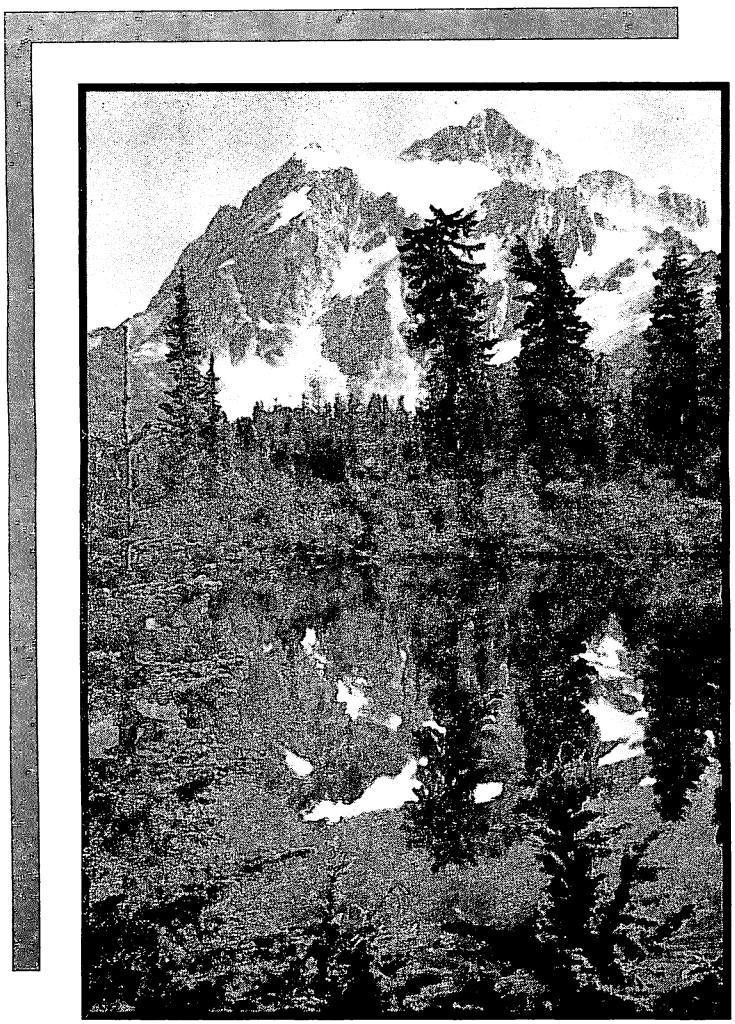
BEACON LIGHTS

The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains.
Isaiah 2:2

JULY/1995
Volume LIV
Number 7



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Cover photo: *Mt. Shuksan and Picture Lake near Lynden, Washington.*

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If any material of *Beacon Lights* is reprinted by another periodical, we will appreciate your giving the source and forwarding the printed periodical to the Editorial Office.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE FEDERATION OF PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

When in Doubt

by Michael Kortering

In doubt and temptation, I rest, Lord, in Thee

Few things have influenced society in the last 400 years more than science. Today our world revolves around scientific achievements and the resulting technology. This edition of the *Beacon Lights* was written on a digital computer (invented around 1940), printed on a Xerox copier (1960), and delivered by airplanes (1903) and automobiles (1769). Our knowledge of medicine has increased rapidly, so that few people die from pneumonia (penicillin, 1928) or tuberculosis (vaccines, 1940's and 50's). Our medical procedures ensure that fewer mothers and babies die in childbirth, and many people who are alive today would not be alive if we did not have modern medicine. Truly we live in the scientific age.

What exactly is science? Often when we think of science we think of men wearing long, white lab coats running around in a laboratory, watching white mice, hacking up dead cats, or peering through a telescope. Undoubtedly these are some of the things which scientists do, but let me posit this definition of science: Science is the observing of the natural world through one or more of the five senses, making hypotheses based on these observations, and testing these hypotheses. Let's clarify this definition with an example.

Dr. Krazer is an eminent astronomer who, observing the moon one night, decides to refute the common belief that the moon is made from green cheese. By looking at the moon through his telescope, Dr. Krazer becomes convinced that the moon is, indeed, not made of green cheese, but of silly putty. After forming this hypothesis, Dr. Krazer conducts some experiments to solidify his conclusion. He then publishes his finding in a scientific journal, and other scientists rush to see if this could possibly be true. This methodology did not always exist; we never read of people using this method in any ancient writings. How did the scientific method originate?

The scientific method as we know it today was strongly influenced by a French philosopher named Rene Descartes. One day in the fall of 1619, while on duty in the army of Prince Maurice of Nassau, he happened to be sitting in a small room in Germany, thinking about knowledge. It was here that he decided that all of his present knowledge was replete with error and superstition. To eradicate himself of this error, he decided to doubt everything, including his own existence, and start with only things he knew for certain. From this doubt came the famous expression, *dubito ergo cogito, cogito ergo sum* (I doubt, therefore I think; I think, therefore I am). With this basis be began to reconstruct his basis of knowledge, publishing his findings in *Discourse on the Method for Rightly Conducting One's Reason and for Seeking Truth in the Sciences*, commonly called *Discourse on Method.* The vestiges of this doubt can be seen in today's science. Dr. Krazer doubted the popular belief that the moon is made from green cheese. The scientific community doubted Dr. Krazer, and conducted experiments to see if he were correct. Science necessitates that people have inquisitive, but also doubting, minds.

At this point you may question the relevance of what we have talked about to Christianity, but I think that there is a connection. In fact, it is my personal belief that few things (if any) have effected a stronger impact on Christianity in the past few centuries than the scientific method. Rene Descartes published his *Discourse de la methode* in 1637. One hundred eleven years later, David Hume published a treatise entitled *Concerning Human Understanding* in which he stated that any reasonable man using the scientific method would doubt the veracity of miracles. One hundred eleven years later, in 1859, Charles Darwin published *Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection,* in which he questioned particular creation (i.e., that God created every individual species), sowing the seminal seeds for the modern conception of evolution. About one hundred years later in Germany, critics examining the Bible with the scientific method doubted if the people who had traditionally been credited with authorship were actually the authentic authors. Today, I think that the entire movement can be epitomized by the bumper stickers and slogans which encourage us to "Question Authority."

I am not saying that doubt originates with science; it certainly does not. The Bible, in both the Old and New Testaments, contains many instances of doubt, the most conspicuous being that of the Jews doubting that Jesus was the Son of God. Nor am I saying that science is evil. We are the inheritors of many wonderful benefits of science, and I have a profound respect for science. If you recall our original definition of science, however, you will see that science deals with this physical world as perceived by our senses. Science can not transcend the world as we know it, giving science limitations, weaknesses, and downfalls. We must never let science separate us from the knowledge of God, as He revealed Himself in His Work, or from the love of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

From The Editor

A few months ago Pete Faber commented that if the *Beacon Lights* had an office, it would have to have a revolving door to accommodate the high turnover of personnel. After three years of dedication to the *Beacon Lights*, Pete himself has decided to resign. The *Beacon Lights* went through some major changes during those three years, and the number of subscriptions increased fifty percent, from 800 to 1200. Brian Kuiper, the treasurer of the *Beacon Lights* for the past five years and one of the *Beacon Lights'* most senior members, has also resigned. The staff and I wish to thank Pete and Brian for their years of diligent work and pray that God may be with Pete, his wife Karen, and Brian.

Along with the job of editor, I inherited one of the few extant series of *Beacon Lights*. Apparently the most recent volumes are in the process of being bound, but I have the copies from the first edition, printed in January, 1941, to those of 1970. I have not had time, of course, to read all of them, but I did read many of them, and I would like to share with you some interesting moments from the history of the *Beacon Lights*.

The thing which struck me most was the subject material. Many of the subjects (and pertinent, I might add) which we now find in the *Beacon Lights* are topics which have been discussed for the last fifty years. Subjects like drama, dancing, and drinking appear time after time. What is more interesting, however, is that the level of "conservativeness" and "liberality" has not seemed to have changed much, nor have the arguments of either party.

The conventions have produced an immense impact on the *Beacon Lights*. Old articles are replete with arguments for and against a convention,

advertisements, topics, and convention speeches. What I found most interesting, however, were the pictures. Seeing conventioneers dressed in plaids with thick, heavy glasses, sporting crazy hairdos, could not help but make me wonder what the following generation will think of our styles.

I was also intrigued by the copiosity of military themes. During the 40's, 50's, and 60's, the *Beacon Lights* made an enormous effort to reach the G.I.'s in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, by dedicating columns, articles, and even entire editions to those serving our country.

I would like to think that I have learned something from reading these articles, and from life in general, something which will influence my attitude toward the *Beacon Lights*. First, although I do not wish to understate the importance of "traditional" topics, I would like to explore some fresh, new, and relevant ideas. Although history and old debates are certainly important, we must also look at the present and to the future. I think that this is reflected in a small way in my article about science. Secondly, I think that knowledge of the Bible is paramount, so to help both you and me, I have started a Bible quiz which I hope you will find both interesting and helpful. The difficulty of the quiz is supposed to increase as one gets to the later questions, and I would like to hear your input about the quiz in general, and the difficulty in particular. Thirdly, upon reading both old and new copies of the *Beacon Lights*, I noticed that some people write letters to criticize contributors. If you feel as though some writer needs to be corrected, we welcome your comments, but I ask that you do so in a polite, tactful way. I do not wish to receive letters lambasting a conscientious writer with vitriolic criticism, nor do I wish to make the *Beacon Lights* a forum for mud slinging.

Finally, I would like to encourage all of you to consider writing for the *Beacon Lights*. It is only through your help and comments that the *Beacon Lights* can be successful. If you do wish to send an article, we ask that you send us a copy of the computer disk as well as the printout (if you use a computer) so that our typesetter can eliminate redundant typing. My address is:

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or you can reach me via the Internet at IN%"KM220595@HOPE.CIT.HOPE.EDU" I look forward to an interesting time as editor, and pray that God may lead me in what is right and pleasing to Him.

Guest Article

What Is the Federation Board?

By Mike Feenstra

"If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies. Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Philippians 2:1-2.

"Be ye of one mind!" This passage, in a nutshell, explains the purpose of the Federation Board of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies. It clearly sets forth the goal of all the work done by the Federation

Board. We must understand and hold to the same knowledge of Christ as confessed by our Protestant Reformed Churches in the Three Forms of Unity, remembering that only in the way of unity are we to receive any comfort and blessings from Christ. Indeed, if we are engrafted into Christ, believing that we receive all things in Him our Head, then we must be determined to be of one mind. This attitude should characterize the members of the body of Christ already while they are young people. The Federation Board exists to help us young people achieve the goal of being of one mind in Jesus Christ.

The use of a young people's federation board is not a new idea that was spawned within our own churches. In fact, it was adopted from a similar format used in young people's federations of our mother church, the Christian Reformed Church, which in turn was copied from the young people's federations of the Gereformeerde Kerken. One such federation was the Nederlandse Jongelings Bond, or the Netherlands Young Men's Union. This national federation was comprised of several "Rings" or regions of about ten local societies called Jongelings Verenigingen, or Young Men's Societies. These societies were similar to our young people's societies in many ways except that they were only for young men that were 16 and older. Each society met weekly except when they had monthly regional meetings. In addition to these meetings there was also a national meeting of all the societies. My grandad, who was a member of a Young Men's Society in Zuidlaren, remembers one such meeting in 1935 at Middleburg where there were about 5,000 in attendance!

Apart from the large membership which can be attributed to the sheer size of the Gereformeerde Kerken, this federation of societies was determined to develop the faith and doctrine of its members. My grandad remembers that each member without exception was required on occasion to prepare a written introduction on a particular biblical text, and to be able to answer questions on the topic. That commitment to learning the truths of Scripture in a united way was the purpose of this strong federation. The federation intended to bond the societies with a view to being of one mind, of one faith in Jesus Christ.

In 1940, when our young people were looking for a way to federate, they patterned the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies after the Nederlandse Jongelings Bond of the Gereformeerde Kerken. Before 1940 our young people had nothing in the way of united activities. They wanted to express themselves as Protestant Reformed Young People in a united way, primarily by a publication. (Rev. Herman Hoeksema was instrumental in forming the Federation Board and the *Beacon Lights* since he was the editor of the Christian Reformed Church Young Men's Society's youth publication when he was a young man.) To accomplish this goal they set up an Executive Board of the Federation similar to the Nationaal Bestuur (National Board) of the Nederlandse Jongelings Bond of the Gereformeerde Kerken. The Board was formed to govern the activities of the *Beacon Lights*, and to fulfill the purpose of the Federation.

You can find this purpose in the Constitution of the Federation. If you can't find a copy, don't worry because the Federation Board is having it reprinted so that all members of the Federation can have a copy.

You will find in the Constitution that Article 3 states the threefold purpose of the Federation. The first statement is "to enable all Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies to work in close unity." As Protestant Reformed Young People's societies that confess the same truth about Christ, this statement should come as no surprise because if we believe the same Christ then it follows that we will want to associate with one another. In Psalm 119:63 David reflects this thought when he writes. "I am a companion of all them that fear Thee, and of them that keep Thy precepts." We can do this by being an active member of the Federation. You may ask, "How do I become an active member?" The answer is that you support the activities of the Federation by attending the conventions, retreats, singspirations, and meetings with the attitude that you desire to grow in the truth of Christ through your contacts with fellow believers. Also you can make sure that your local society is fulfilling all of its requirements to the Federation Board by paying your dues and by helping out in fund-raisers.

You can really become active by sacrificing your time by becoming a member of the Federation Board. The Federation Board needs responsible young men and women who are dedicated to the purpose of the Federation because the duties of the officers require much time. There are mass meetings, singspirations, fund-raisers, and activities that need to be planned. It's often so easy for us to think that these events just fall into place. The truth is that if the work isn't done, there will be no conventions, retreats, or other activities. This impresses on us the importance of having a board that has the responsibility to make sure that these events run smoothly. Are you interested in the

spiritual welfare of your fellow Christian young people? Are you willing to help maintain the unity of our Young People's Societies in the truth of Jesus Christ? Then I encourage you to help the Federation Board either by offering to put your name on nomination for office or by volunteering to help the Board whenever the need arises. The Board can do nothing without the support of the members of the Federation. Remember, we are a united body. If some of the members don't pull their weight, then the other members will suffer because of it. Members of the body of Christ that are in Young People's Society will promote each other's advantage if they are serious about preserving the Federation in the unity of the truth in Jesus Christ.

The preservation and witness of the truth is the reason for the Federation's third statement of purpose. It reads: "To give united expression to our specific Protestant Reformed character." This means that the Federation must strive to witness about the truth of sovereign grace in Jesus Christ as preached and confessed in the Protestant Reformed Churches. The only way to do this effectively is in unity of confession. If there are strifes and divisions in the body then unbelievers will become disillusioned with our witness. We can see this in I Corinthians 6:6 where the Apostle exhorts the church to strive for unity because he notices that, ". . .brother goeth to law with brother, and that before unbelievers."

However, Paul charges us that although we live in unity, we must not pursue unity for unity's sake. We must have unity in the truth. God unites His church only through the way of the uncompromised confession of the truth. We can see this in I Corinthians 11:18-19 where we read: "For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." If you read further in the chapter you will find that the Apostle writes these verses as groundwork to remind them that the sacrament of Holy Communion can only be administered in a united congregation. There could not be any heresies present because then they would be divided, and not of one mind. True unity is rooted in the truth of Jesus Christ!

We as young people should take heed to the words of this passage because we are the future church. Already in Young People's Society we should begin to unite ourselves to our fellow young people by the discussion and study of the truth. We should understand that our agreement in the faith is necessary for us to walk together (Amos 3:3). We should also realize that the Federation sets up activities to help the young people of all our societies unite in the faith.

The Federation also helps our young people grow and unite in the faith as well as witness to others the confession of the Protestant Reformed Churches by means of the *Beacon Lights* publication. We can see this objective in the Federation's second statement of purpose which is: "To guide these societies so they develop in faith and doctrine, particularly by means of a Federation publication." The growth and study of the truth is essential to unity. It is often true that once a church becomes lax in the study of the truths of the gospel, she eventually begins to allow heretics in the sheepfold. She loses the ability to discern a wolf in sheep's clothing. Finally, she is embroiled in controversy that cracks the unity of the church.

We should guard against this danger by sustaining the unity of our Young People's Societies. The zeal for unity among the members of the body of Christ should be taught and applied already in adolescence. If we learn to labor toward the unity of the church at a young age then normally we will also do it when we take our place in the church in full communion. This is true in many aspects of our Young People's Society life. We learn the importance of financial support by paying our dues to the Federation. We learn the importance of an orderly meeting when we conduct our society meetings. And finally, we learn that the communion of saints as manifested in the discussing of the truths of the Bible is of utmost importance if we are to maintain the unity of the Body of Christ.

In order to help build up the other members in our society as well as increase our personal knowledge of the truth we should be diligent in the study of Scripture. We should heed Paul's instruction to Timothy when he writes these words: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). One way we can do this is by reading the *Beacon Lights*, a magazine founded on the Word of God. The *Beacon Lights*, remember, was the main reason the Federation was founded. The Federation desired a means by which it could build the faith of its members as well as express its confession to other young people outside of our churches. We should be thankful to God that He has preserved this publication and our Federation for over fifty years. May we continue this tradition, the Lord willing, for many years to come.

We can continue this tradition only if we trust in our Head, the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone gives us the strength and ability to labor towards the unity of our Young People's Societies. He is the Vine and we are the branches. Only when we receive the blessings and nourishment of the Vine do we receive life. Therefore, we must be thankful unto Him by being of one mind. For, when we are of one mind then we have true comfort and fellowship in the Spirit.

"How good and pleasant is the sight
when brethren make it their delight
to dwell in blest accord;
Such love is like anointing oil
that consecrates for holy toil
the servants of the Lord."
Psalter #370, stanza 1.

Mike is a member of Southwest Protestant Reformed Church.

Bible Quiz

1. Who helped to bury Jesus?
   a.) Mary, the mother of Christ
   b.) Joseph of Arimathaea
   c.) Peter
   d.) Mary Magdalene
2. Which was a son of David?
   a.) Absalom
   b.) Jonathan
   c.) Nathan
   d.) Uriah
3. Moses' sister was:
   a.) Jochebed
   b.) Rahab
   c.) Ruth
   d.) Miriam
4. All of the following went with Paul on a missionary journey, except:
   a.) Barnabas
   b.) Peter
   c.) Timothy
   d.) Mark
5. Samson tied firebrands to what type of animal in order to destroy the Philistines' fields?
   a.) ass
   b.) wolf
   c.) dog
   d.) fox
6. What relation was Jesus to Elizabeth?
   a.) nephew
   b.) first cousin
   c.) second cousin
   d.) first cousin once removed
7. How many cities of refuge were there?
   a.) 6
   b.) 7
   c.) 42
   d.) 48
8. Which prophet saw a vision of a valley containing dry bones which came to life?
   a.) Ezekiel
   b.) Amos
   c.) Jeremiah
   d.) Isaiah
9. If a woman were accused of adultery, there were no witnesses, and she denied the accusation, her guilt/innocence would be determined by:
   a.) whether or not her feet blistered when she walked over hot coals
   b.) whether or not she became sick when she drank contaminated water
   c.) a counsel appointed by the high priest
   d.) the use of Urim and Thummin
10. A *leviathan* is:
    a.) a garment worn by a priest
    b.) a table on which bread was placed
    c.) the name for the inner court of the temple
    d.) a sea monster

Answers on page 18.

Watching Daily At My Gates

by Marilyn Ophoff

July 1

Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

As we read in this beautiful passage, there is a time for every thing. From "a time to be born, and a time to die," to "a time of war, and a time of peace," God has made every thing beautiful in his time. Time cannot be changed, for we know that whatever God does, will endure forever, for nothing can be *added* to it, or *taken* from it. No man knows or can see what God has planned from the beginning to the end of time. So man must find satisfaction in his work, and enjoy the fruits of his labors. He must be happy in his life, for this is a gift from God.

July 2

Read Romans 8:5-6

The mind is a wonderful thing. It is the faculty that controls your whole being in all you do and say. From infancy on, it grows as it is stimulated. The mind can become very sharp and powerful if stimulated, or it can be dull and wasted if it is left stagnant. As Christians we are called to use our minds to their fullest. We must stimulate them constantly in the right way, always seeking to do better. We must not fill our minds with the trash of this world, but use our minds to study and learn the Word. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

July 3

Read Luke 11:34-36

"The light of the body is the eye." The saying "seeing is believing" is so true. To believe something, we sometimes have to see it with our own eyes. But as children of God we have to use our eyes in the right way. We must choose what we are going to look at, for what we see with our eyes affects our whole body. If we use our eyes only to the glory of God, that affects our whole body, and our body is full of light. But if we choose to use our eyes to see the pleasures of this world, our body is full of darkness. Focus your eyes only on that which glorifies God, for then "the light which is in thee be not darkness."

July 4

Read Matthew 11:15

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." What would your life be like if you could not hear? We wouldn't be able to hear the sound of a baby's cry, or the birds singing, or the laughter of children playing. We wouldn't hear the sound of the church organ, or the congregation singing praises. And we wouldn't be able to hear the minister preaching. We would miss so much, wouldn't we? Think about the things you hear today. Are you listening to the right things? God gave us ears to hear. Let us use this gift of hearing to His glory.

July 5

Read Proverbs 10:19-21

There are many passages in the Bible that refer to how we use our mouths. Almost all of these passages show the contrast between speaking sincerely or uttering lies. We all like to tell stories; and we all like to tell the latest joke we've heard. And sometimes we can't help ourselves from telling a tale told to us in confidence. And it doesn't stop there. Insignificant tidbits soon turn into major juicy stories as they flow from mouth to mouth. Oh, how hurtful our words can be. We have been given the gift of speech by our Lord, and we must use this gift wisely. We must use this gift to speak highly of one another, to instruct our young, to sing praises to His Name. If we cannot use our speech as a blessing, it is better to keep silent.

July 6

Read Proverbs 6:6-11; Proverbs 26:13-16

Excuses, excuses, excuses, that is what the slothful man does best. All he wants to do is sleep, so he'll make any excuse not to have to labor with his hands. While others are working hard all summer gathering food for the winter, the lazy man hides his hand in his bosom wanting only to sleep. God does not deal lightly with the slothful man. He sends poverty to those who will not use their hands to work. We must use our hands to be diligent in the work God has been gracious to provide for us, for then He will bless us abundantly.

July 7

Read Proverbs 4:26-27

Your feet are an important part of your body. Without them you wouldn't get very far, for you wouldn't be able to walk. They are the foundation of your body. Your feet carry you wherever you go. Many times when the Bible makes a reference to the word "feet," it refers to walking on a pathway. You must choose which pathway your feet are going to follow—a crooked pathway or a straight pathway. As a Christian, your feet must always walk a straight pathway. They must never stray and lead you into temptation and evil. Don't *follow* your feet, but let your feet *lead* you down a straight pathway.

July 8

Read I Corinthians 12:12-27

This past week we have discussed the members of our bodies, the mind, the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the hands, and the feet. I Corinthians 12 speaks of the whole body. It tells how God placed each member in the body, as it pleased Him to do. The eye can only see; it cannot hear or speak. The ear cannot see or speak. The tongue cannot see or hear. You don't walk on your hands, neither do you embrace with your feet. They all have their own distinct function, yet you need every one of them to be a whole body. The body would not be complete except *all* the members are there. There should be no separation in the body, but each part should have the same care for the other part. So that when one part suffers, they all suffer together. Just so it is with the church. We are all members of the same church, yet when one of the members suffers, we all share in that suffering. And if one member is honored, then we all rejoice with that member. And so it is, there are *many parts*, yet there is only *one body.*

July 9

Read Jeremiah 2:32

We all have a tendency to be forgetful at times. But a bride would not forget to don her wedding gown and veil before she goes down the aisle to marry her beloved. Nor would a man put on his Sunday suit and forget to put his tie and best shoes on. Yet there are times when all is going well, and we are so busy day and night with many activities that we forget our Lord. We forget that He has been with us in every activity we have done and in all we have said. And we forget that it is He Who has given us all our possessions and our good health and all the beauty we see every day in the creation He made. We sometimes take all this for granted without giving thought to our Lord Who made all this possible for us, His children. Do you remember *your* Lord every day?

July 10

Read Jeremiah 9:23-24

It is good to have a *goodly* mind, full of wisdom and knowledge. But it is better to have a *godly* mind that is full of the wisdom and knowledge of giving God the glory for all He has done and given us. We must not glory in our own wisdom and knowledge, but we must always glory in understanding and knowing our Lord, Who exercises loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. This our Lord delights in.

July 11

Read Ecclesiastes 5:4-5

Have you ever made a promise to someone only to find that you cannot honor that promise? Or perhaps you have to postpone your promise to meet your convenience? When we make a vow or promise unto God, we must never put off or postpone paying that vow. It is better not to make a promise we cannot fulfill than to make a vow we cannot pay. That includes our vows of marriage, the vow parents make at baptism, the monetary vow we make to the Lord to give back to Him what He has given us, etc. Promises (vows) are *not* made to be broken.

July 12

Read Ecclesiastes 5:13-17

When a man passes from this earth, one of the first questions asked is, "How much money did he leave?" That is the question of a worldly person. Yet when we buy something a little extravagant or go on an expensive trip to warmer climates, we jokingly say, "You can't take it with you" to those who raise their eyebrows questioningly. "But what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind?" We toil very hard for money. It's what we use our money for that makes the difference between the righteous and the wicked. If our goal is to make money to buy all the good things in life, or to hoard away for the purpose of seeing how much wealth we can accumulate, then we have "laboured for the wind." But if we work hard to pay back to the Lord that which we owe Him first, and then use the balance to pay our bills on time, then we are working for the Lord. And working for the Lord and not for ourselves must be our goal as Christians.

July 13

Read Ecclesiastes 5:13-17

Yesterday we discussed labor and wealth in the monetary sense. Today we will take that same passage in Scripture and discuss a different kind of labor and wealth. The unrighteous labor solely to do the pleasures of this world. They speak of the lusts of this earth with wicked mouths and hearts. They might be considered wealthy by all the money they have in their bank account. But the righteous labor for the Lord. They work hard in the Church and Christian schools. They give of their time to help those in need. They pray with, counsel, and comfort the sick, the lonely, and the sorrowful. They witness of God's goodness and blessings. This is the labor of a godly man. He may not be rich in money, but his riches are in his labors for his fellow saints. Some of the *poorest* saints leave behind the *greatest* wealth.

July 14

Read Ecclesiastes 5:18-20

To work is to labor. If you are not happy in your work, and cannot see the good of your work you will not find satisfaction in your labor. When God enables you to work under the sun all the days of your life you must find enjoyment in that labor. You must accept your lot in life and be happy in your work, because this is a gift from God. For it is God who makes it possible for a man to have a daily job where he can fulfill his obligation to his own and his family's needs. You must find contentment in your work

and rejoice in your labor, for then God will give you joy and gladness in your heart.

July 15

Read Ecclesiastes 7:1a

"A good name is better than precious ointment." A good name? Does that mean that some people have *better* names than others? It is true that sometimes people are called a bad name when they do something incorrect or foolhardy. But let's take your last name, for instance. You have the same last name as your father and mother, your siblings, your paternal grandparents, etc. It is a name that has been carried on for many generations. It is a name to be proud of. And if you are a member of a family who have lived their lives walking in the way of the Lord, your name is revered by your fellow saints. It only takes one member of that family to sully the name for an entire family. Therefore if one member of that family chooses to walk in an ungodly way, it is a reflection on that whole family's reputation and name. Even if this brother repents and is forgiven of his sin, it is hard to forget a dark mark on a family's name. Always live your life in a godly fashion for "a good name is better than precious ointment."

July 16

Read Ecclesiastes 7:8-10

Patience is a virtue that is acquired as we mature. It is so easy to get angry at something that is said or done against us. Pride always gets in the way, for when our pride is wounded, we get angry. But the Lord tells us that a quick temper rests in the bosom of fools. When we feel we have been wronged, we must swallow our pride, and find out the reason for this wrong, for it might have resulted from a misunderstanding. Having angry hearts will bring you down; it will tear you apart until it overcomes you. We must strive for patience instead of anger.

July 17

Read Ecclesiastes 7:11-12

It is better to be wise than to be rich. Riches are a guard and wisdom is a guard. Wisdom also has many advantages over riches. A man can be rich but not have the wisdom to be prudent with his money. He will squander it away on foolish earthly things that when he dies will do him no good. Whereas a wise man knows that money can't buy him happiness here on earth. A wise man knows that living a godly life on earth is more important than accumulating riches. If you are sick, your money can buy the best medical care there is, but your money cannot keep you from dying an earthly death. But if you are wise in the knowledge of Christ, you know that if you die an earthly death, you will still live an eternal life.

July 18

Read Ecclesiastes 7:13-14

Sometimes we tend to think we know what lies ahead of us because of the way we have "planned ahead." We set certain goals for ourselves and expect them all to fall into place. But as Christians we know that no matter what our intentions are for our future, only God knows and directs these things. We cannot change God's plan. Sometimes our best "plans" are put aside because God wants something else for us. We might lose our job and our earthly security, or we might fall ill by God's hand when we ourselves think we are so strong. We cannot fathom what God has in store for us, because He has laid out our whole life before the world began. We can't change this plan, no matter how much we dislike it, or how much we try to change it. God is unchanging. We must joy in prosperity *and* in adversity.

July 19

Read Ecclesiastes 11:1 & 2

Take two sunflower seeds and plant one in the bright sun and the other in the shade. Water them both daily. After a week or so, the seed planted in the sun will spring up out of the dirt a strong, healthy plant. After a couple of weeks, the seed planted in the shade will pop out of the dirt, but will not be or look like the strong, healthy plant that is flourishing in the sunshine. Just as so, sometimes the seed of truth lies dormant for many years, not growing strong. The Christian teaching of a child may lie in the heart of someone, not bearing fruit for many years, until something is said or done to warm the heart of that person so that they might grow strong and healthy spiritually. So often the seed of truth lies dormant in the heart of man because of sin and unbelief, but then the heart is opened once again to the truth and the seeds planted years before, still live, and they break through the ground and grow strong.

July 20

Read Ecclesiastes 11:9 & 10

It is wonderful to be young, having goals, wanting to do and see things. You must strive to reach these goals, and do the things you want to do. But you have to remember that you must account to God for everything you do and say. Always think your goals through before you do them as to whether you will be glorifying your Lord in doing them. For in your youth, you have your whole life to live yet if the Lord wills, so don't do anything foolish that might change how you live the rest of your life.

July 21

Read Ecclesiastes 12:9 - 12

A minister searches the Scriptures to find wisdom in the words he preaches. He searches for the truth. He is wise in the Word of the Lord. A child who studies many books on many subjects can become wise to what others teach, but he is learning the opinions of others. Studying the opinions of others can be exhausting because they go on forever, for there is no end to the opinions and beliefs of others. But in studying the Words of Scripture, you are studying the truth, not opinions. *This* is true wisdom.

July 22

Read Ecclesiastes 12:13 & 14

In conclusion to the words found in Ecclesiastes, what really matters in living your life is that you fear God in all that you do and say. Your whole duty in life is to keep His commandments and always walk a *godly* walk. We might be able to hide our sins from others here on earth, but we can never hide them from our God. And He will judge you for every thing you have ever said and done, whether it be good or bad.

July 23

Read Psalm 150:1-6

There are so many ways we can praise (worship) our Lord, and the Psalms are filled with how we can praise Him and what to praise Him for. We must praise Him in the sanctuary; we must praise Him wherever we are. We must praise Him for His mighty acts and according to His excellent greatness. We must praise Him in music with singing and with the trumpet and psaltery and harp. And praise Him with stringed instruments and organs, and loud cymbals. No matter where we are, if we live and have breath, we must praise His Most Holy Name.

July 24

Read II Corinthians 5:4

Burdens weigh us down so much that we groan from the heaviness of them. Compare your burdens to a big rock. You certainly could not carry the entire rock at one time. Only by chipping away a portion of this rock every day could you carry it. God does not require you to carry the whole rock at one time, but gives you just a portion to carry for each day. Sometimes though, you might choose to add to your burden by trying to carry yesterday's rock over again, and by trying to add tomorrow's rock before you are required to carry it. We tend to needlessly assume burdens by refusing to forget yesterday's troubles and by foreseeing tomorrow's burdens before He has provided grace for them as He has promised to give us. We all have burdens to bear in this life, but "strengthened by His sustaining hand, we shall find His yoke easy and His burden light" (Psalm 55:22).

July 25

Read I Peter 5:1-4

Peter, an elder of the church, exhorts his fellow elders to feed the flock of God willingly, not grudgingly; and not for what they will get out of it monetarily, but because they seek to serve the Lord. So must all of those who are over others minister willingly, not being oppressive in their leadership, and never glorying in themselves as one put in a position of authority, but leading them by their own good example. For when the Lord comes, your reward will be great and you will "receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."

July 26

Read I Peter 5:5-6

Peter exhorts the younger men to follow and submit themselves to the leadership of those who are older and in authority. You must not try to oppose those in authority because of your pride, but do your work willingly and with a humble heart. Sometimes you don't want to do a job you are asked to do, for you think you are above it and are worried what others will think of you. But God has put those in authority over you and you must work willingly at any job that is asked of you. He opposes the proud of heart, but gives grace to the humble.

July 27

Read I Peter 5:7-9

Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Watch every step you take, for Satan is as a hungry lion, seeking to devour you. He watches you and strikes when he sees you stumble. You must not put yourself in a situation that will tempt you to fall, for Satan will be ready to snare you. Be steadfast in your walk, trusting the Lord to take care of your worries and cares, and to care for the burdens of all your brethren on this earth. For God is watching you also and He alone will keep you from falling prey to the devil, if you put all your trust in Him. "To Him be the glory and dominion for ever and ever."

July 28

Read Mark 6:32-44

The story of the five loaves and two fishes is one that every child loves to hear. How Christ could multiply only five loaves of bread and two fishes to feed about five thousand people is truly a miracle and hard for us to fathom. The lesson in this story is that when we give our all to our Saviour, His hand of blessings to us will multiply. We don't know what God has in store for us, or what He will have accomplished through us by putting us on this earth, but if we give our best every day to Him, His powerful hand will multiply our blessings endlessly. Let us strive to give Him our *all.*

July 29

Read John 14:2-4

"In my Father's house are many mansions . . . I go to prepare a place for you." When you move from one house to another, you usually move to a place that is better than the one you came from. The Christian knows that when he dies, his soul will be taken up to glory to rest in a beautiful mansion God has prepared for him. We must never forget that our Lord has already prepared this place for us, and that this mansion is much better than our present earthly home. We must always be ready for He will come for us at His appointed time to take us up to His heavenly mansion.

July 30

Read Colossians 3:1-4

"Seek those things which are above." As children of God we are alive in Christ. We must not spend our time worrying about the mundane things here on earth, for when we die they will not matter. We must seek the treasures and joys of heaven, for our real life is in heaven with our heavenly Father. Our life here on earth is but a moment, but our life in heaven is eternal. Constantly seek those things which are above, for soon you will be able to experience the unbounded joys and rich treasures in heaven with our Lord.

July 31

Read II King 10:16

"Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord." These words were spoken by Jehu who, through slaying the prophets of Baal, showed much enthusiasm for God's cause. Yet in his own relationship to God he "departed not . . . from the sins of Jeroboam . . . who made Israel to sin." Jehu certainly had zeal, but it was without dedication. Such zeal may achieve some good, but it falls short, and isn't as effective as it should be. And then there are those who are totally dedicated to the truth, but yet are not full of zeal and enthusiasm, so that it is hard to receive this truth. Let us be full of zeal and earnest in our enthusiasm when we witness the truth always. For "it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing" (Galatians 4:18a).

Our Certain Victory

by Rev. John A. Heys

When the believer reads the Word of God, it is at the same time both crystal clear but so deep that he can never see to the bottom. The book of Daniel is one example. The smallest children can understand and love the story of Daniel and his three friends. But when it comes to the dream, visions, and prophesy, we begin to experience the great depth of the Word of God. We all have in our minds a picture of the image which was made of gold, silver, brass, iron and clay. We can also picture a stone being somehow cut without hands and smashing the image into powder. God gives us this earthly picture to teach us heavenly reality. What is that heavenly reality? In his article, Rev. Heys directs our attention to the reality of our certain victory.

Through the prophet Daniel, Young People, our God presents to us the same comforting truth which He gives us through Paul in Romans 8:28, namely, "All things work together for good to them that love God."

However, what we read about man, in Daniel 2:31-33, where he speaks to Nebuchadnezzar, is this: "Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay."

But in verses 34 and 35 Daniel, in a different vision, presents the awesome, comforting truth concerning Christ's coming with a blessed victory for God's people. There we read: "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."

Take note then of the fact that we have here a vision of an image, but also a vision of a stone that smote that image. Here our God, through Daniel, presents to the believers an amazing and very important truth, by which we should note that God, through Daniel, tells us what is going to happen in this life to the ungodly enemies of God's church. Here also is the glorious victory which God presents to His elect.

Let us then, first of all, take hold of the truth that the reprobate world, to which we by nature belong, has become a far more physically stronger people than those of Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom, which is pictured here as being of gold. Consider also that today guns, which the world has, enable young children to kill men who are physically much stronger than these children are. Then too, by the telephone we can today contact people who are hundreds of miles away from us. We can by voice, through a radio or television set, speak unto as well as hear people who are thousands of miles away from us. Today it is even possible for us by an airplane to fly in one day to a place which we by train or automobile cannot reach for several days.

But, as we also read here in Daniel's book, the unbelievers are going to lose their glory and become brass, iron or clay. This means that a physical change is coming, and that some nations, by a physical change, will be strong, while other nations very weak. Sin is developing speedily today, and we already have wars and rumors of wars, which devastate people.

However, away from and separate from the world of unbelievers, the elect children of God here on this earth, are going to be brought with body and soul into a life of heavenly glory, through Christ Jesus our Savior. He is mentioned in verse 34, but also in verse 45. There we read: "Thou sawest that a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands." That stone, indeed, is Christ, and He is called a stone in the sense of being of almighty power, so that man cannot hurt or destroy Him as our Savior.

Christ is the stone that is cut into being without human hands doing so. He was born of the

virgin Mary, but He has no earthly father. He is the eternal Son of God, come into our flesh, so that He could and does represent us. And having no guilt in Himself, but coming into our flesh, He can suffer our punishment. He can be used by God to represent us, suffer our punishment and save us from the punishment which we deserve, but also from the sinful natures which we have.

There are, Young People, two comforting truths in this second chapter of Daniel's book. Through him our God brings us the awesome and comforting truth that there is a true church of God, which is steadily coming closer to its absolutely sure and complete salvation.

We also have here the comforting truth that all the enemies of God's church are going to be destroyed and cast into hell. Our God presents the kingdom of Satan, that is, the host of unbelievers, as an image. And that means that these unbelievers only seem to be a glorious kingdom. But an image never is a reality. It is what one imagines something to be. This generation of Satan's devilish kingdom certainly is physically real. But it, as unbelievers, imagines itself to have the beauty of gold. We do well—in spite of all that which men call glorious and honorable—to maintain that in God's eyes this kingdom of Satan is corrupt, devilish, and on the way to everlasting torment in hell.

Those who are born spiritually dead are images; while those chosen in Christ are a victorious stone through Christ, because of what and through what He does in them and for them. That truth which we find in verse 35 is so tremendously important and comforting. For they, in this passage, are called a stone, which through Christ Jesus, their head, become "a great mountain," and will soon fill the whole earth, from which those images have been removed, and cast into hell with its torment.

Very comfortingly we read in II Corinthians 4:15: "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God." And then also in I Corinthians 6:15: "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" And because Christ is "The Stone" we, who are united with Him, do by God's grace become that "great mountain" that "filled the whole earth."

We surely, by God's grace, have a certain victory. All is well! All will work together for our good, because it will all make us to be spiritually like Christ, and have resurrected bodies like His. It may seem at times as though all is against us, and in fact Satan and the world are always against us. But the comforting truth is that God causes all things to work together for our good.

Go back, Young People, to what is called "The Mother Promise," which we find in Genesis 3:15 There, the day that man fell into sin, manifesting his hatred of God, our God said to Satan: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." Here is the first and wonderful truth of God, that He will save every one of His elect from Satan and all his sinful seed. And this becomes very plain in what we read in Psalm 139:14. There through David comes that beautiful manifestation of God's grace. There we read: " I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well."

We must never fight against that truth, but must sing it more often and enthusiastically than we do. All of our salvation, including our desire for it, comes from God in His grace. We owe every breath of life and heart beat to God. But we also owe Him thanks for every bit of our salvation, including that desire for it, and knowledge of it.

Our God Himself said to Satan, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman." He did not say, "I am going to ask the sinners to change and love Me." God always commands; and He always enables every one of His elect to heed His commands. He did not send His Son in the hope that a group of people in the human race would want to be saved. He told Satan that HE would put enmity between His elect and Satan.

We have spiritual victory, because the almighty God promised it and realizes every bit of it, including the desire in the hearts of His elect. Victory for all the elect is so very sure, because the almighty, unchangeable God had eternally planned to realize it.

Being those whom He saves, we will most assuredly be completely saved from the spiritual death into which Satan got us. And we will be saved most assuredly, because God is the Almighty One. That basic truth of salvation is that work of God in our hearts. Even as He created Adam and Eve with a wonderful spiritual life, He also spiritually creates all the elect to an heavenly life of love towards Himself, and realizes it through His own Son. Salvation is the very, very certain victory that will save every elect child of God, and manifest that basic truth that He is God, and that we owe Him everlasting and joyful praise for the salvation which He has realized for us and in us.

Rev. Heys is a retired minister of the Protestant Reformed Churches. He is a member of Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church.

WHY WE TEACH

by Karen Hanko

> One important thing that I learned in school this year is how the church should be separate from unbelievers.

During World War II, the U.S. government put out a series of propaganda films called "Why We fight." Perhaps this article is a bit of propaganda for our Christian schools. And the "propaganda" is very effective as it comes from the pens of the students themselves (the junior high of South Holland P.R.C.S.).

> We must always have the watchmen of truth, love, wisdom, and necessity at the door of our mouth (from a chapel speech by one of our pastors, KH).

> You can't judge people by how they look or how popular they are. You should look at what people are like on the inside, because that's what God looks at.

But these students have also learned the driving force behind all our actions, as this student points out.

> We must treat fellow Christians with love and only with love. Everything we say and do must be in total love, as Christ loves us. We must follow His example.

The following students have learned some important classroom lessons about authority, attitudes, participation, responsibility and self-discipline. All of these are important for the whole of the Christian life. I quote:

> It's important to have a good attitude in class, otherwise nobody's going to like you, or you could get kicked out of class.

> One of the most important things that I learned this year was how to be a good participant in class.

> The teacher is supreme. I am under the teacher.

> I used to be one of the most irresponsible people I could think of. I'm not anymore.

> One of the most important lessons I learned this year is how to discipline myself in my school work.

Striking, is it not, that most of these students remember underlying principles of Christian scholarship, rather than specific academic concepts? Nevertheless, the mundane lessons are important too.

> I think when we took photography, I learned a lot. I would like to be an underwater photographer.

> One of the most important things I learned this year was how to figure out bills on a credit card. I learned this in math and I enjoyed it.

> I learned more about nouns, pronouns, verbs, and verbals. I really am starting to understand it. It's helping me in my speech today, and it will help my speech in the future.

Whether the lessons learned are mundane or sublime, the Lord graciously uses them to make stewards from sluggards, and saints from sinners. Perhaps, then, the most important principle we can teach our scholars is gratitude to God. Is that not the essence of the Christian life? To hear students express this gratitude makes all the headaches of teaching worth while.

> The most important thing I have learned this year is to appreciate the Christian education that we receive here.

Karen is a teacher in the South Holland Protestant Reformed Christian School.

Championship Basketball—Respect

by Connie Meyer

The whistle blows. Both sides are tense as the tip-off begins the game, a game that will decide which team will win the championship trophy.

Respect. It's a matter of life—or death.

Bang, bang . . . the ball bangs against the floor as the blue team dribbles it toward their hoop. The opposition is there, seemingly everywhere, but somehow . . . swish!

"Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long . . . "

The red team possessively takes the ball across the court. This will be no easy steal for the blue. It's up . . . up . . . and in the hands of the blue! Back across the court again.

"And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath . . . "

The blue has the ball under the net, but the red's defense is so intense, every member of the blue is needed to get it up. Finally there's one last bang against the backboard before the ball slips through the net.

" . . . but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."

Yes, it's a serious game. Respect is not just an abstract topic for study, rather, it involves the stuff that life is made of. God created us to worship and reverence Him, to respect Him as God. He also created us to respect one another, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another," I Peter 5:5. Respect must enter into *all* of our relationships, and to the degree that it does, that is to the degree that we truly experience life.

Let's go back to the court. Hear the beat of the ball as it bounces against the gym floor. Hear the squeak of athletic shoes as they run and stop with the blow of a whistle. Now zero in on those feet, shod with shoes that are fitted to the task, shoes that possess different parts, parts that contribute to that task. Look at the sole of one of those shoes. It's molded out of rubber material in a configuration that will yield maximum traction. The sides and top are sewn out of sturdy yet flexible leather to allow for maximum movement and support.

Respect has different parts to it too. What is the soul of the matter? " . . . Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. Respect and reverence for God is first. This is the first table of the law. Every other aspect of respect supports this one.

It's halftime. The blue players huddle together, discussing a strategy they might use in the next half. Enter—the coach. He tells them the strategy they will use in the next half. They return to the court, unified in their plan to win.

Now let's look at the second table of the law, and the very first thing taught us is "Honor thy father and thy mother." Paul further expounds on this, " . . . which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth," Ephesians 6:2, 3. With what kind of an attitude do we treat our parents, or anyone in authority? Do we honor them? See how the promise connected to this commandment makes it indeed a matter of life or death.

The buzzer sounds. Time-out. There's only two minutes left on the clock, and so far the blue team has only been able to implement part of the strategy the coach called for. He does not despair or look down upon them, but has confidence in his team. The coach explains the plan one more time.

Children have a great responsibility, but parents aren't off the hook either. Paul immediately continues in verse 4, "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath . . ." There is a kind of respect that parents must have for their children, it is an attitude of nurturing and admonition of the Lord. It's not tyranny, it's not an "I can do no wrong" attitude. Rather, we must confess that we are children of God together. (Young People take note, you will be parents soon enough yourselves!)

The remaining two minutes go by quickly and smoothly—for the blue. They work together as a team, with one purpose and one plan. No one member despises another, but each one acknowledges the others' strengths and works to capitalize on them.

Finally, there is a respect or esteem that all of us must have for anyone else. Paul makes this clear in Philippians 2:3, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves." Just as a team is not likely to be successful whose members are out for themselves, neither will we be blessed if we in pride seek our own good. What is our attitude towards our brothers and sisters, our peers, our girlfriends or boyfriends? Is it one of esteem? It takes humility to have this respect for others. It takes grace.

The buzzer sounds one last time. The blue team has won!

But with respect comes life, "That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth." Jesus said, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." Matthew 5:5. Be meek. Be humble. Be respectful. The trophy is priceless!

Connie is a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Gem of the Month

Our Country

We live in a country whose beauty is great;
The mountains, lakes, rivers, with grandeur abound;
The flowers, trees, grasses, which God did create,
And the deserts and fields us with splendor surround.

We are thankful that we who inhabit this land
May have freedom to worship, to speak, and to write,
And we pray that our lives as examples may stand
For our neighbors; reflecting in our lives, Christ's light.

So lift up a prayer that our rulers may be
Used by our God, in His infinite love,
To rule us in wisdom, so to fit you and me
For the time we're transferred to the kingdom above.

Thelma Westra

Praying for Politicians And Those in Authority

by Gene Kamps

Are politicians and those in authority over us, worthy of our prayers? Look at the way they run the country, wasting the tax money we send in, with their stand on abortion, their calling homosexuality just a life style; the list goes on. We should not reason because of their wrongful doings, therefore, that we do not have to pray for them. We, too, selfishly waste on ourselves much of that which is given to us on things of this world, instead of using it for the kingdom of God. So we must give thanks to God through prayer for all He has given us—even the politicians God has placed over us.

Praying for our politicians is a command given to us as people of God. The Belgic Confession, Article 36, teaches that we are to subject ourselves to the authorities, pay tribute, show honor and respect, and obey them in all things which are not contrary to the Word of God. We must humbly entreat for them in our prayers that God may rule and guide them in all their ways, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. This is based on the Word of God which is found in I Timothy 2:1-4, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

Why are we instructed to pray for the politicians? Because God has placed them in rule and authority over us. As we read in Romans 13:1, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." We pray for them because God governs (controls) all things even the hearts of kings (politicians). Proverbs 21:1, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turneth it withersoever He will." So, every action and decision that our politicians make, is al in the control of God's hand. He uses it to accomplish His eternal good pleasure and to the glory of His Name. Even if what the politicians put in order, causes us harm or hurt, we must not take the attitude of rebellion or of revolting. Instead we should lead a quiet life in all godliness and honesty, so that the name of the church will be honorable among those who are outside of the church. We are taught to bless those that curse us, and pray for those that despitefully use us. In this we stand in the assurance that our Heavenly Father will turn all evil from us or turn it to our profit.

We give thanks through prayer for the salvation that God has given unto us through our Lord Jesus Christ. We also must see that the Lord saves His people from all classes of men.

Gene is a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Answers to the Bible Quiz on page 8:
1. b, 2. a, 3. d, 4. b, 5. d, 6. a, 7. b, 8. a, 9. b, 10. d

"LITTLE LIGHTS"

. . . LET IT SHINE!

"An Apple a Day"
Part I

by Connie Meyer

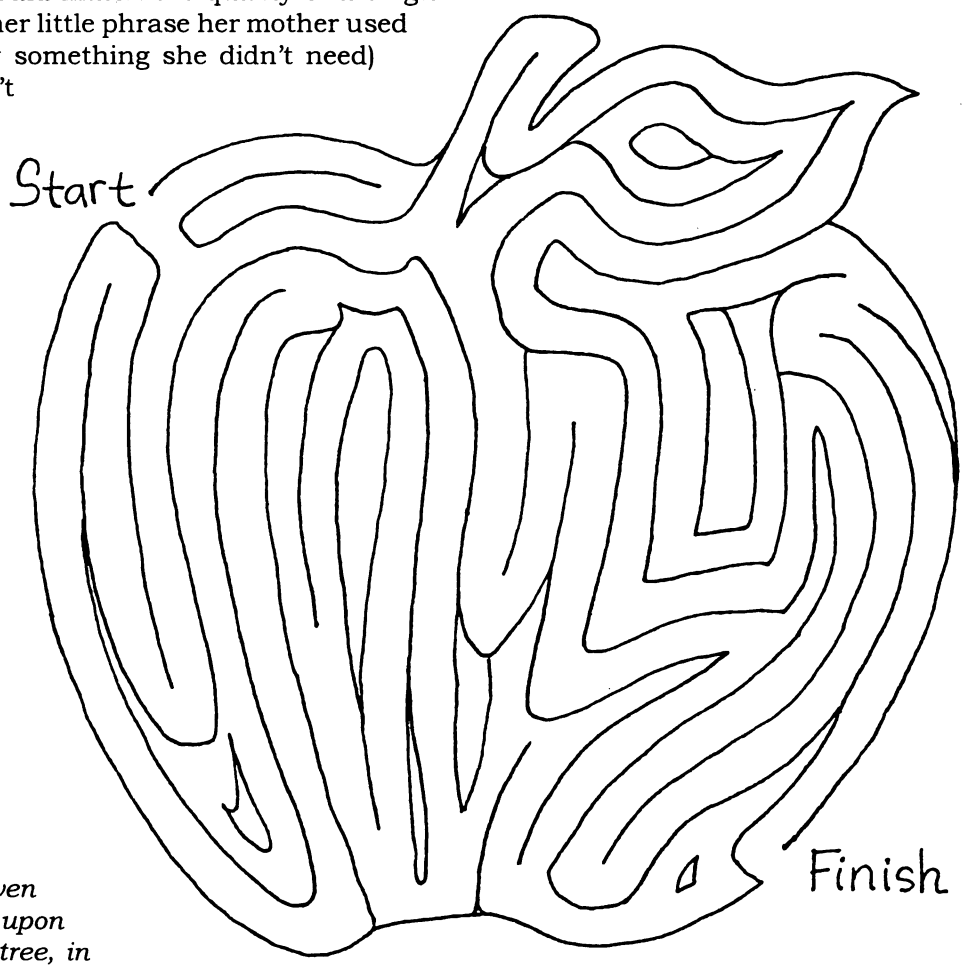
"Hum—hum-hum—an apple a day keeps the doctor away." Julie sang the familiar phrase as she skipped into the kitchen and selected an apple from a bowl. She began munching on it as she went back outdoors, and in very little time had nothing left but the core in her hand.

It was a warm, lazy afternoon and before Julie made the effort to throw the remains of her apple away, she held the core up by its stem and studied it. She saw the peeling (only a little was left), the flesh (turning brown already from exposure to the air), the seeds, and the stem.

She thought about the taste and texture of this apple she had eaten and concluded that no chef, no matter how skilled he or she might be at cooking, could ever produce any food that could match the quality of a single apple. Then Julie remembered another little phrase her mother used (usually when Julie wanted to buy something she didn't need) that went like this, "Money doesn't grow on trees." But here she held something in her hand that *did* grow on trees, abundantly so, and if one was starving, the apple would be worth more than the money. Truly an amazing fruit—the apple!

But Julie could not contemplate these things without soon thinking of Who created the apple and why He created it. God is so gracious, so loving, He made even these delicious treats for His creatures to enjoy.

Finally Julie got up and went back into the kitchen to throw the core (now very brown) away. She walked by the bowl of apples and gave them one more look before she went outside again. Somehow Julie had a feeling she would be learning more about this remarkable fruit in the future . . .



"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat." Genesis 1:29.

Connie is the mother of 5 children and attends Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Walker, Michigan.

1995 Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention

hosted by
Grandville Protestant Reformed Church
August 7-11
at
Hope College
Holland, Michigan

Convention Theme:

Courageous Christian Youth

Speakers:

Rev. Mahtani	*"Daniel—A Faithful Prayer Life"*
Rev. Terpstra	*"Daniel—A Bold Witness"*
Mr. Kalsbeek	*"Daniel—Godly Choices"*

Discussion Group Topics:
Devotions—Private and Public
Respecting Authority
Choosing Friends