BEACON LIGHTS
For Protestant Reformed Youth
THE JANUARY ISSUE FOR 1952
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PRAYER AND ANOTHER YEAR

As the old year is dying we, as covenant Young People, are again placed by our heavenly Father at the dawn of a New Year. But really, is it a NEW year? Do we not see through the doorway of this coming year, as we stand at the threshold, the same old world of sin and darkness, toil and labor, war and destruction, sickness, sorrow, and death? Isn't it true that also on New Year's morning we will awaken in our bodies of this earthy, with the same old sinful human natures which are so very, very difficult to overcome? Yes, indeed within us we have an old sinful nature and all is old and sinful round about us for there is nothing new under the sun and old things have not passed away.

How then must we enter this coming year as Young People? What shall our attitude be?

Shall we choose the path of least resistance which blindly turns us away from reality and then, in a superficial way, shall we extend to our young friends an empty, shallow "happy new year" greeting? Are we perhaps too young to trouble ourselves with the sin and misery that lies within us and in this present world? Would not life be far more worthwhile for ourselves and others too, if we would make a noble attempt to forget all that which is distasteful and put forth a positive effort to find some so-called good that wicked men can do? Should we join with those who are aiming to make this world a better place to live by striving for earthly peace and prosperity? Or if we are of the opinion that such is impossible shall we just hopelessly resign ourselves to uselessness and passively wait for the end of all things to come? If in 1952, young friends, we assume any of these attitudes then either our hope is anchored in men and things of this passing world or we are completely without hope and can only give up in despair.

But we are covenant Young People and therefore this cannot be—for God is ever faithful and plenteous in mercy.
Do you experience this blessedness? Then on the dawn of the first day of also this coming year you will bow your head with the Publican of old and pray, “God be merciful to me a sinner.”

Much is implied in this brief and beautiful prayer for it is the expression of one who has been taught from above to know himself as he really is, and when, young friends, this prayer is also our prayer, we do not turn away or try to forget reality but humbly we confess before our God that we are sinners. We realize as we still stand at the threshold of 1952 that in our selves we are incapable of following the right road and can only stumble, falter and fall far short of the goal. We are afraid to travel on into the year by ourselves and therefore, cry for His mercy and also this plea gives evidence that within us there is a feeling of complete unworthiness. In this prayer we do not approach God and ask to be dealt with according as we deserve for we know that we are entitled to nothing but death and destruction. We acknowledge that of ourselves we can earn nothing in God’s good favor and therefore we pray, only on the basis of Christ’s merits, that God be merciful. Furthermore, in this prayer there is the expression of an attitude of childlike trust and confidence that if only God will be merciful all will be well with us. How often throughout this old year which is slipping away into history have we forgotten this blessed truth, and, being dissatisfied with the way of the Lord, even petitioned from Him things which to our thoughts seemed much better and yet were not? How often have we failed to completely trust in His mercy and instead placed our hope and confidence in our selves and the things which can be seen and touched? Think of the many times that, because of our weakness, we failed to see the goodness of the way of the Lord. When in this past year we were led over paths of trouble or sorrow were we able as covenant children to put our trust in Him who ruleth over all things and causes them to work to the good of us who were called by Him from before the foundations of the earth? Oh, to be sure, even as regenerated children it is so extremely difficult to wholly confide in God and experience the blessed assurance that although our way may be along roads of sorrow and distress yet that it is the road of mercy which alone leads to eternal life and true happiness.

Let us, young friends, throughout this coming year evermore strive by God’s grace to join in prayer with the Publican by confessing in every thought, word and deed our own emptiness and God’s overflowing fullness. Let us fight the good fight of faith ever striving to place our whole-hearted trust and confidence in God for in this way He gives us to taste of the peace that passeth all understanding. It is through true humble prayer that we have hope for the coming year, for Christ has spoken in His word that this meek and penitent Publican went to his house justified, and if we are justified, then all is well.

What a blessed and happy new year
will be ours if only we can be assured in the midst of all earthly sorrow and distress that God is well pleased with us. Then in sorrow we have joy, in war we have peace, in adversity we have prosperity and in very death we have life—for if God be for us who can be against us?

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1951

VANITY OF VANITIES

The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.
—Eccl. 1:9, 10.

The Preacher, the son of David, was certainly looking at the dark side of things when he penned these words of Ecclesiastes 1, wasn’t he? Surely, it isn’t quite as dismal as he pictures it to be.

ALL, is not vanity, is it?

There are many joys in this life and much satisfaction and pleasure to be derived and enjoyed from “all the works that are done under the sun.”

It is quite true that these pleasures and enjoyments do not last as long as we would like them to and there is often much that is bitter amongst the sweet, but if we try to overlook and forget about our sorrows and set our mind on the pleasant things of life and enjoy ourselves with what we have, we can find happiness.

We are entering upon a new year (1952).

We have passed another milestone.

We are called to say something in regard to 1951 and also in regard to 1952.

Shall we say, “there is no new thing under the sun?”

Certainly, when we see the rapidly changing scene and the tremendous advance of man in every field of endeavor it seems illogical to say “there is no new thing.” Why, there’s something new every morning. It is almost impossible to recognize the world of today as being the same as that of, let us say, 1900. How then can this be?

What we have advanced thus far is based solely upon human reasoning and superficial observation, as a person devoid of true wisdom and having no knowledge of God’s holy word, would look at and appraise things.

God’s word is true and every man a liar.

We may not reason from carnal observation and from human philosophy apart from His holy revelation. So, when His word speaks and says “there is no new thing under the sun,” we also say the same after Him.

1952 will be just like 1951 was; nothing new; nothing different.

Some will be born; some will die.

Some will be ill; others will be restored.

Some will be sad; some will be glad.

Some will become rich; others become poor.

So it has always been and so it will
always be—"Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; ALL is VANITY."

The old year of 1951, with all its happenings is settled. It was a good year; a year filled with God’s mercies and bounties.

He dealt not with us according to our sins and counted not our iniquities against us. He sent chastisements, sorrows and pains. He sent some of our boys out from us, taking them from our homes and firesides. Yes, He even sent sickness and death but He did it all in His love.

ALL that He did was well done. He knows the end from the beginning.

He sent us joy and gladness for we know that He does all these things and that He does them well. Thanks be unto Him alone.

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1952

GLORY OF GLORIES

All things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
—II Cor. 5:17b.

A glorious year is dawning.
A year is dawning filled with hope and joy for those who are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

We have passed another milestone, it is true, but each milestone brings us nearer to that eternal dawn which shall usher us into His presence.

With this glorious goal; this inheritance incorruptible and undefiled in view, put off the old man, which is corrupt ac-
cording to the deceitful lusts; and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

The things temporal, which we can see, are always the same, although they may often change their forms and shapes but the things eternal and of God, are always new, for He is the one who says—Rev. 21:5—"Behold, I make all things new."

We enter then upon this new year of 1952 assured that it will be a good year; a prosperous year, regardless of how things and circumstances may belie this fact.

We look for a new heaven and a new earth; and for those who so walk "seeking by faith a better country," the Lord has this precious promise—"I will be your God and ye shall be my people."

Come what may—Whether war or peace; destruction or tranquility—He will be the same yesterday, today and forever—

In 1951—in 1952—and unto all eternity. Glory of Glories!

S. D. Y.

PSALM 85

O Lord to us Thy mercy show,  
And Thy salvation now bestow;  
We wait to hear what God will say;  
Peace to His people He will speak,  
And to His saints, but let them seek  
No more in folly's path to stray.

Number 232, Psalter
OUR FAITH IN GOD

"I believe in God!"

These words constitute the confession of the living Christian. It may be said that all of the Christian's life and faith are embodied in that profession because God Himself is all. More particularly it is the Reformed Christian who is consciously aware of this. Always he begins and ends with all things in GOD! A life that excludes God or that gives to Him only a place of lip-service is neither Reformed nor Christian. To believe in God, therefore, is to have our life filled with His holy presence and to taste in all things the riches of His adorable grace. That joy and blessing is the experience only of living Christians.

I believe in God....

At present we are not so much concerned with the dogmatic implication of this profession for we now assume that our readers understand that to believe IN GOD is wholly different from believing that GOD IS or even believing certain things about God the latter may be perfectly true. To believe IN GOD is to embrace Him with an experiential knowledge, to confide in Him alone in all things with unwavering trust, and to extract from Him grace and mercy according to the proportions of our daily need. It is to feel constantly that God is "eternal, incomprehensible...perfectly wise, just, good, and the overflowing fount of all good. He is the cause, origin and beginning of all things." (Belg. Conf. Arts. 1, 8) To him that believeth there is none like God, neither is there any good outside of HIM.

At present, however, we are more concerned about the fact that true faith IN GOD has a very real controlling influence over the life of the believer. This influence manifests itself in all our works and where this is not the case there can be no assurance of faith. Consequently, to stimulate our Christian Living we need to search out the effect that our individual faith IN GOD has upon the things we do and say in life.

This is all important because if we then are sincere and serious about all this, it will follow that "WHAT" we believe concerning GOD will be as important as "THAT" we believe. IT IS THE CONTENT OF OUR FAITH IN GOD THAT DETERMINES THE COURSE OF OUR LIFE.

Although we do not have the space to trace all of the practical implications of this truth, we may use a couple
examples. To employ the words of our
Confession, "we believe that GOD IS
JUST." It is our conviction that one
who is not perfectly just cannot be God.
All pure justice resides in Him alone.
Just how then does this knowledge of
faith concerning God affect us in our
everyday living? Because God is JUST
we also know that He is terribly dis-
pleased with all sin, original as well
as actual. He is angry with the sin-
ner. His wrath is in their house. On
the other hand God delights in those
that keep His word and testimony and
that follow the paths of truth. He
crowns them with His favor and love.
All this is but the reaction of His jus-
tice. If God did not react this way He
would not be just for even simplest ju-
risprudence tells us that it is right that
the evil-doer be punished and the righ-
teous blessed. Thus, this knowledge
constrains the child of faith to always
and in all things strive after obedience
to the Divine precepts so that he may
in that way enjoy the blessing of his
God.

We also confess that "God is the
overflowing fountain of all good". These
are not empty words but they are ex-
pressions of a very fundamental con-
viction of our faith. In this connec-
tion we do well to signally mark out
and emphasize the little word "ALL".
ALL good, we believe, is out of God be-
cause He alone is GOOD. Now, this
belief concerning God also directly af-
facts the life of the conscientious be-
liever. To him there is nothing good
apart from God. The world of sin and
godlessness which is divorced from God
and allied unto the devil has no appeal
to him because he "believes in God and
is a seeker of that which is good".
Knowing that this cannot be found a-
part from God, he willingly turns his
back upon all that the world of evil
offers. He chooses "the reproach of
Christ rather than the riches of
Egypt." (Heb. 11:25) This Living
Christian has no worldly-amusement
problem!

And so we might add much more and
point out how each thing that faith pos-
tulates about God affects our life. Ev-
ery acknowledgment of true faith ne-
cessitates another change in our life
that by nature is without faith and God.
Hence, the less we know and confess
concerning God, the poorer our Chris-
tian Practical Living will also be, while
the more complete and perfect our
conession is the greater will be the in-
fluence of that faith upon our life.
Then our Christian Living is greatly
enriched.

How complete is your confession?
How rich is your life?

Do YOU believe in God?

WHAT then do you believe concern-
ing Him?

And does your faith then determine
"what you do" and "how you do it" in
all of your living before God's face?

See that it does, fellow Christians!
For if it does not, how can we profess
"faith in God" and how is it possible
to experience "Christian Living"? And
(Continued on page 16)
Wm. O. Douglas has written an interesting and worthwhile book, entitled “Strange Lands and Friendly People.”

This is a description of his travel through the Middle East and Asia, thru such lands as Persia, Iraq, Syria, Palestine, and India. He travelled the roads that were not usually travelled by tourists and was able to meet the common people as well as the leaders of the different places visited. He discussed the problems of the individual countries as well as the world problems which are today so closely related.

Several points of view are presented about the present problems. From memory I recall the following: a) that the way to help Asia in its present crisis is not with dollars but with education; b) that the demand of all the peoples of Asia is for freedom from outside domination; c) that there is an awakening of these peoples to their potential in the world.

The last chapter contains a summary. From it we read the following, “The world is different than we in America have thought. Asia is in revolution. There are rumblings in every village from the Mediterranean to the Pacific. A force is gathering for a mighty effort. We think of that force as Communist. Communists exploit the situation, stirring every discontent and making the pot boil. The revolutions which are brewing are not, however, Communist in origin nor will they end even if Soviet Russia is crushed thru war. The revolutionaries are hungry men who have been exploited from time out of mind. This is the century of their awakening and mobilization.”

As the title of the book suggests, Douglas conceives of these peoples as friendly. They were friendly to him, and will be to the United States or any country which aids them in their program of progress.

The thesis is certainly true that capital and military help cannot be the means to gain these countries, as allies. Aid such as that often awakens a fear of the power who possesses and gives it. For it is human to seek to gain with giving. Only real friendship will gain friends.

The question is, however, can we expect a real friendship of those nations which have been, to a certain extent at least, used to add to our growth and wealth? Can we expect friendship from men who make mistakes because of their greed and selfishness? Is such idealism the result of the teaching of the Word of God and history?

(Continued on page 10)
Dear Mr. Editor:

In the November issue of Beacon Lights the young people of our Oaklawn Society sounded a warning to our federation to proceed cautiously in legislating rules and regulations for controlling our publication. The warning as such should be honored by all concerned. The contents of their suggestions in general also should be heeded when they are involved. However, unfamiliarity with the situation appears to be the reason for (1) an inaccurate presentation of what occurred, (2) a failure to deal with the problem involved.

First of all, the editor was not forbidden to write on any subject because it was a matter of controversy in the church. Nor because of a particular view which he took on a controversial subject. In fact, he was never forbidden to write on any subject. A request was made of him that he refrain from writing on the term condition and related subjects because of the undesirable practices which accompanied his previous writings.

Before we can show a failure on the part of the previous writing to deal with this matter, a consideration must be given to these undesirable practices. Primarily the request was made because the editor began to place certain individuals in a commonly accepted undesirable class without any justifiable reason. It might be referred to as name-calling but an escape might be sought on the basis of a technical term. In all justice to the editor, board members of that time, and all other interested parties, it is but fair to say, that the editor had previously developed much Board opposition (percentage-wise) on the matter by an unwarranted attempt to develop a pessimistic view toward the strength of our churches on the part of our readers. The latter is mentioned because it too was influential in the Board’s losing confidence in the editor to handle the issue in a constructive fashion.

If the authors of the aforementioned article mean to include such practical conflicts when they refer to doubts and questions with respect to the ‘orthodoxy’ of the editor; then the writer would agree also with their solution to this problem. A possible reservation would be that an agreeable solution could be attained without the necessity of a dismissal. If this was their intention then the inadequacy of their article referred to is only the result of a misinterpretation.

To prevent the formulation of any undesirable restrictions which may hamper future publications, the writer recommends that the committee responsible request the next delegate board to maintain the status quo, and continue to support the action of its Board as it has done in the past year. This is done first of all because the present dispute arose out of a peculiar situation. The
editor happened to be a member of the body responsible for his appointment. It is believed that much of the disturbance would have been avoided had the editor excused himself from the meetings when his position was being discussed. Now it appears that much of his action was influenced by personal opinions and not expressions of the Board.

In the second place the recommendation is made because the Board has proved itself diligent enough and capable of preventing an aggressive editor from usurping control of the Federation paper. This attempted confiscation is proved by the contents of his extensive argumentation at Board meetings. Further by the motion made on the floor of the convention contrary to the sense of the preceding action of the Delegate Board. If any action should be taken by our next Delegate Board it should be to secure the control of Beacon Lights within the jurisdiction of the Federation Board. It should be obvious to anyone that a person appointed to a position can expect notification at any time; that his services are no longer desired if he is producing unsatisfactory material. It is shocking that ministers will permit a blow to be made against the respect they hold by refusing to write for Beacon Lights and associate the cause with the dismissal of one of their personal supporters who has failed to satisfy the Board responsible for their mutual appointment.

No other intelligible reason is evident. Certainly they have the wisdom to understand that an appointing body can dismiss those whom it appoints.

A final request of the committee appointed to study the proposals made in this connection. Should your decision alter the status quo may this request be honored: That all matter relative to the question discovered from old minutes, and your recommendation be published early in order that it may receive due consideration prior to the convention.

Anthony Vanden Berge

CURRENT COMMENTS
(Continued from page 8)

This book stirs our interest in these areas of the world which will play the important part in future events. It increases our knowledge of these lands and will serve to arouse our interest for further study in the past history of these peoples. Especially since they also are the lands which concern the history of the Bible. It causes us to realize that as true as it was before the first coming of the Christ that all the nations were used by the Lord to prepare for the coming event of the birth of His Son, so true is it now that they are playing the part determined by God to prepare for the Second Coming of our Saviour.
Concerning: Pelagianism

In the church of God where all salvation is ascribed to God alone there is no doctrinal error which is more detested than that of Pelagianism. Our fathers of Dort in 1618-19 dared to speak of those who ascribed any part of salvation to the free-will of man apart from the grace and Spirit of God as those “who bring again out of hell the Pelagian error.”

There surely must be something very drastically wrong with this Pelagianism.

Indeed, there is!

Well may we beware that we do not ever ascribe one wit of our salvation to our natural inclinations or ability.

But we are anticipating. Let us begin to tell you something about this Pelagius and his teaching, which indeed is un-Scriptural, non-Biblical and un-Reformed!

Pelagius was a British monk, who lived during the fourth and fifth centuries. Augustine refers to him as a Briton. Jerome on the other hand, states that he was from Ireland. It seems probable, however, that he was of British birth. This seems likely since also Prosper, Marius Mercator, refer to him as having been a Briton.

It was from Rome, however, that Pelagius advanced his erroneous views in the years 409-411 A.D. He propagated these views mainly through a Commentary on the Epistles of Paul. Thus Pelagius lived not only as a contemporary of Augustine but he also lived within the same city with him. Their lives were very closely intertwined. They both belonged to the North African Church of that day. And these two men could not by any means see eye to eye on the question of sin and grace, of how we are only saved by grace alone and through faith.

It touched the perennial question of sovereign grace.

This question is the burning question in the midst of the church; it is always and again the point of departure from the truth when the Pelagian error is followed and adhered to.

What was the teaching of this Pelagius?

The following quotation from “The History Of Christian Doctrine” by Shedd may suffice to give you readers some understanding of this error of Pelagianism and its far-reaching consequences. Says Shedd, “The fundamental points of his theory are the following. The soul of man by creation is neither holy nor sinful. His body by creation is mortal. The fall of Adam introduced no change of any kind into either the souls or the bodies of his posterity. Every man,
therefore, when born into the world is what Adam was when created. At birth, each man's physical nature is liable to disease and death, as was Adam's at creation; and, at birth, each man's voluntary faculty (the ability to will) like Adam's at creation, is undetermined either to sin or holiness. Being thus characterless, with a will undecided either for good or evil, and not in the least affected by Adam's apostasy, each individual man, after birth, commences his own voluntariness, originates his own character, and decides his own destiny, by the choice of either right or wrong. Temporary death is no part of the punishment of sin, because it befalls man by creation. His body is mortal as such and irrespective of sin. Eternal death is therefore the whole of the punishment of man's sin."

This quotation is, of course, a very grievous and dangerous error. Surely, what Pelagius teaches is not the truth of the Word of God as we confess it in the Heidelberg Catechism, Belgic Confession Artt. 14, 15 and Canons of Dort, Chapter III, IV. Nor is this the teaching of Holy Writ as given in Gen. 1:26ff.

I advise, however, that you study this quotation carefully for it is very compact. Briefly stated we have here the following:

1. Man is not created good, ethically good in the image of God to rightly know and serve his Creator, but he is created indifferent. He has the will to choose in which direction he will go. That is then his freedom. And physical death is as natural as to be born, to eat and to breathe, to marry and to be given in marriage.

2. Every child born to man is not born and conceived in sin and subject to wrath, but he is born as pure and good as Adam was in Paradise, that is, indifferent. Every man decides his own lot.

When Pelagius is asked how to explain that man is so universally bad, and that there seems to be no exception to this rule he replies that not all men are universally bad. Again we quote Shedd: "The general, but not strictly universal prevalence of sin in the world is accounted for, by the power of temptation, and the influence of example and habit. It is possible for any man to be entirely sinless, and there have been some such, even among the heathen. The grace of the Holy Spirit is not absolutely, but only relatively necessary; in order to holiness; it renders its attainment easier to man. Regeneration does not consist in the renewal of the will by the internal operation of Divine efficiency, but in the illumination of the intellect by the truth, the stimulation of the will by the threatenings of the law and the promise of future rewards, and by the remission of sin through the Divine indulgence. God's grace is designed for all, but man must make himself worthy of it by an honest striving after virtue. The Son of God became man, in order, by His perfect teaching and example, to afford the strongest motive for self-improvement, and thereby redeems us. As we are imitators of Adam in sin, so we are to become imitators of Christ in virtue."
I have this question:

At Peniel there wrestled with Jacob (Gen. 32:24-31) a "man" who at the close of the struggle turned out to be "The Angel of the Lord." What did it all mean? What did the Lord have to say to Jacob through that experience?

Reply—

To understand this event in Jacob's life we must set out with the following remark. In those ancient times it was considered right and proper that the oldest son receive most of his father's estates and goods and the rule over the clan or family at his father's demise. This was known as the birthright. In the families of the three patriarchs—Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—it would include the "promise;" all that the promise held forth, in the final instance, Christ and all the blessings of His cross.

Now Esau was the first-born. Yet God hated Esau and loved Jacob and gave him the promise. This was not doing Esau any injustice. For Esau was an ill-deserving sinner, lost and undone. In the sight of God he could have no rights except the right to be damned. And this was just as true of Jacob. Yet God chose him unto life everlasting in Christ. Accordingly the Lord also brought Jacob into being as a child of grace in Christ and commanded him to fight the good fight of faith; and in the way of this warfare Jacob would supplant, overcome, Esau, representative of the world that lies in darkness and reprobated, and inherit the promise. This was his calling. It was pre-indicated by his taking his brother by the heel in the womb. He must supplant his brother by faith. Of this he was also continually being reminded even by the name that by divine direction was given him. Jacob they had called him, thus supplanter. Such is the meaning of this name. A meaningful name is this name Jacob. It is a name by which every saint desires to be known, as appears from the Scriptures at Isa. 44:4-6, "I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed... And they shall spring up among the grass, as willows by the water courses. And one shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob..."

Jacob's calling was plain also to himself. He must overcome by faith and not by making his flesh his arm and relying upon that arm to get him the victory.

And yet that was often his sin. He was making flesh his arm when he got the profane Esau, weary from the hunt and famished, to sell him his birthright for a mess of food. Certainly his imagining that through that carnal transaction he had gotten hold of the blessing, was vain.

Then on a day Isaac was sitting in
his tent calculating to bless Esau, his elder son, when he should have returned to him with the venison. As instructed and pushed along by his frantic mother, Jacob passed himself off on his aged and blind father as Esau and was blessed of him. Once more he had made his flesh his arm. And once more apparently his arm had gotten him the victory.

Jacob entered the employ of Laban for twenty long years. Could Laban have gotten his way with this fugitive from the results of his sin—Esau was determined to kill him—he would have left the service of his uncle empty-handed. Yet he returned to Canaan with nearly all of Laban’s possessions. He had applied the arts of his trade. (I refer to his doing with those pilled rods). Once more apparently his own arm had gotten him the victory, this time over Laban.

Jacob was now returning to the promised land. They had arrived at the brook Jabbok. It was midnight. Jacob had sent all that was to him over the brook and he remained alone. Of a sudden a “man” came forth from the darkness. He threw himself upon Jacob and a struggle ensued. Jacob put forth a great effort to gain the ascendancy over his mysterious antagonist, but to no avail. He was unable to overcome the man. He gathered his strength for another try, when the “man” touched the hollow of his thigh and lo! he hung helpless in the “man’s” arms. For his thigh was out of joint.

By that one touch of the “man’s” hand he was made to realize, as in the twinkling of an eye, that it was the Lord against whom he was pitting his carnal strength in the attempt to overcome Him, God Almighty. What unutterable folly!

Yet verily that precisely was the vain business in which Jacob had been engaged not merely in the hour of that night but at intervals through the years. His getting the famished Esau to sell him the birthright in exchange for some food—what was that doing other than an attempt to overcome God and secure the blessing by the employment of the weapons of the flesh. For Esau was nothing in himself. He lived and moved and had his being in God so that in this point of view it was always God with whom Jacob had to do and with whose power he was matching his carnal ingenuity.

But here at the Jabbok he learned his lesson. As enlightened by the Spirit he perceived what the Lord was saying to him through that visitation. It was this: that he must wrestle with God indeed for the blessing but as armed with the weapons of the Spirit—with prayer of true contrition, and confession of sin and of faith in Christ and His Father. And so he did. Especially the Scriptures at Hosea 12:3 make this clear. Here the statement occurs. “Yea, he (Jacob) had power over the angel and prevailed: he wept and made supplication unto him...” And as so weeping and supplicating he clave to the Lord, the God of his salvation, when finally the Lord said to him (Gen.32:26), “Let me go for the morning ascendeth.” Not
that the Lord would leave him there without hearkening unto his cry, but this He said only to inspire Jacob to cleave to Him all the more. And so he did as he sobbed, “I will not let Thee go, except Thou bless me.” His prayer was heard. The Lord now said to him, “What is thy name?” He replied, “Jacob.” The Lord said to him, “Thy name shall be called no more Jacob. . . .” By these words the Lord was not freeing him of this name. How could this be, if as was shown, the Lord by His Spirit would inspire the spiritual seed of this penitent to call themselves by this very name—Jacob (Isa. 44). The name is really retained and its meaning enriched by the addition of another. “But Israel (shall thy name be called); for thou hast wrestled with God and with men and hast prevailed.” He is Jacob, is this the penitent, the supplanter of Esau, of the world, through faith and the good fight or wrestling of faith. And verily he overcomes. And his victory is again his faith, which is equivalent to saying that his victory is Christ. And therefore he is also Israel. Wrestling with God and with man, he prevails. That is the new element of thought contained in the name “Israel.” He prevails, does this wrestler, for he weeps and makes supplication. He must not therefore anymore be called merely a Jacob. For, this supplanter, wrestler, has power—with God and with men. The two names supplement each other.

(It is evident what a mistake it is to take the name “Jacob” as born by this patriarch to mean supplanter in the sense of deceiver and to make it apply to the sinful nature of this saint and the name “Israel” to the new-born man in him.)

This penitent has power with God indeed. And what a power he has with God now! Behold, God clasps him to his heart in Christ and by His Spirit He whispers in his soul these very words, “Thou are Israel. For thou hast power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.” In a word, God blesses him there. Thus he knows that he is Israel. For God tells him so. And he has peace. And what God will do for him? Everything! God will cleanse him from all his sins and clothe him with perfection and glory and give him and his seed all things in Christ. For he is Jacob-Israel.

The Lord made special mention of Jacob’s having wrestled also with men; with Esau, with Laban, with the world that lieth in darkness. The reference here is not to his past carnal doings certainly, but to the good fight of faith that through the years he in principle had been fighting by the mercy of God, regenerated and converted and that pre-

The view that at the Jabbok Jacob was viously he was devoid of essential goodness is untenable in the light of the Scriptures. He was a true believer all his life but a believer with only a beginning of true obedience as are all God’s people as long as they lie in the midst of their death. Here at the Jabbok the Lord lifted him up to a higher spiritual level. As never before he tasted that the Lord is good. And there-
fore he craved to know more of God, his wonderful friend. And so he said to the Lord, "Tell me, I pray thee, thy name," by which is to be understood a full revelation of God's glories in the face of Christ. But he lived among the shadows of the Old Dispensation. In the words of John, the Spirit was not yet. Hence he was not yet prepared for the reception of that which he asked. And so the Lord replied, "Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name?" Wherefore? Because the Lord had created in him a thirst after God. And therefore the Lord also granted his request in a measure. For the statement that follows reads, "And the Lord blessed him there."

"And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel," meaning: before God's face. For says Jacob, "I have seen God's face and lived." He, apart from God's grace, a vile sinner—he saw God's face not frowning but smiling down upon him. For he wept and made supplication. And therefore he lived! He perished not. What a wonder! wonder of God's grace.

CHRISTIAN LIVING
(Continued from page 7)
then, one more question. This one is very important!

Christian, what are you doing to increase your faith in God so that your life with HIM may be wondrously enriched? Remember the degree of your faith determines the warmth of real "Christian...ian Liv...ing!"

The following is a list of donations for the January issue of Beacon Lights. We acknowledge with thanks:

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BIBLE OUTLINE

OUTLINE 13

III. GOD’S PREPARATIONS REVEALED BY THE SPIRIT
(I Cor. 2:9-13)

a. The Things Revealed.

The things revealed are the things God has prepared for them that love Him. “But as it is written: Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.”

In these words, we have hidden the eternal and adorable wisdom of God. Hidden behind the things of sight and sense, is the eternal love of God which ordered that all things should be adapted to the final glory of Himself in His people. If we have eyes to see it, we will observe that all things in history move with an unseen hand to their ordered destiny. In the center of history is the Christ for Whom are all things and about Whom all things revolve. They were created by Him and for Him. And through Him, they are also for His people.

They are the things God has prepared for them that love Him. Ultimately this refers to the new creation, the new heavens and earth wherein righteousness shall dwell, which is the inheritance of the saints in light. They are prepared eternally in God’s counsel, and are now being prepared in history.

A few years ago when Mr. K. Van Spronsen of the Netherlands visited among us he made this startling observation in one of his speeches: “Wereld geschiedenis is Kerk geschiedenis.” Translated this would be: World history is Church history. It is well that we understand this. It means that all things in time are for the Church, for her realization and welfare. The Korean war, for instance, is not of any importance by itself. Its real importance is that it must help to realize God’s Cause and serve the Church of Jesus Christ. Thus also we must understand that meaning of all things. The apostle in Romans 8 expresses the truth this way: “All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.”

Concerning these things which God has prepared, the text emphasizes their greatness. We must notice that eye, ear, and heart are not able to perceive them. This, of course, magnifies their splendor and beauty, their preciousness. But it also emphasizes their quantity. They are, oh so many, these things which God has laid up in store for those who love Him.
b. The Medium Of Revelation.

It is not human wisdom that deciphers these things and reveals them to us. This is clearly implied in the quotation in verse 9. One looks in vain for a text from which the apostle literally quotes. Here again we have an instance where he quotes and gives to the quotation his own sense. Apparently the passage referred to is Isaiah 64:4, where we read: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, what he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him." You will notice here that only the eye and the ear are mentioned. But in our text the apostle also adds 'the heart.' It is evident that he understands perception to be more than a physical sensation in the eye and ear. It also requires interpretation in the heart which is the seat of all spiritual reflections, out of which are all the issues of life. Hence it is not improbable that the apostle also combines the passage in Isa. 64:4 with that of Isa. 65:17 where we read: "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." This last phrase 'nor come into mind' may also be translated: "nor come upon the heart." If this is so, then we have the three instruments of perception and understanding, the eye, ear, and heart, mentioned by the apostle. Now the apostle declares plainly that this hidden wisdom of God concerning the things God has prepared could never be fathomed, thought out, deciphered by man's wisdom. Divine wisdom can never be the object of human investigation, nor can it be ascertained from the things which are seen or experienced by human senses.

Shall these things be perceived and understood by us, God must reveal them to us. And this is exactly what He did. "But God has revealed them unto us by His Spirit." Literally the text reads: "For to us God has made known through the Spirit." That is exactly the idea of revelation. It is to remove the cover, to pull aside the curtain that conceals a certain object, with the purpose to show and make known that object.

The medium of revelation is the Holy Spirit. It is undoubtedly the Spirit of Pentecost to which the apostle refers. He is the Third Person of the Holy Trinity as He is given to the Mediator, Christ Jesus, at the right hand of God, and in turn is poured out by Him in His Church in heaven and earth as the Spirit of Christ. Concerning Him Christ had said not only that He would be the Comforter, but also that He would lead us into all the truth, and abide with us forever.

Concerning this Spirit the apostle further declares "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." We cannot now take the time to enter into the profundity of the last part of this expression. In one word, it reflects on the eternal office of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Trinity to search out the depths of the Godhead.

In verse 11 the apostle uses an analogy to clarify the truth that the finite mind
of man cannot perform the office which is only delegated to the Holy Spirit. It is the analogy of what happens in man and what happens in God. We could perhaps paraphrase this verse to bring out the meaning of the apostle. "If it is so, that no one can perfectly know what lies hidden within a man, except the man himself, even so, who do you expect could know the things of God except the Divine Spirit Himself?" As little as we are unable to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart of Man, so much more we can never climb up to the things of God. Only the Holy Spirit can do this. By "the things of God," the apostle evidently refers not to the indwelling works of God which we call the works of God ad intra, but he refers more particularly to the things of God's counsel, the works ad extra. This is in harmony with the context.

c. The Recipients Of This Revelation.

When the apostle says in verse 10 "But God hath revealed them UNTO US by His Spirit," and again in verse 12, "Now WE have received not the Spirit of the world, etc.," this has reference first of all to the apostles. The Word of mystery is first given to them. They are inspired by the Holy Spirit, become the receptacles of the truth, and are infallibly directed to speak and write that truth for us. It has been the mind of the Spirit to make secondary authors of the Divine Word, which factor the Church does well always to recognize. However, that Spirit of revelation has also been given to the Church. She also has an unction of the Holy One and has no need that anyone teach her and they all know who are partakers of this anointing. So that there is this relation established: the Holy Spirit, Author of the mystery, reveals it first to the apostles who being qualified by the Spirit write the Word to the Church, which is given the Holy Spirit enabling her to interpret the Word of the apostles. By the Holy Spirit our eyes, ears and hearts are opened to perceive and receive the hidden wisdom of God, that we also might know the things freely given us by God.

That this is the way it has pleased God to reveal to us the mystery is evident from what the apostle says in verse 13, "which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

Questions for Discussion

1. Did God prepare all things for them that love Him because they loved Him?

2. What is the "Spirit of the world" in verse 12? It is a spirit which is inherent in the world, a spirit of the age? Or it is a personal spirit of the devil as he works in the world?

3. Would the Church be richer if she received the revelation of the mystery directly, rather than indirectly through the apostles?
OUTLINE 14

IV. THE RECEPTION OF THE THINGS OF THE SPIRIT
    (I Cor. 2: 14-16)

a. An Impossibility For The Natural Man.

In the preceding, the apostle had been speaking of the things of the Spirit which things also he spoke in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth. The things which the apostles speak are spiritual things, and they speak them in connection with spiritual words. They, as a result of using words taught them by the Holy Spirit Himself, combine only spiritual words with the spiritual things they preach.

"But a natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." The natural man is the unregenerate. He is just a man with a soul that exists in a carnal fleshly body. The nearest word in the English language that can translate the original word used here is: psychical. It refers to the most elevated aspect of man's nature, that which gives man, in distinction from the animal, a mind.

But Paul is intent on showing that man, even in the highest part of his nature, wills not to receive the things of the Spirit. Being as he is under the power of sin, and having only the natural powers of the soul, every activity of his soul and mind and body will be accordingly darkness. Hence, when the things of the Spirit meet him they are not only foolishness to him, but he is wholly unable to know them with a tasting, experiential knowledge. He not only refuses to accept them, but he is unable to do so.

The reason for this is "because they are spiritually discerned." The word translated 'discerned' here refers to a shifting process to get at the truth by investigation as a judge. A judge when he tries a case weighs all the evidence, interrogates all the witnesses as well as the one being tried to get at the truth of the matter and render a decision. Now the natural man is incapable of rendering a decision for he is unable to recognize the facts. He judges by a carnal mind rather than by a regenerated spirit. The things of the Spirit of God can only be judged by a spiritual mind. The apostle in Romans 8 speaks along these same lines. There he writes: "For the mind of the flesh is death, but the mind of the Spirit is life and peace. Because the mind of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, for it is not able." To know the things of the Spirit therefore one must be spiritually minded.

b. The Spiritual Man With The Mind Of Christ.

The spiritual man is qualified to sift to examine, to judge rightly because the eyes of his heart are enlightened, Eph. 1:18. It is to be noticed that Paul says, "judges all things." Paul does not limit the judgment of the spiritual man only to the things of the Spirit, but he judges all things and does so correctly. The natural man does not judge aright even in the natural things. He does not see
their true nature, purpose, etc. He magnifies these things out of all proportion, hence devotes himself to them exclusively, and misuses them. But the spiritual man has the true standard whereby to measure even these earthly things, and much more, also the spiritual things.

That the apostle adds: “yet he himself is judged by no one” seems a little perplexing. What does he mean? Most likely the apostle is still thinking of the distinction between the natural and the spiritual man. If it is established that the natural man cannot discern spiritual things, follows that he also cannot discern or judge the spiritual man. On the other hand, he that is spiritual judges not only all things but also the natural man. Thus he is able to judge all things, while he himself is judged of no one. We must not forget here that the apostle is writing to the Corinthians who had been judging and making distinctions. However it is Paul’s contention that they were yet carnal (3:3), and therefore unable to make proper spiritual discernment.

The spiritual man has “the mind of Christ.” “For who did know the mind of the Lord that he instructs him? but we have the mind of Christ.”

The question which the apostle places here is borrowed from Isaiah 40:13. If you confer with Romans 11:34, you will find that Paul also there did the same thing. In the context in Isaiah the prophet raises a series of questions. “Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance? Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counselor hath taught him? With whom took he counsel and who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and shewed to him the way of understanding?” And the answer to all these questions is simply: NO ONE, EXCEPT THE LORD HIMSELF. If no one can make up God’s mind for Him it follows that the mind of God is absolute, it is sovereign, it is above criticism. And if one possesses the “mind of Christ,” by the Holy Spirit, it also follows that this too is above all judgment of mere natural man.

Now the apostle declares that he and the apostles were highly privileged to be the possessors of the mind of Christ. By the Spirit they know His thoughts, His will, His purposes. And it is their prerogative to speak of those things that constitute the mind of Christ. That places the position and calling of the apostles also above all criticism of men. You feel immediately what this must mean to the Church of Corinth which had to all intents assumed a wrong attitude over against those appointed by the Spirit to be their leaders.

Questions for Discussion

1. If it is so that the natural man cannot know the things of the Spirit, how is it to be explained that he makes opposition to them?
2. Is the judgment of the spiritual man always correct?
3. Are we to conclude that we who are
4. Is the fact that the apostles possessed the mind of Christ another proof for infallible inspiration?
5. Are the names 'Lord' and 'Christ' in verse 16 relative only to the Mediator, or, does the term 'Lord' refer to the Godhead? If it is the latter, do we have proof here for the Divinity of Christ?

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OUTLINE 15

C. FINAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST PARTISANSHIP—(I Cor. 3 and 4)

1. THE CHARGE OF CARNALITY
   (I Cor. 3:1-4)

   a. The Charge As Such.

   There is a very close connection between that which is recorded in the closing verses of Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 as is indicated in the introductory words "And I," which are placed in an emphatic position in verse 1. The apostle had been speaking of the spiritual man who is able to judge all things, and of the apostles' possession of the mind of Christ which he was required to speak. And since it was the apostle who had first contacted the Church at Corinth, he begins now to reflect not only on their past reception of the gospel he preached, but also on their present ability to receive it. Therefore he now writes: "And I, brethren, could not speak, etc."

   The Corinthians were beginners in those early days, and as such could not be treated as spiritual, i.e., really spiritually minded people, but only as fleshly, people still fleshly in their way of thinking, not able, like the truly spiritual man, to judge aright all things.

   The apostle does not blame the Corinthians for this, for it was quite natural when they just came out of heathendom, the status of the natural man, that they would be just fleshly, and not spiritual, though they were "babes in Christ." The apostle did not expect then that they as babes would act like adults. It is to be expected of all of us that we must be babes at first in the natural course of our spiritual development. Yet, while the term "babes in Christ" removes all blame, it still suggests an unsatisfactory condition of immaturity that ought to pass away soon. It is not censurable or criminal to be a babe in Christ unless this condition is unduly prolonged. "It is one of the tragedies of the minister's life that he has to keep on speaking to members of the Church 'as unto babes in Christ,' who actually glory in their long babyhood, whereas they ought to be teachers of the gospel instead of belonging to the cradle roll," writes A. T. Robertson in his Word Pictures of the New Testament.

   You will notice that in our King James Version the word "carnal" appears four times in these verses. But we should be careful that we correctly understand this term as it is used by the apostle.
In the Greek text he uses a slightly different word in verse 3 and 4 than he does in verse 1. In verse 1, the word "carnal" simply means, made in flesh, that which is fleshly. But in verse 3 and 4 the word "carnal" means, fleshly, referring to those who have given way to the flesh. In respect to the first, it is natural and expected, but in respect to the second, it is utterly wrong and should be gotten rid of. A. T. Robertson makes the following comparisons in the light of the entire context, including Chapter 2, which I believe is to the point. Writes he, "Paul by psuchikos (natural man of 2:14) describes the unregenerate man, by pneumatikos (spiritual man of 2:15; 3:1) the regenerate man. Both classes are sarkinoi (carnal—made in flesh, fleshly), and both may be sarkikoi (carnal—giving way to the flesh, fleshly) though the pneumatikoi (spiritual) should not be. The pneumatikoi (spiritual, regenerated) who continue to be sarkinoi (carnal—made in flesh, fleshly) are still nepioi (babes, not teleioi (adults, fullgrown), while those who are still sarkikoi (carnal—given to the flesh, fleshly) have given way to the flesh, as if they were still psuchikos (unregenerate). It is a bold and cutting figure, not without sarcasm, but necessary to reveal the Corinthians to themselves."

Because the Corinthians at first were babes in Christ, the apostle had fed them with milk, and not with meat, for they were not then capable of digesting the latter. Milk is for babes, they cannot digest solid food. But does this mean that the apostle fed them with anything else than pure doctrine? Of course not! Milk is wholesome food producing healthy and strong bodies. It is just as wholesome and strengthening as the more solid foods. Yet no mother would think of giving her baby a steak diet. No, she very carefully holds her child to a milk formula because that child’s digestive organs are not yet accustomed to anything else. So it must be also with respect to spiritual babes. Lenski is right when he says: "The deduction is wrong that preachers ought to withhold certain doctrines from beginners in the faith because they are too hard for their spiritual stomachs to digest. Some carry this idea so far that they imagine that certain doctrines are fit only for preachers and theologians and not at all for ordinary Church members. . . . . Paul always preached all the counsel of God. Acts 20:27."

That Paul was unable to speak to the Corinthians as to spiritual but as to carnal, was not due to lack or inefficiency in himself, but to the spiritually undeveloped condition of the Corinthians.

But the sorry thing about the Corinthians was that instead of growing into spiritual, well-developed believers, they were still not only like the babes but they were worse, they were now given to the flesh. They were still unable to receive solid food. The apostle now proves this statement by referring to actual conditions in Corinth.

b. The Proof Of Carnality.

There is actually envious rivalry and
wrangling in the congregation. They were not walking according to God's standard, but that of man, mere natural man. They were not only men of flesh; but they were also fleshly minded, doing the desires of the flesh and the mind. Let the Corinthians see this clearly that where envy and strife is, there are also the works of natural man. Are not envy and strife fleshly? No one can deny it.

And that envy and strife were present in the congregation was obviously manifested in their partisanship. When one said, I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, they were promoting the flesh. By their action they showed that they were just like common unregenerate men. They acted so much like the men of the world.

The Corinthians may not have considered their contentions as such a serious matter. Quite frequently real serious faults in the Church make little or no impression on the members, while lesser failings stir them up. Think of the Pharisees of Jesus' day, how they could strike at the gnat and swallow the camel! However, envy and strife are always deplorable. Spirituality will not thrive in such an atmosphere. "To seek honor for men or from them whereas Christ should be all in all is courting deadly danger."

Questions for Discussion

1. Should the missionary to China preach the doctrine of Divine Predestination as well as the preacher at home?
2. Is it proper that we have children's sermons on Sunday occasionally or before the regular service?
3. Why does Paul only mention two parties in verse 4?
4. Is it wrong or right to have controversy in the Church?
5. Is it always right for the Church to split on the matter of the truth?
6. What should be done with members of the Church who obviously continue to be babes?

OUTLINE 16

2. CO-WORKERS IN GOD'S HUSBANDRY AND BUILDING
   (1 Cor. 3:5-17)

a. God's Ministers In His Vineyard (1 Cor. 3:5-9a)

1. The idea of ministers.

   First of all, we want to call attention here to the questions Paul asks in verse 5. It is better to translate: "What then is Apollos? and What is Paul?" There is a second reading which accounts for the English translation "Who then, etc.," but the context is in favor of the first translation. The question according to the context is not so much: Who are these men? but, What are they? What do they do? Are they the outstanding, individual leaders the parties at Corinth esteemed them to be? The answer is emphatically, NO!

   Apollos and Paul are merely ministers of God. The word 'minister' is the same word from which our word 'deacon' comes. Thayer in his Lexicon says the etymology is a derivation of two words
in the Greek which taken together means “raising dust by hastening.” Immediately we gain the picture in our minds of a servant or ambassador who is hastened on his errand by his sender. He is here not described as a ‘slave’ (for which the Scripture has another word, and which Paul in Rom. 1:1 does not hesitate to call himself also) but as a servant-minister. The term holds in it a more elevated sense than the term ‘slave’, and probably brings out the fact that the minister, though a servant, is nevertheless an officebearer.

They are the ministers through whom the Church believed. Paul has in mind the beneficial service these men performed upon the Church. The Church may therefore very well hold them in grateful remembrance. But each of the ministers performed as the Lord gave to each one. Hence neither Paul nor Apollos nor any minister for that matter, has any basis for pride or conceit, nor should be made the occasion for faction or strife. It is this idea which Paul enlarges upon in Chapters 3 and 4.

2. Co-workers With God.

But it must be noticed that while Paul would have the congregation hold these ministers in grateful remembrance, he is also concerned to have them remember that the real source of their blessings is the Lord.

When the apostle says “through whom ye believed,” he characterizes Paul and Apollos as no more than instruments in the Lord’s hand. The Lord alone is the efficient cause in working and preserving faith.

Modestly Paul places Apollos on a par with himself when he mentions the services they rendered the Corinthians. Though Paul had founded the congregation, he seeks no special commendation. Paul is only the one that planted, and Apollos is only the one who watered but it is God which continues the growth. It is important that I translate verse 6 literally for you, for the tenses which the apostle uses here are significant. “I have planted, Apollos has watered, but God causeth to grow.” Sometime in the past Paul had planted the congregation (Acts 18:1-18). Thereupon also in the past Apollos watered, irrigated what was planted, but it is God who continues out of the past into the present and future the growth and development of that which is planted and watered.

Hence, planting and watering mean nothing unless God makes the seed to grow. Planting and watering are necessary before there can be any growth. Planting is no good without watering. And watering is not necessary unless there is first the planting. But all is of no avail if God does not give the growth. So the conclusion is as Paul expresses it in verse 7, that he who plants is nothing and he who waters is nothing, while He who causes to grow is everything. This is something the Corinthians had wholly forgotten in their party strife. Rather than to flaunt the planter and the waterer, they would have done what was right, namely, praise the Lord.
Paul and Apollos and all ministers of the Word are God’s instruments, His ministers, but the Church is God’s vineyard. His husbandry, which He works and causes to produce. However, it is to be noticed that though the ministers are God’s instruments, they are not to be conceived of as a plow, or a harrow, or a tractor, in the cultivation of land. No, they are ‘co-workers’ with God.

They are responsible, rational, spiritual men who of God are clothed with an office in which each performs the work assigned to him, and for which each receives his own reward according to his labor. There are differences between the Lord’s ministers. He sends the one to plant and another to water. There are also differences in the labor which each performs. Some have a much harder task than others. Some are called to labor longer than others. So they also receive different wages of the Lord. Yet he that plants and he that waters are one. The very idea of pitting them against another will cease when the congregation sees that God uses them together to make His Church to become manifested and to grow.

3. The Church is God’s Husbandry.

The Church does not belong to any sect or party. Neither is it the property of any minister to do with as he pleases. It is solely the product and property of the Lord God. This is emphatically declared in verse 9: “God’s tilled land are ye.” The Corinthians are a vineyard, planted and tilled by God’s co-workers, and they belong to God. The christian ministry is still a distinct office and Paul does not hesitate to bestow honor upon it. Full of labor though it be, the ministers are God’s co-workers who with God work in His vineyard to bring to manifestation the grace of Christ in His Church unto His glory.

Questions for Discussion

1. Is it proper for a Church to especially honor her first minister in distinction from those who labor after him?
2. Does the first minister in a Church always do the planting and those who follow, the watering? Or do those who follow plant also?
3. Whose is the minister? the congregation’s? or God’s?
4. Who determines the pay the minister is to receive? the congregation? the minister? or God?

If I could always clearly see
The reason for God’s way with me;
If I could fully understand
And see all things as He has planned
Then I of faith would have no need
Nor constantly for grace to plead.
But now, I cannot see the way:
What shall I ask, what shall I say?
Lord, Thou art Great, Wise and Good;
In deep humility, I would
But blindly follow in the way,
And live by faith anew each day.
The Military Mail Bag

Once again it’s time to hear from your servicemen, and we have two letters, one from our Holland church and one from First Church in Grand Rapids. You all know “Jerry,” so there is no need for further details.

“I am writing you to thank a lot of my friends who wrote a few notes in my convention booklet. It was sure wonderful to read notes from many of my old pals from all over. I have often thought about the convention, and when I read some of these things that were written, it reminded me much of the good times I spent with you at those meetings.

“Well, since this last column was in the Beacon Lights, things have changed. I am now in Germany and have a new job. The task which I am now performing, is undoubtedly one of the best a young fellow in service can get into. I have the great honor to be a Chaplain’s Assistant. This job brings me into an atmosphere which I am used to. In the job I now hold, I assist the Chaplain in various activities, such as correspondence, filing, teach Sunday School, playing the organ for Sunday Service.

“I certainly feel, often, being in this field, that we as Protestant Reformed people should have young ministers in the service of our country to preach the gospel and witness the true word of the gospel to all men, not just to our own people. We were left with one great commission by Christ, “To go into all the world and Preach.” This should not be limited within our own circles. I do believe that in the service, men need the true word, not all forms of religion. So, I’ll close this little writing by saying, “Let us as Protestant Reformed be international in our religion not isolationists.”

“With these short thoughts I’ll close my letter off. May God bless us one and all, till we meet again.

Your “Airfriend”

“Jerry”

And here is Jerry’s address:

Pfc. Gerald W. Kok, AF-16346116
Box 82, 7150 Air Base Group
APO 633, c/o PM, New York, N.Y.

Our second letter is from someone we haven’t heard from before, John Faber, and thanks for writing, John.

“I have been in service now for 14½ months and have received the Beacon Lights faithfully. This is sincerely appreciated.

I have been in Fort Knox since I was drafted in September 1950. My duty is to cook for Co. C 13, which is stationed here. This I have done for 10 months. I have had the privilege of being able to come home quite frequently. I just came back from a 15 day furlough, which went too quickly.

It can be plainly seen that this “Chris-

(Continued on page 30)
LIFTING THE LID

MODERNISM—

II. ITS PLAN OF REDEMPTION AND SANCTIFICATION

The Church of all ages has always maintained that the sin and depravity that is present in every one of us by nature proceeded from the fall of our first parents in Paradise and that man is so corrupt that he is wholly incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil. Modernism however teaches the very opposite. The fall of man, they teach, was a fall upwards rather than downwards, because man became like God knowing both good and evil. Since that time man was and still is under a process of evolution whereby he becomes better and better morally as time progresses. Thus modernism exalts man above the Living God, which is nothing more than Atheism pure and simple. Tell a Modernist this and he will be very much offended. He then will try to explain that man’s present moral condition is due to his failure to rise out of animalism. All the events of history loudly proclaim the very opposite. Man has, is not, and will not get any better by nature, but instead grows worse and worse. World War I was terrible and lasted four years. Twenty years later we witnessed World War II which was far more terrible and lasted six years. Only six years later we are at the brink of World War III. Also consider the advance in military weapons; from swords, bow and arrows, and slingshots to big planes, tanks, machine guns, bombs, atomic bombs, and hydrogen bombs. Also consider the family quarrels, divorces, murders, strife between capital and labor, race riots, etc., that have risen to an appalling degree during the past half century. “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hinder the truth in unrighteousness; because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them; that they may be without excuse; because that knowing God, they glorified Him not as God, neither gave thanks; but became vain in their reasonings, and their senseless heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God for the likeness of an image of corruptible man, and of birds, and four footed beasts, and creeping things. And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting: who knowing the ordinance of God, that they that practice such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but also consent with them that practice them.”—Rom. 1:18-23, 28, 32. Also consider the advances made in the medical field. Diseases such as typhoid fever, diphtheria, small pox, etc., are little heard of these days but equally dreadful disease have taken their
places. Think of all the deaths caused by heart disease, cancer, polio, and accidents. Many of these accidents and sicknesses are caused by sheer ignorance and carelessness due to lack of proper education in the fundamental rules of hygiene and safety. I will say more about this in my next installment.

Modernism emphatically denies the need for a blood atonement. They do not believe that God's wrath against sin is so great, that rather than it should go unpunished, he punished the same in His beloved Son Jesus Christ with the bitter and shameful death of the Cross in order to save his own. The modernist term this the "slaughter house religion," which belongs to the dark ages. Instead, they teach that God is too loving and kind to require the punishment of an individual for the sins of another person or to send any of his own creatures to eternal punishment. God, angel, or man could not be happy in heaven if a single human being were suffering in hell. Therefore they teach that there are no such things as hell, a judgment day, and a judge, outside of ourselves. Every man must atone for his own soul. All men, no matter how wicked they are, are sons of God and will eventually be saved. Consecrated Christians are too busy about deeds of love and justice to give thought to their own selfish salvation.

That God could never be happy if a single soul were suffering in hell is a cunningly devised lie. God certainly delights in executing His anger against the wicked. Scripture teaches this very plainly in Ex. 15:1-21; Ps. 2:4 and Ps. 6 and 8, also in Rev. 18:20 we read that all the heavenly host and God's saints are encouraged to rejoice over God's righteous judgments upon the wicked. It is also a comfort for us as Christians to know and to long for the judgment day when God shall cast all His and our enemies into eternal damnation. This is also expressed in many of our Psalter numbers. For this very reason the apostitizing church always discards the Psalms and sing hymns instead. Most hymns emphasize God's mercy, love, and grace at the expense of His wrath, justice, righteousness, and majesty.

Can mere man, who is so corrupt that he is wholly incapable of doing any good and inclined to all evil; whose throat is an open sepulchre, whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness; and whose feet are swift to shed blood, atone for his own soul? By no means, but on the contrary man daily increases his guilt. Even the benevolent deeds of mankind, which are solely done to glorify himself, are nothing more than damnable hypocrisy in the eyes of Him with whom we have to do. Even we Christians must say with the Apostle Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me out of the body of this death." But thank be to God who has not spared His only Son, but sent Him into this world of woe to suffer bleed and die and descend into hell, in order to save those whom God has ordained to eternal life before the foundations of the world. And we out of ourselves can never ac-
cept Christ as our personal Savior, but on the contrary we crucify Him afresh. Arminianism is also modernism in a more modified form. Christ must come and open our hearts of stone before we will ever let Him in. And ONLY THEN we will not only be able, but we will want to do good works to show forth the glory of His praise forevermore. To Him alone be the undivided glory and honor forever. In closing I would like you to meditate upon the words of a well known hymn:

When I survey the wondrous cross
On which the Prince of Glory died,
My richest gain I count but loss,
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small,
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all.

in this and in my first installment on Modernism I have given the origin, aim, and the main evaluations of its anti-christian doctrines. In my next two installments I hope to show how this doctrine of the devil (Gen. 3:4-5) is effectively spread and enforced over the entire earth.

Mercy, good Lord, mercy we plead,
This is the total sum;
Mercy through Christ, mercy we need;
Lord, let thy mercy come.

MILITARY MAIL BAG
(Continued from page 27)

tian country” is the direct opposite inside the army camps. There is very little spiritual upliftment that a Protestant Reformed serviceman can derive from chapel services.

Yours in Christ,
John Faber

Pfc. John Wm. Faber, US-55019650
Co. C, 18th AIB
CCA 3rd Arm’d Division
Fort Knox, Kentucky

Our New Editor

With the appearance of this issue of Beacon Lights Mr. S. De Young begins his tenure as editor of our paper. We are confident that in Mr. De Young we have very capable and energetic personality, who will give us sound, intelligent leadership in this position. Mr. De Young is a member of the First Church in Grand Rapids. We ask that from now on all material for publication be sent to:

Mr. S. De Young
1001 Franklin Street, S.EE
Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

The Executive Board of the F.P.R.Y.P.S.
John Hofman, Jr., Pres.

"The High Calling" is a sequel to James Street's earlier publication, "The Gauntlet." In "The Gauntlet" we read of the experiences of a young Baptist Preacher when he was first ordained in the ministry. In his later novel the author tells of this same minister twenty years later when he again returns to the scene of his first pastorate, Linden, Missouri.

London Wingo was a man in his early forties when he decided to accept a call to the new Plymouth Baptist Church. It was not that he was dissatisfied with his huge Kansas City congregation, but in his opinion the education of his motherless daughter would not be complete until she had lived and worked in a small rural community. Hence the change. Enroute to his new church, Dr. Wingo meets Benton Andrews who owns a radio station in Linden and who prides himself in being a atheist. Strange as it may seem, Benton Andrews' son decides to become a minister. The resulting clashes and misunderstanding between an atheistic father and a son who aspired to the ministry is one of the fundamental themes of the story. When Dr. Wingo arrives at his destination he meets many of the people he had known twenty years before in his earlier ministry. His daughter Paige is a beautiful girl who shows the character of a child who has an indulgent father and no mother. She is a young lady who knows what she wants and doesn't hesitate going about getting it.

Soon after their arrival in Linden, Paige gets a job with Benton Andrew's radio station. This results in her and Benton's son Vance being together quite a bit and, true to form, they fall in love. London Wingo also meets a school teacher in his new flock whom he ultimately falls in love with. The story ends just previous to their marriage.

While I do not consider the book to be without significance, neither do I feel any inclination to applaud it as a masterpiece. The story is well written and is probably most distinguished by its human and its sympathetic portrayal of a man in a field that is looked upon with scorn by our present day society. Yet I think the book has one fundamental error. The Author has attempted to write about a Baptist minister but he does not in my opinion define or make any attempt to explain Baptist doctrine or theology. You would not, for instance, write a book about Martin Luther without expounding quite thoroughly

LOUIS REGNERUS
Oak Lawn, Illinois
the truths Luther taught and the Reformation of his day. Hence when James Street writes a book about a Baptist minister, I am not concerned primarily whether he wears a hat or goes bare headed, but I would like to know the fundamental and basic doctrines of the Baptist church and how they harmonize with the Word of God. I think that is essential.

If Mr. Street’s presentation of the Baptist church is accurate then it really is not a church. Dancing, movies, popular music and all the things that we as Reformed people cannot indulge in are spoken of and done with no restraint whatever. Probably we should remember that the book is fiction and as such is also the result of the Author’s imagination. However, that does not change the content. If you read for relaxation only you may enjoy the book. However, if you are seeking for knowledge or a better understanding of the Baptist religion you are wasting your time.

A Word of Appreciation

The Board wishes to announce that it has received and accepted the resignation of our editor, Mr. A. Heemstra. We take this opportunity to thank him for the very capable and progressive service which he has rendered to us during the past years as editor of Beacon Lights.

The Executive Board of the F.P.R.Y.P.S.
John Hofman, Jr., Pres.

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