Beacon Lights

January
2012

Volume LXXI
Number 1

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the

2012 PRYP Convention!

To be held at the

Michindoh Conference Center

in Hillsdale, Michigan
www.campmichindoh.org

August 13-17, 2012

Hosted by Hope PRC in Walker, Michigan

Speech topics:

The Shepherd
The Sheep
How the Shepherd Cares for the Sheep

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Eternal Truth

Rationalist logician avers argument powerful
That Christ's death no substitution signifies.

Futile, worthless logic falls before the Cross:
"We have received the atonement
The Good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep"—

Doctrines of Grace He proclaims, holding heart and mind
Deep-dyed with crimson stain
To ingrain the wool of the soul.

Where His word is not heard, easily men are swept
Away with every sophic miasma.

Uttered He His truth in voice of Luther and Calvin;
Men thronged them to hear at death's expense.

Huguenots under mortal ban yet mustered
To sermons of interdicted preachers Reformed.

Geneva sent forth prophets to gather auditors
In fields tinged with martyr's blood.

Why congregated they so on death's dark brink?
Never jeopardize men life to meditate mere modern thought!

'Tis the good way, in the old paths, alight with holy allure
Of election, sovereign, precious, pure—
Redemption which actually redeemed—
Preservation ensuring perseverance to glory eternal—

Truth, which is matter of life and death;
Divine magnet in life; deep comfort in death;

Forms a race of real men receiving a Kingdom
Immovable, in palaces divine
Founded on the Rock.

– Rev. Robert C. Harbach
Beacon Lights, *March 1988*

I Need You

by Tiffany Poortinga

In my dream I am falling. Falling! …and screaming for help. I am hanging over the edge and I can't pull myself back up! I am slipping! Doesn't anyone hear me? If only I could pull myself back up I would be okay; but I can't. I am falling and I am terrified!

We all have had a dream similar to this. This, however, to some is no dream. It is a recurring situation our daughter finds herself in. This is the result of a young girl with Cerebral Palsy who gets tangled in the sheets of her bed and rolls just a little too close to the edge of the bed and finds herself hanging off the edge in horrific fear of falling without the ability to pull herself up. Many a night I hear, "Mommy, I need you!" and she does.

From dressing to toileting, and eating to writing "I need you" can be heard throughout the day. Our daughter is not completely helpless; however, nearly every task requires some form of help and assistance. For example, while our daughter can use a spoon or fork she often struggles with getting the food onto the utensil; or, if she does get the food on she must deal with the disappointment of the food falling off just as it touches her lips. The CP (Cerebral Palsy) affects her coordination and with every meal she needs help. She makes improvements, but the reality remains…she needs help. Even play time is a task for her. If she drops the object she is playing with, she can't pick it up. Once again, she needs help.

That's because CP is a movement disorder caused by damage to motor control centers of the developing brain. Very basically, in our daughter's case this damage to the brain causes the brain to send too many messages to many muscles of her body so that certain muscles are constantly over-firing causing abnormal muscle tone. We like to say, "It's what makes her stiff" although spastic is the proper term. Her muscles are very tight and daily stretches and movements are important. While CP is not a degenerative disease, growth is not its friend as muscles that are already too "short" and tight will only become tighter with growth. There is no known cure, but certainly surgical and medicinal options exist. Interestingly, epilepsy, mental retardation, and learning disabilities are secondary conditions to CP and are not part of Cerebral Palsy. To understand CP more I refer the reader to Wikipedia. To put all this into perspective I want you to picture a young girl sitting on a stool at a birthday party. Her feet are flat on the floor…until her mom brings out the cake. The excitement causes her brain to send those messages and instantly her feet fly out! Straight out! And she nearly flies back off the seat except her Aunt catches her first. Okay, so she's settled down again and is sitting nicely. It's time for her to blow out her candles. She's excited but can overcome it now. She's concentrating on something new. She wants to blow out her candles. All seven! But this is no easy task! She has been working on this in therapy. The coordination of her mouth muscles and lungs to blow out enough air is difficult. But she can do it! It will take much longer than "normal," but her family doesn't mind. This is only the second birthday they've seen her do it; and they love it!

What could possibly be the purpose of God in creating such a needy individual? Certainly it is, "…for I (God, *TDP*) have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him" (Isa. 43:7). And also, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28). From Scripture we see that our daughter's CP and the help she gets from others is working for her salvation and thus glorifying God. But what about you? What purpose could her condition have for you, young reader? Well, because she is in the covenant, she belongs to the fellowship of God's people and this means that she belongs in the fellowship-life where you belong, including the Christian day school. But, because of her handicaps, she needs you!! She needs that helper in Sunday School who picks up her dropped folder. She needs the classmate to hold the Psalter for her while she stands in her walker to sing at school. She needs the two boys to wheel her desk to the gym. She needs that classmate to stop, say "hi," and ask how her day is going. She needs the junior-high kid to carry her special chair to the sanctuary so she can use it in the program. She needs her circle of friends to play with her at recess. She needs the teacher who opens the door for her. She needs the aide who adapts her school work for her. She needs the congregation who supports her financially in order that she might attend the Christian day school. She needs her parents and siblings to spiritually strengthen and encourage her. She needs the school board members who willingly adapt things to meet her needs. She needs the Protestant Reformed Special Education Board and it's

society to help in the support of her educational needs. Wow! The needs just don't seem to end. But wait… there's more to see.

That child on the playground just selflessly gave up his turn in kickball so she could come in for a turn. He didn't even care that he now has to run slowly behind her in order to get home. And that kid over there has asked the teacher's aide all week when it will be his turn to play with her next, even though all the other kids may be playing his favorite game without him. That young lady over there just came and asked the aide if there was anything she could do to help. Oh, and look over there! There is a middle-aged man crying in the pew as she sings her heart out with the whole school in the program. At home her siblings willingly give up a day of hiking in the mountains to do something she can do with them. Her father and mother have a far better understanding of what a privilege it is to have each and every one of their children in our Christian day school.

Dear reader, can you think of a special needs person within your life? There are so many. From the Autistic boy, to the hearing impaired girl, to the elderly man who had a stroke…your special needs brother or sister is there. Do you make a point of saying "hi"? Parents, when your child asks you why that person is in a wheelchair (right in front of that person) do you hush them up and lead them away because of your discomfort? We have personally seen that children are more comfortable (although certainly curious) regarding the handicaps of the handicapped than the parents. Reader, do you have any opportunities in your church or community to help someone more needy? Do you mention them in your prayers? If not, then this article is for you! For all the needs of any special needs child or adult, one purpose may be for you to be the one to realize and say to your special needs acquaintance… "It is I who needs you." ❖

Tiffany is a member of Loveland Protestant Reformed Church in Loveland, Colorado.

Church Family

Our Children's Education: (7)
Covenant Education: Objections and Conclusion

by Aaron Lim

VIII. Objections Answered

Weighty objections have been laid against the idea of a Christian education in Singapore. While it may be true that circumstances in this land make it more difficult to give our children a covenant education, it only means that we as covenant parents must be willing to make greater sacrifices for this cause. We do not let the situations in life dictate our Christian walk. Scripture, to which our consciences are bound, must always be our binding principle.

Objection: A Christian education will raise socially inadequate children. Christian education excessively shelters our children from the world, producing socially awkward adults.

The concern is valid in that if we place our children in a Christian environment throughout their childhood years, they will not know what the world is really like. They will be ignorant of how the world functions and how to interact with their ungodly colleagues in the workplace when they are of age.

Covenant parents must be assured that this will not be true. A covenant education that has its basis in Scripture teaches our children true wisdom—how to walk circumspectly and purposefully according to the station and calling God gives to them. Wisdom will enable our children to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves in the midst of this world (Matt 10:16).

We are not raising covenant seed to integrate them into society. From a biblical viewpoint, God's people will always be social outcasts. They are the social pariahs because they are extremely different from the people of this world. They do not share the same principles, goals and ideals in life. God's people will always be fools in the eyes of this world, but precious and dear to him. They

are preparing to live in the heavenly kingdom.

Dreadful will be the day when our children are comfortable in this world. The day they find themselves at ease with this world is the day they lose their identity as covenant children. They become comfortable with pursuing the world's ideals and living its philosophies. That day signals the end of the antithesis between God's children and his enemies.

We are raising our children for war with the enemy. Scripture warns that persecution will always face God's people, and increase in measure as the return of Christ draws nearer. A solid Christian education, contrary to a public one, prepares them well for this warfare.

Objection: Christian education diminishes our children's Christian witness to the unbelieving world.

The objection stems from the idea that if we shelter our children by giving them a covenant education, they cannot be effective witnesses for Christ, especially in the public schools.

It is very unwise to think that our young children can be effective witnesses when their spiritual faculties are not properly developed yet. Rev. Ronald Hanko writes:

> It is especially important for our children, who are compared in Psalm 128 to young olive plants, to be protected from evil influences. No young plant can be immediately exposed to the elements and to the full heat of the sun and be expected to live. Nurture (Eph 6:4) is not exposure (Christian Education, http://www.cprf.co.uk/pamphlets/christianeducation.htm).

Nature itself teaches us this principle. No mother hen allows her young to wander around on their own. Turtles which hatch from the beaches are very quickly preyed upon as they make their way to sea on their own. Lambs are the easiest prey for wolves in the sheepfold.

Christ would not allow his lambs to fight the fierce battles of faith until they have been properly trained and equipped with the necessary spiritual armoury. While the calling of the Christian is to reprove the world and to shine forth as a light in the midst of darkness, he must receive a thorough and solid training before he can perform his calling effectively. One must not only have the physical strength but also training and practice to wield a sword effectively, along with the other weapons of war described in Ephesians 6:13-17.

IV. Concluding Remarks

Covenant education for covenant seed is faithfulness to Jehovah's covenant. Public education is contrary to all the precepts of the covenant. We rob our children of their covenant privileges when we give them a public education instead of a covenant one.

It is sheer folly to expect godly, spiritually mature men and women to be raised under an ungodly education. As a corrupt tree cannot produce good fruit, so an ungodly education cannot produce godly children.

Jehovah's calling for covenant parents is not to raise up the Bill Gates and Obamas of this world. They are raising up the Davids, Daniels and Pauls for the church of Jesus Christ. They are rearing mothers in Israel.

Educating our children carefully in the ways of the covenant will serve an important purpose. We will raise up a people who know their Reformed faith intimately; love it, confess it, maintain it, defend it, live by it and die for it. We are raising a people who are jealous of their precious Reformed heritage because they have a God who is jealous of his glory. We are raising a people whose chief end in life is the glory of their God.

It is extremely crucial for parents in CERC to understand and be convinced of covenant education. Most of our young people have already gone through the whole public education process and many suffer from its evils. If the Reformed faith is to survive and be developed in all its splendor and beauty, the next generation may not condone public education.

If CERC pursues the path of covenant education for her young, we will be very much alone. Most churches in Singapore have given their covenant seed over to the public schools and are suffering its devastating consequences. We must not be afraid to be alone, for God's people always constitute a very small remnant.

I have no doubt that covenant education in Singapore is a path of suffering that will involve much sacrifice. It is, nevertheless, the path that Scripture directs for us as covenant parents. We need not offer any excuses. God assures us that he will bless us in the way of obedience.

God's provision of the Protestant Reformed Churches must serve as an example to us. There is nothing cultural about the PRC's insistence on giving a covenant education to her children. It is biblical. It is confessional. It is Reformed.

For reformation to take place in the church of Jesus Christ, we must give serious consideration to the education our covenant children receive. The education of our children is not a matter of choice. It is our covenant duty. It is our covenant privilege.

It is covenant necessity. ❖

Aaron is a member of Covenant Evangelical Reformed Church in Singapore.

Update from the Federation Board

Greetings from the Federation Board!

Another busy year is, under the blessing and favor of our heavenly Father, well underway for the Fed Board. This article is to inform you, the members of our Young Peoples' Societies, as to the identity, purpose, and current membership of the Fed Board.

The Fed Board is the Executive Board of the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young Peoples' Societies. It is a 10-member body that meets in the West Michigan area once a month to discuss financial and practical matters relating to the functioning of the Federation. These include, among other things, the collection of dues from our member Societies (please pay promptly!); assisting the host church of the annual PR Young Peoples' Convention (this year Hope Church in Walker, MI); and overseeing the two standing committees of the Fed Board, the *Beacon Lights* Committee and the PR Scholarship Committee. The members of these Committees are appointed by the Fed Board. They meet on their own regular schedule and send a written report of each meeting to the Fed Board.

A recent development is the establishment by the Fed Board of a Transportation Subsidy Fund to assist young people and their families with paying transportation costs to the annual Young People's Convention. It was initially established in consideration of those in our Western congregations who must usually fly to the Michigan/Illinois area for the Convention, but the subsidy is open for application to members of all our Societies. We are currently working to get the application online with the other registration forms for the YP Convention. Details about where to mail the completed form will be available online as well. The money for this assistance comes from the dues collected each year from our member Societies, and this ought to provide yet another incentive for each of you to pay dues in full and on time.

The Fed Board exists for a three-fold purpose, according to its Constitution: 1) To enable all PR Young Peoples' Societies to work in close unity, manifesting the unity of the church of Jesus Christ in the truth of him as revealed in Holy Scripture and summarized in our Three Forms of Unity; 2) To provide guidance for the development of faith and doctrine—Protestant Reformed faith and doctrine—by means of a Federation publication (the *Beacon Lights* magazine); 3) To give expression to our specific Protestant Reformed character. Part of that specific Protestant Reformed character is our confession

Left to right: Rev. Dan Holstege, Nate Bodbyl, Rachel Kamps, Jonathan Langerak, Jr., Dave Noorman, Kylie Mulder, Jordan Koole, Annie Zuverink, Rev. Gary Eriks. Missing: Mr. Scott VanUffelen

with our parents and with the church of Jesus Christ throughout history of the doctrine of God's unconditional covenant of grace, a covenant governed by God's eternal decree of election and established with believers and their elect children in Christ Jesus our Lord. It is this truth as it is manifested in the organic life of the church that enables us not only to federate in a denomination as Protestant Reformed congregations—with this distinctive doctrine as our hallmark and reason for existence—but also allows our Young People's Societies to work together in communion as covenant friend-servants of God our heavenly Father and young brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The members of the Fed Board are elected by representatives from each member Society who come together at the Delegate Board meeting at the annual Convention. The current members are: Jonathan Langerak, Jr.—President; Nate Bodbyl—Vice-President; Annie Zuverink—Secretary; Kylie Mulder—Vice-Secretary; Jordan Koole—Treasurer; Dave Noorman—Vice-Treasurer, and Rachel Kamps—Librarian. Advising these seven officers of the Board are two Spiritual Advisors—Rev. Gary Eriks and Rev. Dan Holstege; and one Youth Coordinator—Mr. Scott VanUffelen. I would like to thank each member of the Board for the work they have done and the wise advice they have given thus far and encourage them in the year ahead.

The Fed Board covets your prayers as we carry out our work. And we for our part pray for each of you as members of the Societies and of the church of Jesus Christ as manifested in our Protestant Reformed Churches. You are the future of our churches and will bear the standard of the Reformed faith forward into succeeding generations.

In Christ, for the Fed Board,
Jonathan Langerak, Jr. ❖

Jonathan is a member of Southwest Protestant Reformed Church in Wyoming, Michigan.

Federation Board Annual Financial Report	
July 21, 2011	
Bank Account Summary	
Beginning Balance (8/1/2010)	**$59,964.34**
Checking Account	
Beginning Balance (8/01/2010)	$23,514.35
Ending Balance (7/29/2011)	$37,678.90
Net Increase (Decrease):	$14,164.55
Savings Account	
Beginning Balance (8/01/2010)	$16,046.99
Ending Balance (7/29/2011)	$16,058.69
Net Increase (Decrease):	$11.70
Certificate of Deposit	
Beginning Balance (8/01/2010)	$20,403.00
Ending Balance (7/29/2011)	$20,882.40
Net Increase (Decrease):	$479.40
Net Balance Change (Decrease):	***$14,655.65***
Ending Balance (7/31/2011)	**$74,619.99**

Watching Daily At My Gates

by Chester Hunter

January 9 Read Numbers 19

This text exudes one word throughout the whole. That word is holy. While you do not find this word in the text, the idea is there. Notice how many times you see the word purify or some variation. Our God is a holy God, and we must honor him as that holy God. In fact we use the term "thrice holy" which is from Isaiah. Israel had to have all of these ceremonies to point out this attribute to them. However, we, too, must see that God is holy. We must live lives that reflect this holiness. We must purify ourselves, not with ceremonial water, but with the blood of the lamb. This we must do every day and in every aspect of our lives. Sing Psalter 265.

January 10 Read Numbers 20

God's people must obey him at all times. This must be true for all of his people. No one is exempt. This we see as Moses strikes the rock instead of speaking to it. Since Aaron was in agreement with Moses about Israel's obstinacy, and who would not be, he, as well, was prohibited from entering Canaan. Children and young people, you are called to obey God and all those whom he has put in authority over you just like your parents and grandparents. We are required to do this at all times. There are no circumstances that absolve us from the law of obedience. Let us trust and obey our most holy God, and in this way please him during our journey on this earth. Sing Psalter 266.

January 11 Read Numbers 21

Throughout the Old Testament we find the gospel. Here in this chapter we find it in a vivid way. Jesus himself referred to this incident as he preached to Nicodemus. Israel once again fell into the sin of complaining. For that sin God chastised them with bites from that creature that most really represents Satan and his attacks upon God's church. After being healed by looking at the serpent, God brought blessings to his people. First there was water, a sign of the water of life Jesus Christ. Then there was the victory over Og mighty king of Bashan. God gives to us the water of life that we need as well as victories over mighty enemies of this day. Let us look to the cross for our salvation. Sing Psalter 397.

January 12 Read Numbers 22

As Israel got closer and closer to Canaan, Satan fought harder and harder to keep them out of the picture of heaven. Even today, he fights to keep us from the heavenly Canaan by trying to cause us to sin. First it was Moab, Israel's relative through Lot. Then there was Balak employing the pseudo-prophet Balaam. Even when Balaam is confronted with his speaking ass, he refuses to acknowledge God as God. Let us only speak and do what God has commanded us in his Word. Let us do this daily, and let us teach our children to listen to Jehovah their Savior. Sing Psalter 234.

January 13 Read Numbers 23

Over and over Balaam tried to curse Israel. Over and over God thwarted his plans and desires. Satan does not give up. We must understand this. We must put on the whole armor of faith and fight against his wiles as Paul calls us to do in Ephesians. Even though Balaam understood who God was and what he is, he tried to go against him. Look again at his words in verses 19 and 20. And then look at verse 21. Not only did he have to confess who God is, but he also had to bow to the work of Christ on his peoples' behalf. When God looks at us through the blood of Christ, he sees a people without any sin. What a blessed truth this is even though it comes form the mouth of a wicked prophet. How great our God is! Sing Psalter 320.

January 14 Read Numbers 24

Once again Balaam tries to earn his pay from the wicked king. Once again God thwarts his attempts to curse his beloved people. Now Balaam has not only to prophesy against Moab, but he also has to prophesy of Israel's ultimate deliverer, the Star out of Jacob. Do we look for that Star? Do we bow before God's scepter in our lives? There are lessons for us in these accounts of Israel's encounters with Balak. Let us learn those lessons well as we await the day we can enter the heavenly Canaan. We will get there not by our works; by nature we are no better than Balak and Balaam. We will get there through the blood of the Star of Jacob who will come with healing in his wings. Thanks be to God! Sing Psalter 124.

January 15 Read Numbers 25

While Balaam had no spiritual wisdom, he had plenty of earthly wisdom. While we are not told this in this chapter, we find it later on in the history of Israel and in Revelation, that it was Balaam who told Balak how to get at Israel. It was he who said tell your young men and young ladies to amalgamate themselves with Israel's young people. Cause

them to sin, and God will come against them. And it happened just as he said. Parents, is this not enough for us to keep our young people from the Moabites of this day? We must do this in our homes, in our entertainment, and in their friendships. This is not easy work, but by God's grace we can lead our young people in the right way. Israel did not, and they suffered for it. Sing Psalter 308.

January 16 Read Numbers 26

Israel had to be numbered one more time. This was the second time an accounting of the people was made for two reasons. First of all, Israel had to know that in the way of their tribal divisions, they would be given land in Canaan. Secondly, and maybe more importantly for Israel at this time, they had to see that death had taken all those except Caleb and Joshua who had left Egypt. Sin must be taken from God's church, and it was. Let us remember that God will not be mocked; he will bring those into the heavenly Promised Land whom he has ordained. He will cleanse his church from sin. Let us walk without complaining of the way that God will lead us. Sing Psalter 246.

January 17 Read Numbers 27

The daughters of Zelophehad knew that they, too, deserved an inheritance in Canann. They deserved this not because of who they were, or what they had accomplished, but they deserved it because of God's promise to their fathers. We have a list of those fathers in this chapter that goes back to Joseph. Their claim was recognized by God who told Moses that it was legitimate. Their claim is a picture of the claim all of God's people have in the heavenly Canaan. Gender does not matter. Skin color does not matter. Race does not matter. Grace matters. God, by his graces, has elected men and women from every tribe and tongue to dwell with him in the New Jerusalem. What a joyous blessing this is! Sing Psalter 304.

January 18 Read Numbers 28

This chapter contains no new sacrifices. God was not going to institute a different kind of worship when Israel entered Canaan. That would not come until Christ died on the cross, and the veil was rent in the temple. Today, we must not be looking for a different way of worship other than what we find in the Bible. As the reformers of old brought the people back to "Sola Scriptura", we must be reminded of this every Sunday. We must not look for something new until Christ comes once more and welcomes us into the heavenly kingdom. Our worship must be of God and for God each and every Sabbath Day. Sing Psalter 251.

January 19 Read Numbers 29

During the seventh month of every year, Israel was commanded to keep three feasts. On the first day of the month there was the feast of the trumpets. This feast seems to be held in anticipation of the two great feasts to come. Secondly there was the great Day of Atonement. On this day Israel was more vividly reminded of the great sacrifice to come. Finally there was the feast of the tabernacles, which was a feast of thanksgiving and joy. In addition to their daily offerings Israel had to bring some special offering to Jehovah. We, too, are called to worship. We, too, are called to bring offerings in thanksgiving for the great work of atonement wrought by Christ on the cross. Are we joyful and solemn? Sing Psalter 254.

January 20 Read Numbers 30

All vows whether made by man or woman had to be kept before God by Old Testament Israel. While we may not make as many vows as Israel did, the same calling is held before us. When we take upon us the marriage vow, we are required to keep it. We must not be as the world, and look at divorce as a "way out." We must honor that vow every day of our lives. Another vow that we take is the vow of baptism. We make a vow to bring up our children in the fear of the Lord. This may require plenty of sacrifices on our part, but these are necessary so that we keep our vows. We also have made or will make a vow at confession of faith. This, too, should, not be a vow taken lightly. We made this vow before God and man, and we should keep it. Let us keep these solemn promises and in that way walk in the fear of Jehovah. Sing Psalter 207.

January 21 Read Numbers 31

There are three items of note in this chapter. First of all, notice the death of Balaam the false prophet. Through his instigation Israel had fallen into sins that incurred God's wrath among them. The wicked are to be delivered up to destruction. Secondly, that sin had not been eradicated from them. They saved alive women of those Midianites. Moses was rightly angry with them. Thirdly, notice the provision for the dividing of the spoil of the battle. Israel was to be a fighting nation. These provisions would be used over and over. In those provisions was mention of the children of Levi. That provision was to be used for God's service. We can be instructed by all three of these items. Let us learn, and let us serve God with this knowledge. Sing Psalter 253.

January 22 Read Numbers 32

Sometimes things need to be worked out in God's church. This is the case in today's chapter. Men from three of the tribes saw land that would fit their way of life, but when they proposed this to Moses, he became angry. But instead of rebelling, the men calmly explained to Moses what their idea was, and how they would carry it out for God's glory and for the God of the church. Moses acceded to their plan and gave orders to those that would lead Israel into Canaan that it should be carried out. In the church we must have plans for God's glory and the good of the church.

They must be calmly arrived at and when shown to be profitable carried out. May we ask God's blessing on our work and if it is his will that it prosper. Sing Psalter 348.

January 23 Read Numbers 33

Moses was commanded to write down an account of the journey from Egypt enumerating each stop. By doing this Israel was reminded of God's care for them even when they rebelled against him. Then Israel was commanded to drive the people from the land that they would inhabit. God even gives to them a reason for doing so. Have we driven the wicked influences out of our lives before they become "pricks and thorns" and before they "vex" our children and us? If we do not, God gives to us the same warning that he gives to Israel. Are we heeding that warning? Sing Psalter 290.

January 24 Read Numbers 34

Can you imagine Caleb and Joshua nodding their heads as God described the land and its borders for Moses? They were the only two people left from that scouting trip forty years ago. After describing the land, God gave to his people the method that they would use to divide that land up by tribe. Each tribe and each family would have a portion in the land of promise. This method was an orderly one with Joshua, Eleazar and other princes to direct it. This process was a picture of the hope that we have for our lot in the heavenly Canaan for there is where our home is, not on this earth. Sing Psalter 291.

January 25 Read Numbers 35

Even though the Levites were not given a division in the land, they were still to be cared for. Forty-eight cities and the land around them were to be set aside for the Levites to live in when they were not doing their assigned duties in the worship of Jehovah. These cities were scattered throughout all the land so that the whole nation would have a reminder of that worship of Jehovah and the care of those who participated in those ceremonies. Of those forty-eight cities six were designated as cities of refuge. In this way God protected those who killed someone without malice. Rules were established for the administration of this provision, and those rules like all of God's law had to be followed. Sing Psalter 137.

January 26 Read Numbers 36

We see in this account of the request of the daughters of Zelophehad that God dealt with the exceptions to the law. These exceptions were not man-made exceptions, but rather were exceptions ordained in his counsel. All of God's people are to be cared for in his law by his church. We must use wisdom that comes from Jehovah alone to deal with exceptions. When we apply God's law to these exceptions, we will find that he cares for each of his people in the state in which he has put them. We do not need to look for exceptions; God will show them to us and give to us the wisdom to deal with them. Sing Psalter 41.

January 27 Read Deuteronomy 1

With this book of the Bible the portion known as The Law ends. The word Deuteronomy means second law. We find in it not only a retelling of the Ten Commandments but also a repetition of other of the laws that God gave to his people. It also contains Moses's farewell address. This first chapter reminds Israel the reason why it took them so long to be able to inherit the land. May we learn from this account to obey God at all times and to not "drag our feet" when he gives to us a direction in our lives. Sing Psalter 321.

January 28 Read Deuteronomy 2

In this accounting of the past forty years of history much of it remains unknown. Moses through God's direction did not glorify the time during which they served the sentence pronounced upon them at Kadesh-Barnea. He reminds them that they were not to meddle in the affairs of their distant relatives unless they were provoked, as did Sihon and Og. God gave to them some of that land east of the Jordan and would certainly give to them the land west of the Jordan. May we look for the day when we are given the whole of the heavenly Canaan through the second coming of Christ. Sing Psalter 213.

January 29 Read Deuteronomy 3

After distributing to the three tribes that which they requested east of the Jordan, Moses once more begs that God would allow him to enter the promised land. God's answer was that he must charge his successor, Joshua, to be faithful in that he was charged to do namely leading Israel into Canaan. He then was directed to go into a mountain in which God permitted him to see the land. May we take from this account of Holy Scripture to do what God has commanded us even when our personal feelings are otherwise. In this way we may be assured of the blessing of Jehovah. Sing Psalter 311.

January 30 Read Deuteronomy 4

Israel is now reminded that they are God's chosen people. They are also reminded what a privilege that they alone have, and that it is a great privilege. They are warned from walking in the ways of idolatry like they did after Balaam showed Moab how to make them sin. We, too, must consider what a great privilege election is. We, too, must not worship idols and walk in the wicked ways of the Moabs of this world. In this way we will have the assurance of the promised rest that will be ours in the new heavens and the new earth. Sing Psalter 143.

January 31 Read Deuteronomy 5

Here we have the second telling of the decalogue. After repeating this law to Israel, Moses exhorts Israel to obey the law and all the other precepts God had given to them. In doing this, they would show their thankfulness for the goodness shown to them by Jehovah. We, too, in our keeping every part of God's law show our thankfulness for the great salvation that was wrought for us on the cross. Instead of trying to get out of keeping that law, we should be seeking for ways to more completely keep that law until God deliver us from this earth. May this be our desire in all that we do every day of our lives. Sing Psalter 428.

February 1 Read Deuteronomy 6

Not only must Israel seek to keep God's way, they were to teach their children about that law. We teach our children about God's law in whatever we do on this earth. Do we teach them the Scriptures by our using them correctly? Do we do this with the school that Jehovah has so graciously given to us? We teach them no matter what we do. Our teaching has its rewards. May we seek not to burden our children with God's law, but rather let us show to them the blessing in a true obedience to that law of God. Sing Psalter 215.

February 2 Read Deuteronomy 7

Israel was reminded that they were to utterly destroy those wicked nations who inhabited Canaan. They were to do this so that those wicked people and their practices would not wrongly influence them. They were to do this for the children's sake. If the children were influenced by the wicked nations, they would soon turn from God's way. This is God's exhortation to us. We must put out of our lives the wickedness of this world. This is for not only our sakes but also, and that more importantly, for the covenant children's sakes. In this way we will glorify God alone and teach our children to glorify him. May this be our desire throughout our lives on this earth. Sing Psalter 4.

February 3 Read Deuteronomy 8

History repeats itself is the lesson of this chapter. In this case the history is the care that God showed to his people over the past forty years. During that time they were not hungry and they did not go without good shoes and clothing. God blessed them even when they did not deserve it. Israel was to show thankfulness for such a blessing by staying away from idolatry. Do we show thankfulness in the lives that we live today for the manifold goodnesses God has shown to us? We should and we must. Sing Psalter 289.

February 4 Read Deuteronomy 9

Israel was assured of a victory over an enemy that loomed large before them. They would get this victory not because of their goodness. As a nation they had shown time after time that they did not deserve the good land that God was giving to them. They had shown this at Sinai just after getting the law. This is what Moses reminds them of. We, too, must remember that justification is by faith alone. It is not our work-not even a tiny part of it. It is by grace through faith which is the gift of God. Sing Psalter 170.

February 5 Read Deuteronomy 10

As we have seen before Moses is recounting God's grace to his people. This is an undeserved grace as seen from the forty years of wandering in the wilderness. It was a grace that allowed them to grow from a little family of seventy souls into this large multitude that would take over the land of their inheritance from the patriarchs. This is a picture of the church, of which we are members, being given grace to inherit a land that we did not prepare. We will live for eternity in the new Canaan which, too, flows with milk and honey. Sing Psalter 367.

February 6 Read Deuteronomy 11

Over and over Israel is charged to love God with all their hearts, minds, and souls. Many may have become exasperated with Moses as he continues to repeat this refrain. But they needed to hear it. They needed to know it, and they needed to live it. This must be the refrain that must echo in our ears and in the ears of our children. They must know that they are charged to love God with all of their being. Israel was commanded to go to two mountains in Canaan and repeat all the parts of the law. We must do this as well. Of course, we do not do this literally, but figuratively we must recite and keep both the blessings and curses of God's law. Sing Psalter 323.

February 7 Read Deuteronomy 12

Among all those laws of which Moses was reminding the children of Israel were the laws of proper worship of Jehovah. The Israelites would see many practices of worship that would seem good unto them. They only seemed good unto their flesh. These practices would not please God and were not the way that would lead them into his peace. Idolatry and all its accompanying practices are abominations to God. May we keep them from our children so that they can enjoy the good rest of God's ways. Sing Psalter 90.

February 8 Read Deuteronomy 13

Not only were the items of idolatry and the practice of idolatry to be abhorred and destroyed, but also the persons that encouraged such practices were to be destroyed. Israel had to rid themselves of all those who would lead them astray. God's church must do that as well. Christian discipline must be carried out in the church. In this way God's name is hallowed and our children are protected from all which would cause them to sin. Israel could not shirk this duty, and we must not shirk it either. Sing Psalter 223.

Stewards and Stewardship

by Rev. Rodney Miersma

God called us into being, made us what we are and set us in that particular place in which he would set us in the midst of his creation. Our task is the work that he has laid upon us. Our strength is the strength that he is willing to give us in his sustaining power. All that we have, even the hairs of our head which are numbered, are solely his possession. He entrusts these things to our care that we may use them consciously, willingly, and devotedly in his service toward one simple purpose unto which all things are set, namely, the glory of his name. We have not one second to live which God has not entrusted to us. We cannot stir one member of our bodies without his power. And when our life is ended we must give an account of our stewardship to our master who privileged us with this service.

Indeed, we are stewards. A steward is a servant, one who takes care of the possessions of his master for the good of the master. A biblical example is Joseph. Potiphar entrusted all that he had to Joseph. After Joseph was placed in prison, the jailor put the running of the jail in Joseph's hands. Likewise did Pharaoh after Joseph interpreted his dreams. A steward is accountable for all that is placed in his care

We are stewards in that we are servants of God who take care of God's things which he has entrusted to our care. We do this to the glory of God. We are held accountable for everything entrusted to us. God is the Master based on the fact that God owns everything, all things which are in heaven and on earth. This includes the big things such as the sun, moon, the stars, the earth with all of its trees, plants, and animals, and everything else. There are things that we take for granted such as the air we breathe, that which we call our own, time, our very lives. This is very plain from Scripture. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fullness thereof" (Ps. 50:10-12). "Thou, even thou, art Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth, and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshipeth thee" (Neh. 9:6).

These principles one must apply to his own life. As young people, what do you do with your time in light of the fact that every second is God's time? God will ask you some day. It is so easy to waste time in front of the TV, at the computer, on Facebook, texting, and the like. While at school are you attentive to your teachers or do you daydream or simply fritter away your time? At work do you really work or do only the minimal to maintain your job? Each moment wasted cannot be recalled; it is gone. How do you use the tongue that God has given you to praise him? So often one uses this good gift of God to take his name in vain, to talk back to teachers, parents, or employer or to hurt the feelings of others whoever they may be. God has also given us gifts of ability such as singing, learning, helping others, and many other gifts. Do you use them to the best of your ability and to the glory of God?

How about ourselves? Jesus bought us with his blood. Thus he is our Lord and master. A good servant and steward always works as if the master were at his side. Many of the things that we do we do because we think nobody sees us. But God is there and sees us. We do not see him, but he is there and certainly sees us. We should ask ourselves, "Would I want to be doing this if Jesus would come now? Would I do this if Jesus were with me? Would Jesus do this with me?" All things must be done consciously and willingly to God's glory. In this way we are blessed. He says, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

Walking in obedience we do what God wants us to do. Then we know in our hearts that we are pleasing in God's sight. That gives us joy. We must pray for that for we cannot do that in our own strength. We pray to God that he will lead us by his Word and Spirit to be good stewards, that we may see his face in Jesus who paid for our sins. Then we have comfort because our whole life will show that we are children of God. The Spirit will tell us in our heart. And those about us will tell us because they will see it in our actions. Nothing is more precious to us than to know that we belong to Jesus. Thus we walk in thankfulness before our God, happy that we can serve him in his kingdom. ❖

Rev. Miersma is an emeritus minister of the Protestant Reformed Churches.

Meekness

by Mary Beth Lubbers

"Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek…" (Matt. 21:5).

There is a certain truth in the theory of Thomas Carlyle, "The history of this world is the biography of its great men." Certainly it is true that the great leaders of this world have left their mark on history's lessons. Equally true is that great eras in history are closely associated with the great leaders of that era. Alexander the Great (the glorious days of Macedonia), Julius Caesar (the mighty Roman Empire), Napoleon Bonaparte (France's day in the sun), even Adolph Hitler (Germany's ignominious rise to power).

What is the quality(ies) which is required for leadership? What brings an Alexander the Great, an Adolph Hitler, or a Ronald Reagan from virtual obscurity to the highest positions of leadership in the world? Historians say that Napoleon could greet thousands of soldiers by name and that the American politician, James Farley (1888–1976), could call over 50,000 people by their first names. Is the necessary quality for leadership the ability to relate in a personal, intimate way with the masses? Today probably more than ever before this is a desirable quality for leadership—at least it is one important way to become a leader.

Undoubtedly, the qualities most sought after and expected in a world leader are that he is dynamic, forceful, charismatic, diplomatic. A man with a golden tongue is high on the list, his rhetoric such that he is able either to appease or to excite the masses; and good looks don't hurt a potential leader either. Promises of the good life—plenty of "food and fun"—have always lured the people to follow a Pied Piper.

When it comes right down to it, modern day man's expectations for its leaders has not changed essentially from that of Israel's of old. Why did Israel's heart swell in hope at the sight of Saul? His bearing was kingly; "from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people." And then later, "Saul has slain his thousands." "He has clothed us in scarlet and put ornaments of gold upon our apparel." In today's language, "He is strong; he has brought us the good life."

All of these are qualities which men look for in a leader. Are these also the important traits which God looks for in a leader? We would do well to remember that Saul was never God's choice for Israel's leader. Nor were Jesse's older sons, handsome and debonair though they were. Even Samuel was fooled by outward appearance. It seems that God, however, reserves to himself a requirement for leadership that man has rarely, if ever, considered. God knows the vanity, the futility, in outward indications of leadership potential. As always, God looks past—and through—the outer shell of a man and his eye penetrates deep within the recesses of a man's heart. And what does he want to find there which makes a man suitable for leadership? He is looking for one outstanding virtue for his leaders, be it in the world or in the church. His leaders must be meek! Meek, you say? Who would ever want a meek leader? In man's opinion meekness has never been a necessary ingredient for leadership; in God's judgment it is paramount. Scan the Scriptures from Genesis through Revelation and you will find that every leader that God ever chose was first and foremost meek. If Saul had one qualification going for him at the outset of his kingship it was that he was lowly-minded. Would today that more leaders were "hiding among the baggage," being begged and coerced into the position of leadership.

When Saul became king, the adage held true, "If you wish to know what a man is, place him in authority." Saul's very soul became warped through it. "It is an observation no less just than common that there is no stronger test of a man's real character than power and authority (leadership, *MBL*), exciting as they do every passion, and discovering every latent vice." Saul could not hold up under these aroused passions; his latent vices soon rose to the surface.

In leadership there is the inherent vice, "Take heed lest thou become a Caesar indeed; lest the purple stain thy soul." In fact, it is only a leader who is meek who can withstand the intoxication of power and authority—whose soul will be untainted by the purple.

We often equate (wrongly) meekness with "mousiness." And in a world of "Stand up for your rights" and "I'll show you who is first around here" the quality of meekness is oft times strained. Meekness makes a man "all things to all men." Meekness is enduring injury with patience, without resentment. Meekness is largeness of

spirit, denial of self, and willingly subjugating oneself to God and the neighbor. Meekness is an attitude of the heart which makes one willing to subordinate all one's own rights, real or assumed, to the service of peace and unity. Dr. Thomas Goodwin (puritan preacher) says, "Meekness must spring up out of one's heart, as that heart is more and more softened, and tamed, and humbled, and sweetened by the grace of God and by the indwelling Spirit of Christ."

To be meek is to be as submissive as Abraham, as self-effacing as Moses, as penitent as David, all to God's glory, for Jesus' sake, for the advance of the Gospel, and the welfare of the neighbor. Out of the many possible examples of Scripture's leaders (the judges, the prophets, the apostles), it is upon these three leaders that we will focus our attention as those who evidenced the fruit of the Spirit, meekness.

Abraham was a leader chosen by God whose entire life was characterized by the virtue meekness. Although already in Ur he seems to have been a man of import, he willingly packed up all his possessions at God's behest to go to a strange land about which he knew nothing. It was because Abraham exercised meekness towards God that he was able to maintain peace and unity amongst the herdmen by showing a spirit of meekness toward his nephew, Lot. The pious patriarch took no account that he and he alone had been given the promises of God and the whole land for his inheritance, but rather, he "condescended to Lot's equal although he could not be compared in age, dignity, or office" (Luther, *Commentary on Genesis*, p. 238).

How meekly he stands on those wind-swept plains—the title to those lands all his, clear and free—speaking softly and smoothly to avoid the confrontation which is smoldering right on the surface. Hear him as he says to Lot in honeyed tones, "We are brethren, let there be no strife between us" (Gen. 13:8). In this incident we see Abraham keeping Christ's injunction in Matthew 20:27 and 28, "And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant; Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister…."

But Abraham's supreme example of a meek and quiet spirit came near the end of his life when, after waiting nearly one hundred years for the promised son, God commands him to sacrifice his son, his only son, Isaac. See, then, this great Old Testament leader (put to the ultimate test of bearing injury patiently for God's sake) walk meekly up Mt. Moriah, lay his beloved son on the altar, and with no forthcoming explanation from God, grasp the hilt of his knife to obey God unquestioningly and plunge it deeply into his son.

In Abraham, God chose a leader/friend who was meek towards him and towards his fellow man.

No biblical example of a meek leader would be complete without Moses. For it is of Moses that we read a phrase which is found of no one else in all of Scripture: "Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth" (Num. 12:3). It is a tribute to this Old Testament leader that the saying is common yet today, "He is as meek as Moses."

And again, it was because Moses was first of all submissive towards God, voluntarily leaving the gilded courts of Egypt to spend forty long years in the wilderness of Midian as a lowly sheep-tender, that he is able to evidence that same spirit towards God's people. With what meekness he leads the complaining children of Israel all the way to the Promised Land. What meekness is his when his own brother and sister try to pull him down from the exalted position in which God has placed him. For Moses, this was the final blow to any pride or self-exalting to which he might have been inclined —his own family humbling him by its envy and ill-will. This family dispute, coupled with his wife Zipporah's earlier stand-off over the issue of the circumcision of his sons, had done much to humble and make meek the heart of this man, Moses.

And yet, as with all the Christian virtues, the most meek of men has only a small beginning of this godly virtue as is shown in the narrative of Moses when, on the very borders of Canaan, Moses, as fiery and quick-tempered as when he had slain the Egyptian taskmaster, struck the rock and called God's people rebels. How beautifully Alexander Whyte gives verse to this incident in the life of Moses:

Moses, the patriot fierce, became
The meekest man on earth,
To show us how love's quick'ning flame
Can give our souls new birth.
Moses, the man of meekest heart,
Lost Canaan by self-will,
To show where grace has done its part,
How sin defiles us still.
Thou, who hath taught me in Thy fear
Yet seest me frail at best,
O grant me loss with Moses here,
To gain his future rest.

In Moses, God chose a leader/friend who was meek towards him and towards his fellow man.

It was while David was yet a youth that God looked deeply into his boyish heart and, liking what he saw,

chose David to be king over all Israel. It was of this ruddy young man that Scripture says, "A man after God's own heart" (I Samuel 13:14). Without question, God saw much sin in that heart, sin of the grossest sort (adultery and murder!), for David was guilty of the worst of all sins beyond any other sinner in the whole Bible. But there he also beheld repentance, tears in the night, real sorrow over sin. He saw subjection to him. He saw a leader brave, fearless, and loyal, but also meek and humble. And so, Samuel must go to the unlikely sheepfolds of Bethlehem, to a lowly farmer's home, to procure Israel's greatest king.

Even though David's brothers taunted him and accused him falsely when he was sent by his father Jesse to Saul's battle camp, there was no pride in his heroic slaying of Goliath, but rather, "The Lord will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine…so that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel" (I Sam. 17). How God loved the humility, the meekness, of the young stripling from Bethlehem. In David he saw the meekness of his own dear Son.

For many years after his anointing, David had to wait patiently, at great cost to his own reputation, for the crown to be placed upon his head. During those years Saul pursued him relentlessly. In retaliation, David had had more than one opportunity to take Saul's life and thus to place the royal diadem upon his own head. In meekness he waited for God to crown him just as he had anointed him so many years before. Indeed, David's self-restraint was the only thing that prevented civil war in the land of Israel. On one occasion, David did draw his sword but, to the consternation of his men, he only cut off the skirt of Saul's garment. To the end of his days, David rued that he had even dared to take a piece of Saul's robe for, after all, in David's own words, "Saul was the Lord's anointed."

To behold David's most Christ-like example of meekness we must see him and his band of mighty men as they are walking wearily past the top of a hill. His son Absalom has risen against him and his friend Ahithophel has betrayed him. A man named Shimei of the house of Saul comes out cursing David like a wild man and throwing stones and dirt at him, David's men, hands already on their swords, are eager to do in this "dead dog." But David, walking the way of sorrow, detains his men. Willingly, he endures the insults, the slights, the injuries, and meekly he says, "Let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David… It may be that the Lord will look on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day" (II Sam. 16).

Whether David was on the hillside tending his father's sheep or performing his duties in Saul's court, whether he was in the wilderness fleeing for his life or wielding the scepter from his throne, and especially in the sanctuary, David was meek towards God and towards the neighbor. Who of us finds it easy to prostrate himself before God, putting away every excuse, crying from the depths of his soul, "I am the man!"? It is with David's Psalmist pen that we are able to most clearly see the meek, lowly, penitent spirit of Israel's greatest of kings. "I acknowledge my sin." "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" "I waited patiently for the Lord." "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart thou wilt not despise."

In David God chose a leader/friend who was meek towards him and towards his fellow man.

Of David a voice from heaven said, Thou art a man after mine own heart, and it is that same voice which thundered centuries later. This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Who is so meek a leader as Jesus Christ?

We sing of Christ in Psalter number 243:

A mighty leader, true and brave,

Ordained, exalted, strong to save.

And well we should. But listen to what Jesus says of himself:

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart."

As one authority so well put it: "So utterly did the Son of Man renounce his own words, and works, and will, that we know comparatively little of him. All was from the Father and to the Father" (Paul, F. B. Meyer, p. 40).

"Come, learn of me for I am meek." See him now as he relinquishes heaven's courts for a lowly manger. See the one who framed the starry skies and suspended the planets in their orbits hammering nails to help his father Joseph make a living. See how meekly this king sits on the foal of an ass. See him stoop to wash his disciples feet. See him now, when smitten, turn the other cheek. See him reviled and mocked, answering not a word. Hear how submissively he prays, "Not my will, but thine be done." See how meekly he bends his brow to receive a crown of thorns. With what divine meekness he pleads for us, his murderers, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

Would you be an imitator of Christ, a leader such as he? Then, "Come learn of me…I am meek." ❖

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Lies Young Women Believe and the Truth That Sets Them Free

reviewed by Tom Bergman

Lies Young Women Believe and the Truth That Sets Them Free, by Nancy Leigh DeMoss and Dannah Gresh. 2008; Moody Publishers; 198 pages, softcover

The title page of this superb book by Nancy Leigh DeMoss and Dannah Gresh shortens its title to *Lies Young Women Believe*. The full title on the cover tells the full story better. This easy-to-read book truly is about *Lies Young Women Believe and the Truth that Sets Them Free*. It is written for young women (ages 13-19) regarding twenty-five lies that Satan and this world use as weapons against them. It begins and ends with the Truth—real, absolute Truth. The Truth as we know it in Christ who is "the truth and the life."

DeMoss and Gresh write to young women in such a way that their thesis and supporting arguments are all crafted to center on God and God's word, not centered first and foremost on young women and what young women would like. Their desire to present a God-centered approach is most evident in their respect and love for God's word. Rather than evading difficult truths and sugar-coating unpalatable ones, DeMoss and Gresh take the Bible at face value for what it says. Satan is real and his attacks are real. A real Eve listened to a lie, considered the benefits of a lie, and acted upon that lie. Lies are abominable in God's sight because the one real, true, living God is a holy God.

Lies Young Women Believe and the Truth that Sets Them Free is also very much Bible-centered. DeMoss and Gresh did not write a self-help book with new-fangled, hot ideas for how to be a fantastic Christian for God. In fact, the authors present precious few new insights of their own. All they do—and this is exactly what makes this book a great treasure—is carefully, patiently, and very understandingly apply the truths of Scripture to the troubles that young women face every day. Often I was impressed by how the authors were able to cut to the heart of the matter with genuine love and concern. They could step on my toes and make me thankful for stepping on them!

DeMoss and Gresh use Scripture to fight against lies such as these:

#3 God should fix my problems.

#10 It's OK to go out with a non-Christian.

#12 I can't handle the loneliness of staying pure.

#13 It's OK to be one person at home and a different person with others…especially online.

#19 I can't overcome my sin.

#24 Having a career outside the home is more valuable and fulfilling than being "just" a wife and mom.

#25 What I do now doesn't affect the future.

When you read the book for yourself, you will appreciate Nancy Leigh DeMoss and Dannah Gresh for what they have done. Their knowledge of the Bible, their very personal awareness of teen problems, and their patient instruction make them two of the most authentic authors I've read in a long time. I look forward to reading more of their books.

There is very little to object to in the book. It's not perfect, but I bought copies for my girls, Tessa and Molly. Although it will be a while before they're teenagers, I want to make sure that I have this book to give to them.

I give high marks to *Lies Young Women Believe and the Truth That Sets Them Free*. Read it and use it. Check out their website (www.liesyoungwomenbelieve.com) for a preview. ❖

Tom is a member of Providence Protestant Reformed Church in Hudsonville, Michigan.

Church News

BAPTISMS

"For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Act 2:39

The sacrament of holy baptism was administered to:

Mackenzie Joy, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joel Westra—Calvary, IA

Emily Grace, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. James Holleman—Crete, IL

Rowan Henry, son of Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Medema—Crete, IL

Symone Korynn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joel Holstege—Faith, MI

Katherine Adel, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jordan Whiteley—First, MI

Jackson Benjamin, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dave Flier—First, MI

Nolan John, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dave Moelker—Grace, MI

Libby Ruth, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Tim Kleyn—Grace, MI

Elizabeth Joy, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Matt DeBoer—Grandville, MI

Blake Annamae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Dustin Hall—Grandville, MI

Sophia Lynne, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Brent Boverhof—Holland, MI

Brittany Leanne, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. James DeZwarte—Holland, MI

Gabriel James, son of Rev. & Mrs. Daniel Holstege—Holland, MI

Miles Jospeh, son of Mr. & Mrs. Dave Faber—Hudsonville, MI

Tyler Joel, son of Mr. & Mrs. David Haan—Hull, IA

Nolan Jacob, son of Mr. & Mrs. Chuck Cammenga—Loveland, CO

Elaina Jane, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Hiskes—Peace, IL

Aubre Jeannette, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Aaron Lanting—Peace, IL

Austin Lee, son of Mr. & Mrs. Brent Kuiper—Providence, MI

Dana Lynn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Postmus—Redlands, CA

Juliet Paige, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Darin Gritters—Redlands, CA

Elena Faith, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Eric Westra—Sioux Falls, SD

Nash Robert, son of Mr. & Mrs. Mike Holstege—Trinity, MI

Adult baptism was administered to Debbie Murray—Ballymena, N Ireland

CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

"Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established." Proverbs 4:26

Public confession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ was made by:

Joel VanDrunen—Crete, IL

Connor Lanting—Crete, IL

Jason Lenting—Crete, IL

Kevin Huizing—Edmonton, CAN

Brad Huber—Grandville, MI

Matt Kaiser—Grandville, MI

Andrew VanOverloop—Grandville, MI

Joshua Cammenga—Holland, MI

Brent DeJong—Holland, MI

Jessica Haveman—Holland, MI

Jared Bosveld, Michael Kalsbeek and Renae Koole—Hope, MI

Holly Cnossen—Hudsonville, MI

Brent Hanko—Lynden, WA

Emily Feenstra, Adrian Gaastra, Carol Hopkins, Charlie Hopkins and Brad Potjer—Redlands, CA

Doug Hoksbergen—Sioux Falls, SD

Katrina Langerak—Southeast, MI

Alex Kaiser, Jeffrey Hofman, Stphanie Looyenga, Eric Schipper and Jessica VanDonselaar—Southwest, MI

MARRIAGES

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Proverbs 3: 5 & 6

United in the bond of holy matrimony were:

Mr. Geoff Veldman and Miss Becki Looyenga—Grandville, MI

"LITTLE LIGHTS"
... let it shine !

Lights in the Night

by Connie Meyer

Lena opened the door and stepped outside. A rush of cold air pressed onto her nose and cheeks. She pulled her knitted hat down over her ears. The night was quiet, and dark. She put her hands in her pockets and walked to the shed. Dad had asked for someone to get an armful of kindling wood for the fireplace. Lena had volunteered.

A faint whistling swish came from a row of fir trees swaying in the breeze across the yard. A screech came from an owl waiting for prey in a nearby field. Lena stopped by the shed door and put her hand on the knob. A yard light mounted on the barn shone through a group of oak trees growing near the shed. The light cast eerie shadows of the branches onto the snow. She wondered why she had volunteered to get the wood. She didn't know how dark and cold it had become.

She grabbed the wood and shut the door. She looked up at the bluish-black sky. The stars were out, and the moon. The owl screeched once more, this time nearer. A dog barked in the distance. Something rustled behind the shed. She dropped a piece of wood. She breathed hard.

Lena knew she didn't have to be afraid. The stars looked friendly. The moon was like a big smile, kind of sideways. God made it all. The dark and the light were his.

Lena picked up the piece of wood that she had dropped and walked back to the house. She looked at the stars and moon once more. No, she didn't have to be afraid. God knew the stars by name. And he knew hers, too.

Find the underlined words in the puzzle below:
Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names. Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite (Psalm 147:1–5).

T	O	G	E	T	H	E	R	I	K	C	D	N	A
P	R	N	S	R	O	F	S	G	O	O	D	T	P
K	O	I	O	T	N	R	L	R	M	M	H	L	S
H	U	D	U	G	A	T	H	E	R	E	T	H	T
P	R	N	R	E	M	E	L	A	M	L	E	E	S
R	H	A	L	H	E	A	R	T	H	Y	L	A	A
A	S	T	A	R	S	K	L	G	T	L	L	L	C
I	B	S	N	U	M	B	E	R	E	F	A	E	T
S	G	R	R	R	I	E	H	T	D	T	C	T	U
E	N	E	K	O	R	B	H	Y	N	K	W	H	O
R	J	D	W	F	S	U	W	B	I	D	O	T	H
E	I	N	F	I	N	I	T	E	B	D	U	P	O
W	D	U	N	L	P	L	E	A	S	A	N	T	T
O	C	G	L	C	M	D	F	O	R	H	D	J	N
P	R	A	I	S	E	S	P	R	A	I	S	E	U

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

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Open Dialogue
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Mystery
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Uncertainty, tolerance, lack of conviction...what is happening in our society today? Why do so many college students turn away from the Truth? What is the Emergent Church Movement? What makes Rob Bell so popular today?

Join us as we look to discuss these questions in the light of God's Word and find Truth in a postmodern world.

JANUARY 27
7PM

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Rev G Eriks
Rev A Lanning

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