the sins of us Sabbath desecraters, and redeemed us out of all the unrest of hell. In His cross we find the basis for our Sabbath enjoyment. And in the resurrection on the first day of the week, you have the completion of that work of our redemption. The labor to enter into that rest has been accomplished. Our Lord Jesus Christ **labored** under the mighty burden of God's wrath that we might enter into the rest of God. We do not need to toil under God's wrath, in order to enter the peaceful rest, which is His fellowship. We rest first. And in the strength of that rest we go forth to the battle which is our daily existence - the battle not of works, but of faith. All you who are in Christ Jesus are a Sabbath people.

God comes to us and says, "I am Jehovah your God, the God in Whom there is perfect rest. I have called you out of the house of bondage, where there is only unrest, and I have redeemed you in Christ. From that unrest of body and soul, that unrest which is death, I have delivered you. Now, therefore, My people, **enter** into that rest, **enjoy** that rest, by faith. Live it in your present existence, even in this world that is full of unrest. Reveal in all your life that you are a Sabbath people, the people of God. And to that end, while you walk in the midst of a world filled with darkness, and because I know the weakness of your own sinful flesh, I give you a special day, in

order that you might experience a little taste of the blessings of the everlasting Sabbath."

Contrary to the false teachings of the Pharisees, the Sabbath was made for man; not the other way around. God gave us this day. And He purposed for us in this day, the first day of the week, to create as much as possible a **vacuum,** an empty space, as far as our earthly life is concerned, in order that we might labor at filling that empty space with the things of God's kingdom, the things that have to do with that spiritual rest. It is a day not of idleness, but a day in which we May, by God's grace, reveal ourselves as Sabbath **celebrators,** in separation from the world of Sabbath desecraters. It is a day in which we may enjoy and enter into the blessings of that covenant rest, a day in which we may receive nourishment and encouragement for our daily battle of faith.

Understand well (and let us examine ourselves), it is a sign of spiritual deadness and lack of preparedness to enter the **eternal** Sabbath, when we who call ourselves the people of God continue to desecrate the Sabbath. It is a terrible sign if you must be begged and urged to meet with the people of God for worship, or when you only attend once, and on the slightest occasion find a reason to stay home. It is an evil sign when the Sabbath rest does not mean much; when we spend our Saturday nights in such pleasure seeking that there is no ambition nor physical strength left on Sunday to serve the Lord with joy; when we cannot even stay awake, let alone labor to enter into the rest of God. Remember, the blessings of the Sabbath day are specifically and particularly the blessings of a Sabbath people. There is no peace for the wicked, for the Christ-less Sabbath breaker.

What a blessed privilege is the Sabbath day to the child of God, when from all his earthly labors he is given a day of rest and to remember the Lord's mighty works of redemption for us His people in Christ! The Lord says to us, positively, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." To remember the Sabbath day means basically two things.

In the first place, keep it in mind. Do not forget that day. Many are so busy with the business or taking care of yard work and jobs around the house, that they forget the Sabbath day. Others make the Sabbath day a day of recreation and earthly pleasure. And the result is that they too forget the Sabbath day. People (we?) seem to think nothing of making the Lord's Day a travel day during vacation. They (we?) can go without church when out of town (just so long as it doesn't happen too often). But what are we teaching our children when we forget about the Sabbath day, though it be only occasionally? The day must be **remembered.** How? Positively, James writes in his epistle, chapter 1, vs. 27: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction." Let me ask, when did **you** last go to the nursing or rest home to visit one of God's saints? Some of our young people, to their shame, hardly ever visit their God-fearing grandparents. They are too busy, even on Sunday, with earthly pleasures and self-seeking. You cannot remember the Sabbath by spending the entire afternoon **sleeping.** How is that possible?? And therefore, again, to remember the Sabbath is not that we do **nothing,** but that we **crowd** the Sabbath day with **work!** That is right; but with a certain **kind** of work.

To remember the Sabbath day means, in the second place, to **hallow** that day. That is, set the day aside for a certain kind of work, for the service of the Lord your God. The weekly Sabbath, that wonderful gift of God to His people, must be filled, not with lazy inactivity, but with **rest.** And paradoxical as it may seem, that rest is **labor,** specifically the labor of entering into the fellowship of God's covenant through Christ Jesus, where alone is found true peace and rest with God. When we understand that the Sabbath is to be filled with the activity of entering into the rest of God, then the question of what we may or may not do will take care of itself. You cannot labor in the things of the world and rest in God. You cannot fill your Sabbath with mundane activities, with playing or watching football and baseball games, e.g., and at the same time fill it with the rest of salvation in Christ. The tendency of everyday life is that it makes us forget the rest of God. But in mercy God has given us the one day to be, as it were, a vacuum in our daily routine, in order that we might fill it with **heavenly** things, occupying ourselves as much as possible with the things of the kingdom of God, When we understand that, then we will walk in Christian liberty also in our observance of the Sabbath day. Then we will not need to ask, "May I do this on Sunday, may I do that?" For we will regard the day unto the **Lord.** And filling that day with heavenly things, there will be no time left to ignore the work of Christ and to fill our earthly desires. Then there will not be **time** to forsake the fellowship of the saints and the house of God. For we will be too busy receiving the blessings of the Sabbath!

WATCH OUT

by John Faber

Young people are constantly told to beware of the wiles of the devil who goes about like a roaring lion. Well, at first glance one would retort, of course we would be afraid of a lion that is roaring. I think, though, that the word, roaring, is but an adjective that belongs to that certain animal of the wild. He roars to show his rule over other animals. He thinks that by his roar he will cause all other animals to keep their distance, so that he has the field to himself. I think that that adjective sets him apart from all other animals - he is the only one that roars.

But when you see his actions when he is stalking its prey, you will find that he is as quiet as a mouse. He will be slinking along keeping his body close to the ground, keeping a low profile, to remain undetected by his prey.

Scripture tells us to beware of the wiles of the devil. Wiles are tricky, deceiving properties of a lion's character. I have noticed that one of those wiles is to use words with a double meaning. He will use an adjective and twist it to mean a noun. He is doing that right now, under our very noses. In newspapers, magazines and t.v. ads he constantly uses a noun adapted from an adjective and has completely turned the original meaning from good to bad. He has succeeded so cleverly that now it is quite impossible for me to use it in its original meaning. Have you guessed it? It is gay. Webster says that that word means, joyful, glad, merry. That word tricky Satan uses to soften the impact of the real meaning also found in the dictionary, meaning licentious.

A September issue of Newsweek had a cover story of those licentious people. They are a class of people who are bound together by one of Satan's strong chains. The Newsweek told of a presidential candidate who had an official gala with 600 men and women who were proud to call themselves gays or lesbians. That candidate was Gov. Clinton. That dinner raised 100,000 dollars for his campaign. In his emotional speech he said, "I have a vision, and you are a part in it."

He is the first candidate to openly seek gay voters. One of his promises, if elected, is to lift the ban against gays in the military, and sign gay rights legislation.

I cannot help but shudder at the thought of the future of America if this trend continues. Gay policemen? Gay judges? Gay ministers of the gospel? Gay Elders and Deacons in the consistory room?

All those horrible pictures are already on public display. The results of abnormal behavior are firmly entrenched in society. The disease, AIDS, permeates society. Again we can see the wiles of the devil in the very name. It sounds quite all right, AIDS can be helpers and so Satan has led us to use that acronym instead of the name. That dread disease has already become the agonizing death of countless thousandS of the world's citizens. They are dying like flies. They are lying in the gutters of our cities. I can imagine Satan taking pictures of those human wrecks and showing them to his cohorts and diabolically laughing in their cups of feasting.

The Apostle Paul knew of such people. In his Epistle to the Romans he explains how some got that way. He said that because they began to worship birds and animals, changing the glory of God down to the level of created beings, that gave them over to lasciviousness through the lust of their hearts so that they dishonored their own bodies between themselves.

So God, in His cause-and-effect punishment gave them up to vile affections. Paul puts it very bluntly: women did change their natural use into that which is against nature; and the men burned in their lust for one another worked that which is unseemly. Then that awful statement that God gave them over to a reprobate mind!

That giving-them-over resulted in a host of sins listed in verses 29, 30, 31 of that first chapter in his letter to the Romans.

In the last verse of that letter he describes that activity quite common in our day. It speaks of people who know the judgment of God upon such wickedness but also do the same; and even have pleasure in them that do them. In this time of new inventions and the development of them we see advertisements of the sale of VCRs which are movies of people engaged in those vile practices.

So, Young People, heed the injunction to beware the wiles of the devil. If you should be invited to party where you are going to watch such movies of the sin titillating VCRs. Need I multiply the number of temptations to which you will be subjected?

Let me sum it up with the injunction that the holy inspired Paul wrote to his beloved Ephesian Christians, "Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to withstand the wiles of the devil."

CHURCH NEWS

by Lora Ellerbroek

FAITH (Michigan)

Mr. and Mrs. Craig Ondersma were blessed with the birth of Hannah Marie.

The membership papers of Corinne DeVries have been received from Randolph PRC.

At his request the membership papers of Robert Bos have been sent to Loveland PRC.

We rejoice with Dirk and Beth Westra in the birth of Hannah Joy.

The sacrament of baptism was administered August 30 to Gerrit Jon, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arlen Ter Avest; to Lucy Mae, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Doug Griffioen; and to Hannah Marie Ondersma.

HUDSONVILLE (Michigan)

The consistory received the papers of Mrs. Sandra Kay De Young as baptized member from Bauer CRC.

SOUTHWEST (Michigan)

The sacrament of baptism for Case Donald, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Harv Ver Beek took place July 12.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. John Van Baren and children have been sent to Faith PRC.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Rich Van Baren and children have been sent to Byron Center PRC.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Doug Boone and children have been sent to Faith PRC.

Congratulations to Mr. Ted Engelsma who celebrated his 82nd birthday July 5.

Miss Diane Van Dyke and Mr. Kenneth Van Putten were united in marriage June 12.

The sacrament of baptism was administered July 12 to Catherine Joy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Marty Vander Wal.

Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Henry Kamps in the birth of Rachel Joy. She was baptized on August 30.

Miss Sarah Hoving and Mr. Marlin Feenstra were united in marriage August 14.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Doug Wassink and children have been sent to Holland PRC.

Rev. and Mrs. Veldman celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on September 9.

EDGERTON (Minnesota)

Mrs. Dorothy Brands celebrated her 90th birthday May 10.

Sheri Leigh, John Alan, Joey Arthur, and Billy Michael, the children of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bleyenberg were baptized on April 26.

We express sympathy to Allen Hendriks and family in the death of his wife, Marie.

Jodi Brummel and Jeff Baker were united in marriage August 21.

Allen Brummel and Crysta Boonestroo were united in marriage on August 14.

REDLANDS (California)

Mrs. Jeanette Feenstra celebrated her 90th birthday July 29.

Mrs. Kate Veldman celebrated her 89th birthday August 12.

Brenda Mantel and Tim Gaastra made public confession of their faith August 23.

SOUTHEAST (Michigan)

The sacrament of baptism was administered August 16 to Kraig Robert, infant son of Russ and Amy Zwak.

BETHEL (Illinois)

The papers of Howard and Valarie Lortz and children were received.

The sacrament of baptism was administered to Zachary Dean, the infant son of Dr. and Mrs. Phil Looiker on August 2.

LOVELAND (Colorado)

The sacrament of baptism was administered to Leah Beth, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Griess August 16.

The papers of Shon Griess have been transferred to Faith PRC, Jenison.

Mrs. Louise Griess celebrated her 85th birthday August 19.

HOLLAND (Michigan)

The sacrament of baptism was administered Lydia Dawn, infant daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Wilbur Bruinsma and Tyler Jonathon, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Deane Wassink.

The membership papers of Keaton and Kathy Stearns have been received from Grandville PRC.

PELLA (Iowa)

Chuck and Jan Pawloski rejoice in the birth of Luke Thomas.

We rejoice with Steve and Lynn De Boef in the birth of Grant Michael. The sacrament of baptism was administered to Luke Thomas Pawloski and to Grant Michael De Boef on August 23.

HOPE (Walker)

The sacrament of baptism was administered to Jonathan Robert, son of Bob and Mary Lou Vermeer.

Keith and Sara Noorman were blessed with the birth of Kyle James August 20.

Mr. and Mrs. Randy Feenstra were blessed with the birth of a son.

The membership of Harland and Lenora Hoekstra and son were received from Hull PRC.

Miss Karen Hanko transferred her papers to South Holland PRC.

LACOMBE (Canada)

Rev. and Mrs. Mitch Dick were blessed with the birth of a son David Anthony August 9.