

BEACON LIGHTS

W. L. G. YOUTH

October - November 1959

The Devil on the Leash

JASON KORTERING

The Calling to the Ministry

REV. G. LUBBERS

Forsaker or Partaker

REV. G. VANDEN BERG



BEACON LIGHTS

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WHY PROTESTANT REFORMED



IILEEN GRIESS JANNET HAUCK
DONALD FEENSTRA

The opinions of the rank and file of Protestant Reformed youth is seldom expressed in our paper. Therefore, BEACON LIGHTS has asked three of our young people to express themselves on the question, "Why am I Protestant Reformed?" from their respective view points. Miss Jannet Hauck, a member of the Ebenezer Reformed Church of Forbes, North Dakota, expresses her desire to become Protestant Reformed from this church's very unique position in relation to our church. From Loveland, Colorado, we hear from Miss Ileen Griess as she relates her church's reasons for becoming Protestant Reformed. Finally, Don Feenstra from Redlands, California tells why he is, and why he wishes to remain Protestant Reformed.

WHY WE WANT TO BECOME PROTESTANT REFORMED

I am very happy to have the opportunity of expressing my thoughts on this subject and am sure this applies to the young people of Isabel as well.

We want to join the Protestant Reformed Churches, not for the sake of having the name, but because we find the purest preaching of the Word of God in said churches.

Having this instruction is of much value to us, the young people, because hearing the truth preached when we are young, discerning and understanding it, gives us the foundation for our spiritual and everyday lives. It teaches us how to conduct ourselves among our Christian friends and also in the world. Since it is our calling before God to live in the world but not of the world, we cannot live any other way.

Before the year 1955 we were not under the Protestant Reformed teaching. Through the efforts of one of the Protestant Reformed ministers, we received said teaching, and were instructed for two years, during which time we were forced to leave the church at Leola for the truth's sake. Since that time we have organized our own church and have been served by the Protestant Reformed home missionary.

We have attended the Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention for the past two years and have been able to have true fellowship with most of the young people. We have also taken to heart the speeches given there and encouraged our other young people to attend these conventions.

We realize that we have only a small beginning of the new obedience, but through the grace of God and His promise we rejoice in His Word. It is our every prayer and hope that we might join the P. R. Churches for these very reasons. D.V.

Jannet Hauck



WHY WE BECAME PROTESTANT REFORMED

In 1943, Mr. Henry Schwarz, on his deathbed, realized that his family needed words filled with hope since they had been forced to leave the church because of the Truth which they professed. The words, "God will make a way", were full of hope.

These words were not forgotten over the years as we struggled and longed for the Truth. When we were literally locked out of the Hope Reformed Church of Loveland we were ready to believe that there was no church which taught the Sovereignty of

God. It seemed that there was no way of getting the Truth preached to us. Yet God makes the impossible possible for he chose to bring us the Word first in the form of missionary work and later through our own minister. A promise made by God, through a man's lips had come true, which is naturally always the case, yet we glory in it each time it occurs.

However, we did not become Protestant Reformed just to be permitted to call a minister. That too, but it presupposes there was a reason why we wanted to call a minister from this particular denomination. The reason really is because we believe that the Protestant Reformed Church teaches the truth and is the Church of God. Because we are the children of God, we longed to have the same name as the Church of God.

When you look into it even deeper you realize that we became Protestant Reformed because God loved us first for if God had not given it to us to long to be affiliated with this Church and made it possible we would not carry this name even now. Therefore, all glory is to God and we are assured through experience that "God will make a way".

Ileen Griess



WHY I AM, AND WANT TO REMAIN PROTESTANT REFORMED

WHY AM I Protestant Reformed? I was, of course, Protestant Reformed because I was, by the Grace of God, born and brought up in the Protestant Reformed Churches. All of us are very fortunate to have this undoubted privilege, to be brought up in, and taught from childhood the joys and comforts of the Word of God.

The Protestant Reformed Churches of America have the distinction of being the only denomination in the world that teaches the total inability of natural man to do any good before God. We also believe in the absolute sovereignty of God, a point which many churches, either do not believe or fail to stress. We place God in the fore, in His true position. We have a Church that is God's Church, and not man's church.

Two

The reasons for my remaining in the Protestant Reformed Churches are obvious. One must go to the church he believes is teaching the purest manifestation of the Word of God. This is evident for several good reasons. First, it is a sin to go to any churches except those which one believes are the purest. To be a member of any church you must confess its doctrine. Just think of going to a church that you know is wrong, and not being able to partake of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Or, worse yet, the sin of doing so with the knowledge that it will most certainly be to your damnation. Secondly, if you are married, your children will no doubt be baptized. You most certainly violate this sacrament by promising to do the utmost in your power to bring up your children in the most Christian manner possible, and failing to do so. Supposing you know enough to separate the good from the bad. Your children most certainly will not. It would be very wearisome, and certainly not very edifying to go to church with the knowledge that you must continually be on your guard against all, or part of what the minister is saying.

It must follow then, that I must go to the Protestant Reformed Churches. I believe they come closer to the truth than any other churches in existence. I can go to church with the knowledge that what I hear will be the truth. I can believe what I hear instead of asking myself the question, "Am I hearing the truth?"

Another reason for remaining in our Churches is the matter of Christian discipline. In most churches of this country, and of every country in the world, discipline is very lax. In many churches people attend, not for things spiritual, but for a social hour. A place to meet 'nice' people, and find out what is happening around town. As there is no discipline, sinful members go unchecked. Not only this, but a church in this condition drifts farther and farther away from the truth, and eventually becomes completely false.

Believing these things, I can come to only one conclusion. That is, I am going to the church where I belong, the place where I intend to stay.

Donald Feenstra

BEACON LIGHTS

EDITORIALS

SCRATCHINGS FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Wha' happen? Where's Beacon Lights? How come so late this time? Here they are folks, the reasons, excuses, call them what you will. Here's a brief report on what has happened, is happening, and what we hope will happen in the near future.

Part of the delay is due to the time lapse encountered in the execution of certain changes apparent in this month's issue of *Beacon Lights*. It was decided to combine the October Issue with that originally scheduled for November and to publish this issue later than the October date but earlier than the November date of publication.

Convinced that an occasional change of authorship is healthy, the Rev. G. Vanden Berg requested that we obtain another writer for the department entitled "Truth vs Error". In response to his request, we have asked the Rev. R. Harbach of Lynden, Washington to continue this valuable column for the edification of our readers.

The column "Nature Study" has been temporarily discontinued due primarily to

its specialized nature. It seems that the few persons qualified to write on this subject are already so much in demand for other church and school projects that the additional responsibility of these column has proved to be a burden.

Here's an opportunity to win a year's free subscription to *Beacon Lights*! On page 9 you will find the first appearance of a brand new feature called... well it's so new we don't even have a name for it yet and that's where you and the free subscription enters the picture.

The staff of Beacon Light has decided to make this prize available to the person who suggests the winning name for this new feature. It should be relatively short and should contain some reference to the special nature of the column. (Best way to determine this is to read the first installment on page 9.)

Send your suggestion to BEACON LIGHTS TITLE CONTEST, 1312 Rosewood, S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan. The staff reserves the right to select any or none of the suggestions and will be the sole judge. All entries must be postmarked by midnight November 1, 1959.

Get your suggested entry in the mail today!

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Editor,

I would like to comment regarding question No. 3, in your answers to Reverend Hoeksema concerning the possibility of life existing a half-million years before the birth of Christ.

You wrote the following, "I have been unable to relocate the source of the information that carbon dating has placed man on the earth calendar some half-million years before Christ."

May I say that if you had information

concerning that possibility it was entirely invalid. There can be no validity to a statement that organic matter has been, by means of carbon 14, measured to the age of a half-million years. Carbon 14 is valid only to approximately 60,000 years. Carbon 14 can be found only in matter which is living or had been living. Thus rocks and stones cannot be measured with carbon 14. There is however some lead compound which can, to some degree of accuracy, measure the age of inorganic matter.

Yours in Christ,
Roger Harbin

The Devil on the Leash

JASON KORTERING

The devil is a cunning, crafty creature. He knows much about our life. He watches us day by day. Sometimes he does not merely watch, but is very busy. He has many tools with which he may pry into our lives. He's not stupid, ignorant, or careless. The very opposite is true. He does not reveal himself as some weird creature, causing us to recoil in fright. Oh no, he is too smart for that. He wants to be our friend. He wants us to believe that he is helping us. He wants to give us a "thrill" in life. Always he seeks to make himself appealing, his presence always appreciated.

Do you walk with the devil on the leash? You perhaps are puzzled with such a question. Walk with the devil on the leash? How is that possible?

Let me explain. As born again young people, we do not desire to entertain the devil. We do not enclose him in our bosom and seek his fellowship. We do not give ourselves over to his dictates, so that we leave the church, go every night to places of ill fame, make friends with people of evil repute. We do not throw aside all our Christian training and discipline. No, we want to be Christians. We want to walk in the shadow of our Savior. Our joy is in the promised salvation in Christ. We love the church and all its many activities. We have our conversation in heaven.

Yet, if we are very honest with ourselves and take a closer examination of our lives, do we really treat the devil as we ought? Scripture tells us, "Resist the devil and he will flee from thee". James 4:7. Do we always do that? Are we always faithful in resisting him?

To be perfectly faithful to this text would mean that we are completely delivered from sin. That we all confess, we are not. Yet, the question remains, do we always *strive* with all our power to resist him? Do we really try?

In answer to that question, we must admit that all too often we walk with the devil on the leash. Oh, we don't want to walk with him in our arms. We don't

want to embrace him whole-heartedly. Neither do we want to resist him, so that he flees away and leaves us alone. Our sinful nature and evil desires like to court with him on the pathway of life, let him have a little to say, take him for a stroll on the avenues of our experience. Is that not true?

But how? There are various ways. The devil knows our weaknesses, he will appeal to them. What do we read? Is it always pure? Every sort of literature—books or magazines? The devil has much power in this field. He is always ready to go for a walk—if we only put him on the leash.

Music is a wonderful gift of God. Do we listen to and sing the songs of Zion? There are many songs of which the devil is fond. He would just as soon have us like them too, if we only lend an ear. Do we snap the leash?

We all have many friends. Every one does. Are they true friends? This includes your dates as well. With whom do you date and what do you do? Be careful, the devil likes dates loaded with dynamite. Society season is upon us. As children of the covenant, God gives us this wonderful opportunity to fellowship with godly friends. Use it, young people, with all your power and enthusiasm. It will strengthen you against the power of the devil.

So we could go on, cheating in school, the off-color joke, the lie that is told, the person we kill with the tongue, the evil thought, the suggestive gesture, etc.

The devil is not a gentle pup, rather he is a roaring lion. Take him for a walk, and he will take us for a run. Give him a finger, he will devour our whole body.

Let us be on our guard. Sin and the devil appeal to our flesh. The old man of sin loves it. Fight it! Turn away from it. By the power of God's grace, don't leash the devil, don't court with him, but resist him and the farther he will flee, the safer we will be. Our victory is through the power of faith. May God give us grace to exercise it.

A Protestant Reformed World and Life View

REV. H. HANKO



In the last issue we were discussing the fact that the world and life view of those who maintain the theory of common grace is in a very real danger of falling into the error of post-millennialism. This view of the coming of Christ we discussed at some length. It remains for us now to show how this is indeed the case.

COMMON GRACE AND POST-MILLENNIALISM

The reasons why I think that common grace tends toward this view are the following. In the first place, when the wicked and the believers can get along so well together in the pursuit of their common aims and goals, then they are inevitably seeking the same thing. And this common denominator which unites them can only be such a worldly kingdom which the world seeks, but which is called by believers the kingdom of Christ. In the second place, it is a matter of record as well as a logical conclusion of common grace that the duty of the Christian is to make this world a better place to live. He has one calling in this life, and that is to cause his influence to be felt in every phase of history and every sphere of culture so that this world becomes better and better. This is exactly the goal of the post-millennialist. In the third place, by lowering or destroying altogether the barriers erected between the church and the world, the error is that the rule of Christ is not only made universal, but is also made exactly the same over the church and the world. There is no longer any differentiation made between the sovereign rule of Christ over His people and His rule equally sovereign over the wicked. All effects of His rule are precisely the same. The rule of Christ over the elect is identified with the rule of Christ over the wicked without any significant difference. The result of this is that the whole world

is the kingdom of Christ, and all men citizens in it. This follows with indubitable logic. But when the world becomes the kingdom of Christ, then that kingdom will be formed here upon earth through the evolution of society, as well as through the ecumenical movements of church groups and back to God crusades.

And, as a matter of fact, this is also what is happening in those churches where this theory lays hold on the theological thinking of the people. It is a matter of fact that there is little concern any more for the coming of Christ at the end of the ages. There is far more concern for the cares and troubles of the world accompanied with an earnest regard for the welfare of mankind. There are all kinds of crusades against bad literature, bad children, crime, racial and class unrest and hatred, as well as crusades for peace on earth, religion in politics and all that goes with it. But the welfare of the church and the spiritual safety of the people of God is all but forgotten. And this is inevitably the case when men lose sight of the return of our Lord in judgment upon the world and with salvation for the faithful.

I do not say that those who maintain common grace have officially incorporated this post-millennialism into their creeds; nor yet that they would even admit to its position. I say only that common grace seems to bear the fruit of post-millennialism and those who maintain this theory become in practice at least post-millennialists.

ITS BASIC ERROR

But this view is very wrong and very dangerous. It is not necessary to show how this view conflicts with Scripture in every detail and how it goes astray as a result from fundamental doctrines of Scripture. But I would like to emphasize the basic issue at stake. The rule of Christ over the whole world is indeed a fact. He rules sovereignly over all the works of God. He holds in His hands not only men, but also angels and devils. All creatures perform His will without question and do His bidding so that all things serve the purpose of His Father. Nevertheless, there is a vast and essential difference between the rule of Christ over the world of wicked men and the rule of Christ over the world of the elect. Christ rules over His church by His grace and Spirit and Word. He comes to dwell in their hearts to establish His throne within them. And by doing so, He makes His own people willing subjects of His who love to do His bidding and who serve Him and worship Him as willing subjects and citizens of His kingdom. But this is far from the case with the wicked and with devils. Although the elect in their service of God are as the angels in heaven, the wicked and the devils stand bitterly opposed to all that Christ does. They hate Him and His kingdom. They despise all that is holy and good. They seek, in their hatred, to destroy Christ and the church, for the church represents the cause of Christ in the world. Bitterly opposed to this kingdom, and hateful of all that is of it, they set themselves in opposition to God and to Christ as they seek to establish their own kingdom of sin and unrighteousness. But nevertheless Christ rules over them. Only, while He rules over His people by making them the willing subjects of His kingdom, He rules over wicked men and devils against their will and in spite of them. He rules over them, and He sovereignly controls all their actions, but He does so in spite of their own wills which are set against Him. They hate Him; but He uses their hatred to serve His purpose. They war against Him and against His church; but even this bitter fury He uses to establish His own kingdom and realize the glory of the Father. They set themselves, and their

rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against His anointed, saying, "Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us." But He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. God's King is set upon the holy hill of Zion and the heathen are given to Christ for his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession. He breaks them with a rod of iron and dashes them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Psalm 2.

This fundamental difference between the rule of Christ over His people and Christ's rule over the world must never be destroyed or lost sight of. It is exactly here that we have the fundamental principle of a Protestant Reformed world and life view.

A PRACTICAL DANGER

However, there is also a very practical danger involved in this view of post-millennialism and in the view of common grace. This danger is that the kingdom of the Antichrist is identified with the kingdom of Christ. It is true that at the very end of the ages, a kingdom of peace and prosperity, of plenty and happiness, utopia far exceeding man's fondest dreams shall come upon the earth. But this kingdom is not the kingdom of Christ and of His people, but the kingdom of Antichrist and the wicked. It is precisely this kingdom which shall war against the church in the bitterest persecution this world has ever seen. It is this kingdom that shall expel the people of God, for there is no room in this kingdom for those who hold steadfast to the truth. But post-millennialism faces the very real danger of identifying this kingdom with the kingdom of Jesus Christ; and those who hold to common grace would do well to examine their position to see once whether or not they are laboring for the kingdom of Antichrist rather than the kingdom of Christ.

And no doubt if only these men would even seriously evaluate the world about them with sober thoughts and with their Bibles under their arms they would find something quite different than they propose about the world. As things get progressively worse and the wicked seem bent on filling the cup of iniquity, the whole theory of common grace becomes a mockery.

There is no world and life view in these theories which meets the standard of Scripture. Standing upon these human mountains we cannot take our view of the world and of life and determine the course of our action. These principles are found in the

Word of God and can and will indeed serve as the beacon lights to guide us in our view of life and the world and in the path we ought to walk as citizens of the kingdom of heaven.

TRUTH VS. ERROR

FORSAKER OR PARTAKER

REV. G. VANDEN BERG

The caption of this article refers to the brief but lucid story of Demas recorded in II Timothy 4:10.

The brevity of the story is such that we can relate it unabbreviated on this page. It reads like this: "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica".

The clarity of this story is seen not so much in the facts as such but rather in its repetitious character. Writes T. C. New, "Poor Demas was not the last of his tribe. We today seem to have far more *forsakers* than we do *partakers*". Not uncommon is it to find the story rewritten in various forms upon the annals of the church throughout history. Legion are the Demases who "having loved the present world have turned renegade."

Are you, young people, *forsaking* or *partaking*?

Before we attempt to answer this question we should try to see more clearly just what Demas did when he turned *forsaker*. The story does not say that he left the church but Paul writes that "he hath forsaken me". He forsook Paul who was a faithful servant of Jesus Christ and an ambassador of the Gospel of salvation. For this reason we may not oversimplify the matter by simply classifying all church-deserters as Demases and further then conclude that all those who remain in the church today are Lukes and Tituses. The mere fact that we remain in the church

does not leave us unexposed to and unstained by the sin of Demas.

Demas forsook Paul and in doing so he forsook Christ. Calvin explains, "It was truly base in such a man to prefer the love of this world to Christ. And yet we must not suppose that he altogether denied Christ, or gave himself up either to ungodliness or to the allurements of the world, but he merely preferred his private convenience, or his safety to the life of Paul. He could not have assisted Paul without many troubles and vexations, attended by imminent risk of his life, he was exposed to many reproaches, and must have submitted to many insults, and been constrained to leave off the care of his own affairs, and, therefore, being overcome by his dislike of the cross, he resolved to consult his own interests. Nor can it be doubted, that he enjoyed a propitious gale from the world. That he was one of the leading men may be conjectured on this ground, that Paul mentions him amidst a very few (at Col. 4:14) and likewise in the Epistle to Philemon (vs. 24) where also he is ranked among Paul's assistants, and, therefore, we need not wonder if he censures him so sharply on this occasion, for having cared more about himself than about Christ."

The story of Demas is a lucid example of *Truth vs. Error!*

The story contains a mighty challenge as well as a stern warning to Protestant Reformed Youth! You, among whom Christ dwells in all the glory of the revelation

of His truth, are daily exposed to the temptation and danger of turning *forsaker* instead of *partaker*. Demas did! Will you?

Firstly, the temptation is real because to remain with me (Paul, the apostle; Christ, the Truth) means that you cannot escape the cross. The reproach of Christ is upon you. You shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. Men shall persecute you, revile you and say all manner of evil against you falsely. In the world ye shall have tribulation. Remember the word that I (Christ speaking in John 15:20) said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

We cannot *partake* of Christ without all this and if we cannot partake of all this, we shall be *forsakers*, not *partakers*. The way is not easy.

Secondly, Demas turned forsaker because he *loved the present world*. This world with all its opportunities, pleasures, riches and more (many more in the present world than in the world of Demas' time) is a constant allurement to the flesh. But let us not be mistaken in this. To forsake Christ and the truth does not mean that one is immediately manifest as renegade to the cause of the Truth and wholly given over to the pursuit of the lusts of the flesh, lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Demas, in forsaking Paul, undoubtedly did not immediately identify himself with the godless and immoral world. He did not forsake *religion* but his evil was that he put the things of the world and his flesh first and who does this has no part in the Kingdom of Christ. The story does not tell us in so many words but it is not unlikely that Demas continued to go to church, perhaps on occasion continued to preach (?) and was held in esteem by others in the church who were of the same mind as he, but nevertheless he was *forsaker* and not *partaker*.

God is not mocked!

One cannot be partaker *and* forsaker!

One is either partaker *or* forsaker!

Seek ye first the Kingdom of God.

Not self, not individualistic interests, not money and pleasure and all that pleases

my flesh but Christ, His Church, His Word, the running of the race, the fighting of the battle, the striving toward the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, the faithful and diligent use of every opportunity to grow in the knowledge of the truth — these things are *first!*

Forsakers *desert* them.

Partakers *pursue* them.

Which are you?

Should we now attempt to apply the thought of our article to the particular circumstances of young people for whom these lines are primarily written, our article would become too long. Suffice it to write that each of us will have to do this for himself. Nor is this difficult. Let us pause to reflect upon the question: "Where are my interests? What captivates my first love?" Do we have so many interests in the world of pleasure, business, sports, etc. that we shun our duty to study the Word of God or perhaps even neglect our place and calling in the societies of the church giving as an excuse that we are too busy?

Love not this world nor the things of this world but set your affections on things above!

A. T. New said: "We are living in an age when the world is *condoned* rather than being *condemned*. Let us not be a Demas, but be like unto Paul, not *forsaking Christ*, but always *forging ahead with Christ*. Those who *quit* Christ here will never *sit* with Him there."

And again he said: "*Those who truly know the facts will never think of going back*".

We add to this that the reason for it lies in the unchangeable truth: "Every plant that my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up" (Matthew 15:13). Those who are not planted by God never truly *know* the facts. And, "*My sheep hear my voice and I know them and they follow me and I give them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand*" (John 10:27, 28). These *know* the facts for "*flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven*."



Mr. "K" visits a "christian" nation

AGATHA LUBBERS

GROUND BREAKING

With this issue the undersigned begins a new rubric. The task of the writer will be to report and to comment on any important event which occurs in the world around us, in the nominal church world or more particularly in our Protestant Reformed Churches.

Permit the undersigned to become trite and say that I am happy that the Federation Board has placed its confidence in me. I say this because the task of reporting, commenting on and interpreting current events is always difficult because the event or events in question must be surveyed and judged very soon after the occurrence of these events. This often results in much misjudgment and misunderstanding.

Your writer shall always attempt to view all the events which we discuss through the "spectacles" of the Word of God as revealed in His Holy Scriptures. We hope that in this way our perspective may be broadened and that the perspective of *Beacon Lights* may also be enhanced.

We welcome the suggestions of our young people. You all know that *Beacon Lights* is your paper and that we are writing for you. If you have any particular topic of current nature that you should like to see discussed in our rubric, do not neglect to inform our Editor in Chief or the editor of this rubric. In this way we all profit and our young people's magazine becomes the combined effort of many dedicated young people working together for the same cause.

* * * *

No single event in the year 1959 incited more comment and more excitement than the visit of Premier Nikita Sergeyvich

Khrushchev to the shores of these United States of America. "Churchmen", scientists, labor leaders, politicians, diplomats, capitalists and industrialists all wiggled into the act as the world's recognized "apostle" of communism announced and made his first appearance in the "land of the free and the home of the brave."

All the media of communications; radio, television, the daily newspaper, and the leading news periodicals focused their attention upon and capitalized upon this seemingly earth-shaking event. The very atmosphere seemed supercharged as the Russians made a timely "moon-strike" and as the Russian premier made his appearance in our country.

Here was "Mr. K.", a real, live Communist, a confessed atheist, an author of many communist purges, but he was not the fire-spitting demagogue most Americans had expected to see. Instead he was the congenial, Ukranian, proverb-uttering premier of the world's largest country, who had come to the land of the capitalists to entertain and to be entertained.

Because of all that has been written and said about the relationship between the United States and Russia and the seeming conflict of ideologies, it is easy for us to be swept along with the prevailing current of thought. This current of thought would lead us to believe that Russia is the basically anti-Christian state and the United States is basically Christian. It is against this wrong notion that I wish to caution you, dear youthful reader.

I know how easy it is for us to be misled into thinking that our country is basically Christian. All the textbooks written today posit this idea. The President issues a pious decree in which he advocates that all men everywhere pray that

peace may prevail. This makes our nation look very wonderful.

Does the President's decree necessarily indicate, however, that our country is a Christian nation? Besides, does he issue this decree with the intent that all men pray that the Lord's will may be done or must man so pray that his desires and wishes are fulfilled and are foisted upon the divine will of our Sovereign God?

We are living in strange times. The church has never had it so good. It is very unusual that the church should be so free from persecution. It has become fashionable to go to church or at least belong to some church. Because of this fact it is not very difficult to call oneself a "Christian."

Does the fact that there are many who call themselves Christians make our nation a Christian nation? Does the fact that we have a President who attends church on Sunday and invites Mr. Khrushchev to attend church with him make our nation a Christian nation? I suggest that it would be well for each of us to examine the church canons of the church in which President

Eisenhower confesses his "faith." In this way we can come to some basic understandings about the real convictions of our country's leader.

It is an established axiom that the kingdoms of this world have no room for the Christ. They have no room for a Christ who has come to save lost, damnable sinners who are worthy of nothing else but hell. They have no room for a Christ who comes to save men who are totally depraved and incapable of doing any good. Neither the Marxian nor the "neo-capitalistic" system is interested in Christ of his cause.

Both of these systems are basically humanistic. They are man-centered. They aim to further the ideal of the modern man: "Make this world a better place to live."

May I suggest that the leaders of this world and the leaders of our country have forsaken and cast out all that is fundamentally Christian. They have no room for THE CHRIST of the Scriptures.

They are anti-CHRIST.

The Tower of Babel is still being built.

PENCILS AND CHALK

THE SOCIAL STUDIES PROGRAM

MISS W. KOOLE

The term "social studies" when used to designate certain school subjects is of comparatively recent origin. Although first used in 1916 it is in recent years that it has become the accepted term by which the school subjects which deal with human relationships are known. Included in it are history, geography, civics, economics, sociology, political science, and others. For our purposes it can be limited to history and geography, and perhaps citizenship in the lower grades.

A social studies program can be organized in several different ways: separate subjects, fused subjects, problems or projects, units or topics, or activities and experiences. While there is much dis-

cussion regarding the advantages and disadvantages of the fused program as against the separate subject set-up in the higher grades, in the primary grades there is uniformity regarding the teaching procedure.

Social studies are very important: The purpose being a systematic widening of the child's knowledge and understanding of the world as it was created and is sustained by God and always serves His purpose. Therefore, even in the primary grades it should not be neglected. At this level there is no attempt made to divide the material into separate subjects. The contents of the social studies program are generally organized into units which in-

clude activities. The lower the grade, the briefer and more numerous should be the units. Some of these units are suggested by a subject that is taught in all the primary grades — nature study or science. Some of the most important geographical concepts are almost certain to be introduced in these units. Acquisition of a concept is a slow growing thing. It is wise to repeat it throughout the grades. Many children in higher grades can reach back into past experiences of primary and intermediate grades and find there valuable generalizations which can then be developed and expanded.

Some units which embrace geographical concepts are those which deal with Weather, Seasons, Day and Night (bringing in the globe for study and touching upon rotation, gravity etc.); also a unit on Animals; or Food, Clothing, and Homes; or Occupations as being influenced by natural environment. There is at present an increasing supply of rich supplementary reading material for primary grades treating many of these things. The more advanced readers will benefit greatly from its use, but all pupils will find it profitable for vocabulary enrichment as well as development of reading and other study skills.

One weakness I feel in the social studies program in the primary grades is the neglect of the historic element. Children coming face to face with history as a subject in the fifth grade have very little background. I realize that it is impossible to use the chronological sequence and expect these young children to understand it, but simple time relationships can be taught. A unit on Transportation or one on Indians uses the historic approach nicely and naturally. Historic events and figures could easily be presented to children in the early grades in a simple way. Must a child be in the fourth grade before he ever hears of Columbus? Why not use special days, such as Columbus Day, to lay a little groundwork? Important days and persons connected with the history of the Church should not be overlooked either. Reformation Day should be an important event even to the very young child! Isn't it also possible and proper to treat, not necessarily in detail, the historic background of the Church in Europe as we talk about

the Pilgrims and the celebration of Thanksgiving? February is a good time to introduce and work out a unit on our country's early history in connection with the birthday celebrations of two of its prominent leaders. If history is, as we believe, the unfolding of God's plan throughout the ages, it is far too important a subject to be thrust in the background! "His-story" has great significance for everyone of His children.

One worthwhile way of giving children a little historic background is to read interesting stories to them about some of the historical personages. Such an introduction in the primary grades aids in the jump to the more factual presentation in the intermediate grades. Certain of the publishing companies put out a reading series which devote one or more sections to just such stories. There is also a wealth of biographies available on almost every reading level, and we encourage the children to read them.

Systematic geography begins in the fourth grade. Our present textbook treats a series of progressively more complex human-habitat studies, and it would be very difficult and most confusing to use the fused approach. Historic elements can be brought into the picture as needed to facilitate understanding, but the emphasis is not on history as such. There is an argument as to whether it is pedagogically sound to jump into the strange and unknown world; it might be better to begin with the known and familiar and then gradually expand the horizons. We start out with a unit in the fourth grade on Michigan, and I usually find that the state capital is as far away as the Amazon in terms of the experience of most children. A background on the community and the town is given in the third grade social studies program, but state, country, and continent are new concepts. Geography in the fifth grade deals with the Americans, and the history of the United States does tie in well with the regional approach of our country. But I prefer the broader, more detailed treatment afforded with history as a separate subject, going ahead at its own speed. Concentration on one subject makes for better learning, and if the same topic comes up in a different setting, it has the advantage of being repeated and being looked at from another angle.

Current events is another phase of the social studies program that contributes to the child's understanding of the world. Especially today with television more attention is being paid to it in the home. Helping the child to comprehend the significance of events should be the work of the teacher in the intermediate and upper grades. There are many interesting current events "weekly readers" published that are on the child's reading level. The

sixth grade is using one this year that has captured the interest of the whole family.

Whether it is through a fused program a unit approach, or through separate subjects, social studies is a means of aiding the child to consolidate and integrate his fragmentary image of the world—to find in it a God-ordained orderliness, coherence, and purpose—and to be able to take his place in it as an intelligent child of God.

CONTRIBUTION

The Calling to the Ministry

REV. G. LUBBERS

A TIMELY SUBJECT

In a general sense it may be said that the matter of the calling to Ministry of the preaching of the Gospel is ever a timely one. Are we not living in the dispensation of the grace of God which is ours by the Holy Spirit through the *preaching of the Word*? Is it not true what we confess in Question 65 of the Heidelberg Catechism that faith "proceeds from the Holy Ghost who works faith in our hearts by the preaching of the Gospel, and confirms it by the use of the Sacraments"?

Such preaching presupposes *preachers* of the Word!

The subject is, therefore, a perennial one, and is from this viewpoint too a very timely one.

However, it is emphatically a timely one today. Not only is there a rather emphatic shortage of preaching power in our churches due to the emeritation of our beloved Rev. Ophoff, and through the fact that both the Revs. E. Emanuel and J. McCollam have left us, but also due to the fact that through the labors and industry of our Home Missionary the Lord has seen fit to add other churches to our number. (See the timely contributions of both Miss Jannet Hauck and Miss Ilene Griess in this issue.) Besides, time and tide

wait for no one. Many of our ministers have entered the fifty year and more bracket in our churches. These will not, by the law of God's average dealing with men, be able to preach for too many years to come.

To write an article on the calling to the ministry and to emphasize the need of our young men to seek entrance into the ministry may indeed be regarded as being timely.

This article is written for all of our young people to be sure. But it is meant especially as an added challenge and inducement to our young men in our churches.

WHO MUST ENTER THE MINISTRY?

Not everyone must seek to enter the ministry of the Word, to be sure. No one must in anyway attempt to "intrude" into the ministry. He may never by indecent means seek to enter into the office of a minister of the Word, but is bound to wait till it shall please the Lord to call him! (Belgic Confession, Article 31.)

But how shall a man who "desires the office of a bishop" (I Timothy 3:1) know that he is not intruding into the office, and have the testimony of his calling,

and be certain and sure that it is of the Lord?

The Reformed Church Order and also dogmaticians have distinguished a twofold calling to the office of the ministry.

There is first of all the *internal* calling. This is not simply a *mystic* calling, hearing a voice from heaven as did little Samuel of old in the tabernacle. It is more than a "feeling" of being called. It is, to quote Dr. Herman Bavinck "the way of calling (vocatio) examination and ordination". And continues Bavinck "it is the agreement of the inward and the outward calling"!

The *inward* calling must not be confused with *supernatural* calling. The inward calling consists:

1. In the *granting of the gifts* which are required by the office. These are the natural qualifications. The natural is first and then the spiritual. No one, who cannot study theology and the Bible and who does not have the natural ability to teach, ought to consider himself called to the ministry. Nor does this ability to teach *per se* mean that one is called to the ministry. All who are called to the ministry have the natural talents, yet all who have the natural talents may not be called.

2. In the pure and upright and constant *desire to serve the Lord* in the office of the ministry. He who thus desires the ministry desires a good, honorable work. This is the *spiritual* side of the inward calling.

3. In the providential opening of the way on the part of the Lord which leads to the ministry and the preparation for the same.

These are the elements that enter into a determining of one's inward calling to the Ministry!

And they who, after careful and prayerful self-examination, find these requisites in themselves may very well ask the question whether they are walking obediently to Christ, their Lord, should they fail to prepare and seek preparation for the ministry!

Then too there is the *outward* calling. This outward calling is in no way to be separated from the inward calling but is to be regarded as being the earmark and the seal of God's approval upon the internal calling which one believes to have. Thus we read in the Form of Ordination

to the ministry "I ask thee, whether thou feelest in thy heart that thou art lawfully called of God's Church, and therefore of God himself, to this holy ministry?"

Such an outward calling is the seal of the inward calling. And this is sealed finally in the *ordination*! Then God sets such a one aside to the ministry of the Word as His chosen vessel to preach the Gospel.

Young men, think these elements over and ask yourself: Does the Lord call *me*?!

CALLING NOT CONTRACT!

The undersigned once heard the expression that the *contract* between the congregation and me has been broken and therefore I will no longer consider it binding. Such a view of the office as being a "contract" makes the vote of the congregation somewhat of a natural democratic right to call a minister to enter into a contractual relationship with him. As soon as things go wrong the contract is broken by one of the parties that made the "contract". It is a *conditional* contract rather than a calling from God through the Church of God!

However, such is not the view of the Bible nor of the Reformed fathers. We read in Romans 10 "...and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent? as it is written "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad-tidings of good things!" Isaiah 57:2.

In a contract there is no power. But when we see in the ministry a "calling" from God, that makes one strong and obedient.

Contract or "calling"! What will it be, young men?

The *Beacon Lights* Staff says Thank You to:

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The Christian Views Psychology

ROGER HARBIN

It is indeed with caution that I bring into the open the topic of psychology in the magazine for the covenant youth of the Protestant Reformed Churches. But I think we can all agree that it surely is time that this discipline is seen in all its stark reality, without the hostile biases of those in our circles who have written about, or spoken of it in such foul ways.

Let us take a glance at the "impact of psychology on Christianity."

Perhaps first we can get a better and clearer picture of the concept of the unconscious. The theory is relatively new in the realm of theological thinking. Thus it has not been completely integrated into the concepts of theological thought, although I might add that it is generally accepted.

Mental life is theoretically divided into three parts: the conscious, preconscious, and the unconscious. The conscious is much smaller than generally supposed. It is made up only of ideas and feelings present in immediate awareness. Other mental content is easily recalled to consciousness, content which is only temporarily absent from central consciousness—the preconscious.

Quite different, however, is the unconscious. It is the greatest segment of the mind, a huge reservoir which contains all of our primitive impulses and desires which we dare not express (perhaps analogous to our totally depraved nature). These forbidden or socially disapproved impulses from the unconscious constantly strive to cross the threshold into consciousness. But because the "concept of the self" (ego) is unable to cope with these unacceptable feelings, the ego pushes them, as it were, from consciousness, thus producing conflicts within, which, if serious enough, result in neurosis.

This brings us to the concept of mental illness. Not many decades ago, people believed that emotional and mental ill-

nesses or disorders were due to the possession of demons. Psychology has taught us that demon possession is no longer found, in general, in the world today. Psychology shows us that each mental disease entity has a definite symptom complex or group of symptoms by which it can be identified and distinguished from all other disease. Many theologians contend that the demonic period existed only during the time when Christ was on earth.

Working then from the idea of the possibility of mental and emotional disorders, we may assume there are "mental laws" which govern the mind, just as there are physical and moral laws and that these mental laws must be observed to attain and maintain mental health. I think we will all agree to the idea that parents are obliged to try to bring up their children to be mature, well adjusted persons. There have been many observations of the parent-child relationship which have given us clues to the formation of mental laws. A specialist in personality reports that excessive punishment typically results in revolt, possibly with delinquency, submission and withdrawal marked by daydreaming and other escape devices; or outward submission, with smoldering inward antagonism. All have bad effects on personality development. However, I must add at this point, that appropriate punishment with the child being easily able to associate the punishment and the misdeed will in no way affect and normal child adversely.

There are also concepts of the accepted and rejected child. In general the accepted child will prove emotionally stable, well socialized, calm, and interested in things. The rejected child, on the other hand, will show emotional instability, restlessness, indifference, and antagonism.

A mental law which indeed can be useful for all of us can be found in Ephesians 4:25, 26, 27. "Wherefore putting away

lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one with another. Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil."

Can we now say "just as faith without works is dead; so prayer without proper

observance of mental laws can be in many cases useless?"

It is my prayer and supplication that we may have keener insights into the processes of the mind, enabling us to praise and glorify our Almighty God with our whole being; body, spirit, and MIND.

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

by ALICE REITSMAN

News from, for, and about our churches . . .

Again, due to Alice's illness, here is your pinch-hitter reporting . . .

From Lynden's bulletin we see that their church picnic was held on Labor Day at Samish Lake, and included the following ingredients: Games and prizes, good fun and above all, Christian fellowship.

Regarding our Servicemen:

Southwest Church reports that on September 3rd Paul Schipper returned from Germany, after finishing three years of military service. Welcome home, Paul!

Also on September 3rd, the Hull young people gathered to hold a farewell supper for one of their members, Henry Hoksbergen, who left on the 13th for service with the National Guard. The supper was held at Hull Park and included swimming in the afternoon for those who could be there early.

The young people of Southeast Church decided to honor Homer Teitsma with a hay-ride on October 24th. Homer surprised his family and congregation when he came home on leave for a few weeks.

Bulletins from everywhere announce the beginning of a new society season. Young



people, are you all society members? How wonderful that we may exercise the communion of saints in this way, and that we have the privilege of studying God's Word. If you are members, do you attend regularly? If you begin to place other activities above your society life, each time it becomes a little easier for you to "skip". Finally, do you take an active part in your society? Yes, it's easy enough to make some small obvious remark during Bible discussion to give the appearance of taking part, but if you are truly seeking God's blessing, you will study and meditate on His Word and then you will experience the real joy of society life.

Also on September 3rd (that seems to be a popular date in this issue) Rev. and Mrs. Geo. Lubbers met with an accident near Randolph, Wisconsin. Although their car was quite extensively damaged, neither of them was hurt seriously.

Adams School Athletic Association again has made plans for a pancake supper — this one to be held on Saturday, November 7th.

The Young People's Society of Hull hopes to sponsor a Reformation Day program on Sunday evening, November 1st. The speaker will be Rev. G. Van Baren.

Candidates for the 1975 P.R.Y.P. Convention: Mr. and Mrs. George Hoekstra have a new daughter (Hull). Mr. and Mrs. J. Van Dyke of Kalamazoo also have a girl. Mr. and Mrs. D. Knoper (First Church) are the parents of a new daughter too. We hope it won't be an all-girl convention in 1975!

Both Hope and Adams Schools have already had paper drives sponsored by their respective Alumni and Athletic Societies.

Hudsonville to the rescue! I just noticed on one of their bulletins that a boy has been added to the denomination. He is Thomas David, son of Mr. and Mrs. G. Young.

The young people of Oak Lawn sponsored a Singspiration on Sunday evening, October 18th. The collection received was to reduce the debt on their new piano.

The Ladies' Society of Oak Lawn changed their time of meeting from Wednesday to Thursday evening in order that Rev. Vanden Berg may teach catechism in South Holland on Wednesday evenings.

Holland's bulletin announces a new trio consisting of Rev. G. Lanting, Rev. G. Vanden Berg, and Rev. G. Lubbers.

Here's a follow-up on the Open Letter of Rev. Woudenberg on page 1 of the last issue of *Beacon Lights*:

On September 15th a meeting was held at Southwest Church for those interested in establishing a Protestant Reformed High

School. A crowd of two hundred gathered there, comprised of parents from the Grand Rapids area, Holland, Hudsonville, and Grand Haven. Mr. James Swart opened with Scripture reading and prayer and introduced the speaker—Rev. C. Hanko. Rev. Hanko prefaced his speech with remarks as to the momentous nature of the occasion which will be remembered for decades to come. He then spoke on the necessity of a High School; the possibility of it, and the procedures necessary to its attainment. He emphasized that the necessity of a high school caused the crowd to gather at the meeting. Also, according to the baptism vow which the parents have taken, it is doctrinally necessary. Present high schools are steeped in common grace and other errors. High school age is an extremely formative age for children. Teenagers tend to trust teachers more than parents or ministers, due to the former's proximity and fluency with scientific subjects. Also, we must have our own high school in order to create harmony between school, home, and church. The necessity is upon us: we have no choice!

As to its possibility—the number of our children of high school age by 1965 will already total over 100. A survey also indicated a supply of competent teachers already available or in training. Financially Adams and Hope schools are exceeding the fondest hopes of early supporters, and since our people are pouring large sums of money into the existing high schools, we may certainly believe the financial obligations can be met.

As to procedure, the first step has already been taken by the forming of the Steering Committee. The second step is this meeting and the formation of a society. The third, continued support in gifts, time, money, and prayers.

After Rev. Hanko's speech, a society was formed, consisting of 94 members. Also the Steering Committee was empowered to appoint a constitution committee who would also act as school board until an official board could be elected.

So, young people, it certainly looks as if we're on our way to Protestant Reformed education—not only on the grade-school level, but also where it is so sorely needed—in high school!

—Mrs. C. H. Westra

WRITING A PAPER?

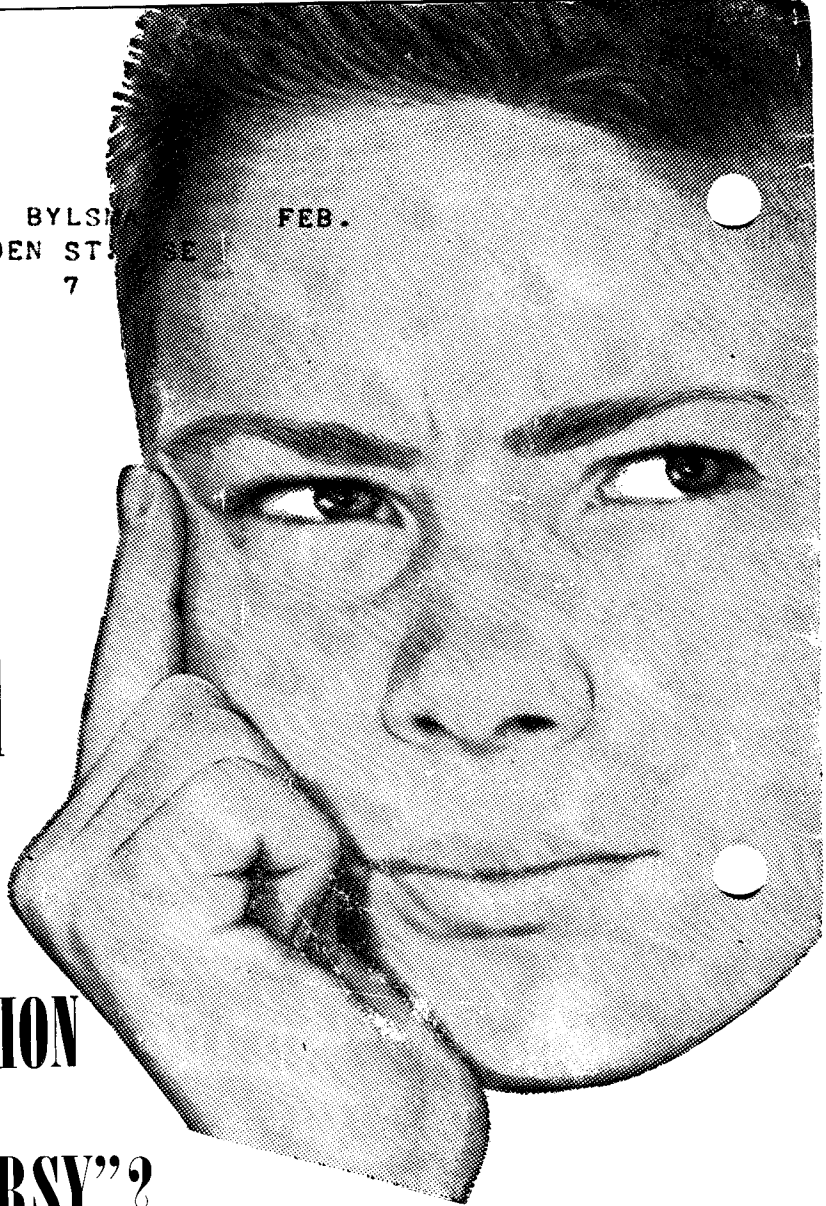
The task of writing essays and papers for after recess programs can be difficult one, but it can be simplified easily. The old issues of both **Standard Bearer** and **Beacon Lights** contain a wealth of information on most of the topics which we need. The material in these issues has been indexed and is available to anyone desiring it. Just write our Federation Librarian and indicate the subject matter you desire.

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FEB.

Confused by the "INSPIRATION CONTROVERSY"?



HERE'S WHERE AND WHEN YOU CAN "FIND THE FACTS."

Be in the know in this important topic! On November 3, the Rev. Bernard Woudenberg will speak at the Y.P. Federation Mass Meeting on the topic "What's Implied by the Inspiration of Scripture?"

EXTRA BONUS — Hear a lively and informative debate on the following resolution: Resolved: we should sing hymns in our church services.

HUDSONVILLE P. R. CHURCH - NOV. 3 - 8 P.M. - C U THERE!