



# BEACON LIGHTS

*for*

**PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH**

January 1963

*A Sober Sixty-three*

REV. G. VAN BAREN

*Possibility of Christian  
Labor Unions*

REV. C. HANKO



# BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

VOLUME XXII

JANUARY, 1963

NUMBER 10

Published monthly, except June and August by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.

**EXECUTIVE BOARD:**

Harry Langerak ..... President  
 Calvin Reitsma ..... Vice President  
 Marilyn Ondersma ..... Secretary  
 Mary Pastoor ..... Asst. Secretary  
 Dave Onderma ..... Treasurer  
 Edward Langerak ..... Asst. Treasurer  
 Sharon Prince ..... Librarian

**EDITORIAL STAFF:**

David Engelsma ..... Editor-in-Chief  
 H. W. Kuiper ..... Associate Editor  
 John Kalsbeek ..... Managing Editor  
 Nancy Heemstra ..... Finance Manager

**STAFF:**

Helen Flikkema ..... Clerk  
 Carol Van Putten ..... Asst. Clerk  
 Clarice Newhof ..... } Assts. to Man. Ed.  
 Lois Schipper ..... }  
 Roger Harbin ..... }  
 Chairman ..... }  
 Mary Pastoor ..... } Public Relations Staff  
 Edward Langerak ..... }  
 Sharon Prince ..... }  
 Beverly Hoekstra ..... }  
 Louise Looyenga ..... } Subscription Managers

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:**

Rev. Robert Harbach ..... Truth vs. Error  
 Agatha Lubbers ..... Critique  
 Mrs. C. Kregel ..... News Editor  
 Charles H. Westra ..... Current Comments  
 Rev. G. Lubbers, Rev. G. Van Baren .....  
 From the Pastor's Study

All material for publication should be addressed to MR. DAVID ENGELSMA, 4242 Riverbend Dr., Grand Rapids 4, Michigan. Grand Rapids subscribers please forward subscription dues to BEVERLY HOEKSTRA, 1346 Butler, S. E., Grand Rapids 7, Michigan. Subscribers outside of the Grand Rapids area please forward subscription dues to LOUISE LOOYENGA, 2604 Almont, Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

All undeliverable material (Forms 3579) should be returned to Louise Looyenga, 2604 Almont, Grand Rapids 7, Mich.

Subscription price: \$3.00  
 Second Class Postage paid at  
 Grand Rapids, Michigan

## In This Issue

AHEAD WITH CONFIDENCE .....	1
David Engelsma .....	
A SOBER SIXTY-THREE .....	2
Rev. G. Van Baren .....	
THE CHRISTIAN'S PLACE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION .....	4
Karlene Oomkes .....	
HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY (Genesis 2 and 4)	
The First Sin — Rev. H. Veldman .....	5
Cain and Abel — Rev. C. Hanko .....	8
TRUTH vs. ERROR .....	11
Rev. R. C. Harbach .....	
CRITIQUE .....	15
Agatha Lubbers .....	
THE POSSIBILITY OF CHRISTIAN LABOR UNIONS .....	16
Rev. C. Hanko .....	
LITERARY CONTEST RULES .....	20
NEWS FROM, FOR, AND ABOUT OUR CHURCHES .....	20
Lois E. Kregel .....	

# Editorials . . .

## AHEAD

### With Confidence

A satire on that familiar piece of doggerel, "Little Bo-Peep," has a section where the comic treats the phrase, "they [the sheep] will return, wagging their tails behind them." He asks in mock horror, "And where do you suppose they might be wagging their tails? In front of them?" In a similar vein, one might ask where else we *can* go as an old year dies and a new year is born—"Backward?"

If the appeal to press on were aimed at young people in general, just-any-old young people, the sarcasm might be to the point. As far as mere natural existence is concerned, none of us can do anything else but go forward into the year of our Lord, nineteen hundred and sixty-three. A deeper matter is our concern. As regards the year stretching out before us, alternatives present themselves to us. Shall we laboriously use the days or shall we idly pass through them? Shall we live them out, impelled by the single motive of love for the Lord, compelled by the knowledge that we make, every day, our entrance and exit *coram Deo*, in the presence of God, or shall we walk the wearisome treadmill of doing much but accomplishing nothing? More specifically, the issue touches upon our past instruction in the Word of God. Do we hold it dear or shall we search out pleasure above Godliness, frivolity above study, and self above God? In a word, shall we go forward or backward?

Even to stand still, to rest content with our spiritual acquisitions of love and truth and humility is to retrogress. The alternatives are either-or: press on, strive with all your might, or fall back. Paul expresses this insistent appeal to go forward in terms of his own life. "This one thing I do, forget-

ting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:13, 14). Constrained to press on, we cannot yield to cheers or jeers from multitudes of men. The world is filled with men whose attitude towards the truth of Scripture is that of dilettantes. In high-flung phrases they exhort all to dabble in the Word with them. Progressive as it may seem, yielding to such pressures drags us back. "Little children," says John, "it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time" (1 John 2:18). They who would blunt the sword of truth, they who would remove the offense from the gospel, would hold us back. The "last time" is not a time to dabble in or to minimize the Word, but a time to ceaselessly press on in knowledge, love, and confession of the truth. Must it be said? This does not bid pleasant dreams to the man at ease in Zion. We repudiate with vigor the self-content, the movers-of-the-tongue-only, those with pat answers to every troublesome circumstance but without the full zeal of life as well as lip. But flail as the theological dilettante may against these windmills, we neither may nor can utter any other confession than that which God Himself has taught us.

One for whom God's truth is a living, life-giving thing soon comes to realize that the future has a menacing appearance. Against the inclination of a youth to regard what lies ahead as a limb of fruit ripe for his picking, the facts of spiritual life oppose themselves. Constant rebuffs, frequent jibes, and the seeming scarcity of those who are

"set for the defense of the gospel" often foster a debilitating cynicism and bitterness. Whether this cynicism be directed outwards or inwards makes little difference; its effect is a limping advance and, inevitably, a destructive backsliding. If the truth, that is, Jesus Christ, is seen only as a set of rules which forbids those deeds and thoughts which men find most pleasurable or if it is viewed as a mere set of dogmatic propositions which can be altered or ignored to suit the fickle temperament of the times and

not as the truth which sets us gloriously free, our advance and, thus, we ourselves are in peril.

Confidence ought to characterize us, confidence that God's favor rests upon the man who buys the truth and sells it not, confidence that God prospers the way of a righteous life. And what is this, other than living by faith in God's promise, in opposition to living by the dictates of the sight of the world's changing fashions?

D. J. E.

---

## FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

# *A Sober Sixty-three*

REV. G. VAN BAREN

I Thessalonians 5:8: "But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation."

The dawn of another year has crept upon us. Suddenly '62 is gone and '63 is here. It is a customary procedure in this country (and I presume in others also) to "drink out the old and drink in the new." It is that devilish practice which calls to mind the Scriptural injunction: be sober. The entrance into a new year requires a sober reflection as well as a sober evaluation of the days ahead. Such sobriety requires not simply abstinence from alcoholic intoxicants, but above all, a separation from worldly, godless corruptions which dull the senses and seek to blind the eye of faith.

There is today a spiritual drunkenness evident the like of which has not been since the days of the flood. That can be seen both in the attitude of man generally towards God's Word as well as his preoccupation with earthly things. He is intoxicated with his science: with his discoveries in medicine, in space, etc. Frantically he searches and investigates — in order to make of this earth a better place in which to live.

Spiritual intoxication is evident in his attitude toward God. Stated simply, man absolutely refuses to acknowledge God and turns rather to atheism. Secondly, he has his heart set upon that which is earthly. His concern appears to be the "easy life" in which he can enjoy the pleasures of ease and entertainment to their fullest extent. His drunkenness is apparent in that to the eyes of this man all things are distorted as far as their true value is concerned.

Such spiritual intoxication can easily beset you too as young people. Beware of it this coming year. How do you decide upon your life's occupation? Do you use a distorted sense of values: how much money does it pay? what hours must I work? how much prestige does it gain? One begins to wonder when he looks at our own seminary, for instance. Two men are being trained there. To the best of my knowledge, only two others have presently made definite plans to attend — and one of those is a school teacher with a family to support. Where are the others? True: our life's calling can be in many other vocations. But the proportion of men desiring to enter the ministry to those entering other occupations seems wrong. And what of the entertainment we

desire? What standards do we use in seeking life's partner? Young people, a proper spiritual sobriety is required in all this.

Spiritual sobriety for '63 requires three things. First of all, one must know himself. He must see and acknowledge that he possesses a sinful nature — a nature totally corrupt, unable to do any good. He is born a spiritual drunkard; he can not deliver himself from the bondage of sin. His deliverance, then, can never come of himself but rather only of his Savior Jesus Christ.

Secondly, proper sobriety is that which knows the world in which one lives — knows it in the sense that one recognizes it for what it is. One then does not admire this world or seek to join it, but sees its corruption, its godlessness.

Finally, in true sobriety one recognizes rightly his relationship to this world. The child of God does not simply join up with that world, nor adopt and live by its standards. Rather, because he is a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, he lives here as a pilgrim and stranger.

And you, young people, are you sober?

One who is sober, recognizes the indubitable fact that protection is needed during this coming year as in the past. There is armor he must have on. We live in an age in which military preparation has become a necessity. The leaders of the country, aware of the dangers threatening, have equipped the armed forces of the country with offensive and defensive weapons. Fact is, they would be grossly negligent were they to do otherwise. But the child of God, living in this unsettled world, is principally concerned with spiritual equipment he needs to endure. There is the need that he be spiritually prepared to face the forces of darkness.

One is equipped when he puts on the breastplate and the helmet. Both are weapons of defense. They preserve one against the attacks of the world. The breastplate, covering both chest and back, would protect the vital organs — particularly the heart. The helmet serves as a defense for the head — the physical control-center for the body.

Our breastplate for this new year is faith and love. Faith is that bond which unites us with Christ so that we are made conscious partakers of all His benefits. Faith clings to Christ and to His glorious prom-

ise. By it we are so united to Christ that His power both defends and preserves us. When we stand in Christ's strength, there is no one and nothing that can reach our heart: the life of Christ in us.

The second part of this breastplate is love. It is listed after faith because it is through faith that we come to a knowledge of this wondrous attribute of God. It is the love of the Triune God. According to it, God eternally rejoices in the perfectness of His chosen people. By that love, God has elected unto Himself a particular people in Jesus Christ. By it, He has sent His only-begotten Son to die on Calvary. In it, He preserves and keeps His people till finally He brings them to glory. That God loves us means that all His power (hence, *all* power) defends us in this world. The child of God, conscious of that love, has nothing to fear. Put on that breastplate in '63. It is our only possible defense.

Also, we need that helmet: the hope of salvation. Hope is that which looks for final deliverance. It is that spiritual characteristic within the child of God whereby he knows assuredly that he will be taken from this vale of tears and brought to glory. It is the longing to be delivered. Hope anticipates the glory that shall be, and expects it without any doubt or question at all. That hope of salvation is the helmet which protects the head. It directs our thoughts heavenward. It turns our eyes, our will, our desires away from this earth. Were that hope not present, there would be nothing to distinguish us from the world. Now there is. We walk in the hope of salvation — the world does not. That hope is our incentive — the drunken world has no incentive. You will need also that helmet this year.

Basically, this armor includes all the rest (Eph. 6). Both offensive and defensive weapons are not of us but of God. He provides them all. Our position, then is not one of weakness in this world, but one of strength.

Put on that armor of God. You can not be without it this year. The command to put on this armor is an injunction given to the Christian. Natural man does not want to put on this armor — nor would he be able to. One could as profitably tell a dead per-

son to clothe himself as to tell the dead sinner to put on the armor of God.

But our text speaks to those of the day, hence, to children of God. Those of the day are those who already enjoy the light — they are regenerated children of God. They already possess principally the benefits of the day. Although they still live in the sphere of darkness, in this world, nevertheless these are living children of God. They are of the day though darkness surrounds them. These both can and do put on this armor by God's grace.

You confess yourself also to be of the day? You are not merely in a church, but you believe you are a living member of the body of Christ? Such is one who is of the day. Then it is impossible that you should desire

to walk in darkness; in drunkenness. One of the day walks in the light — he is sober. And in that sobriety he consciously puts on, day after day, the armor of God. He finds his defense not in self, but in the power of the Almighty God.

We live in the last days. Man has become intoxicated with pleasure — and he seeks to find it all about him. He is drunken with lusts; with earthly things. And this situation grows worse every day. Be sober. Amid the mad search for earthly "happiness," look rather for the final coming of the eternal and heavenly day. One who is sober understands that that day is at hand. One who is sober, is so equipped that he is preserved even unto final glorification. Young people, be sober.

---

# THE CHRISTIAN'S PLACE IN PUBLIC EDUCATION

KARLENE OOMKES

Within the last few years, many Christian graduates have taken their place in the public educational system of this country assured that they will be able to serve the Lord better than in Christian institutions. This is partly due to the influence of a particular theory, which holds that teaching is among other things, a great mission calling. Secondly, graduates are attracted by the higher salaries and the better facilities that the public schools generally have to offer. Thirdly, there are many who think that there is not enough difference between the Christian and public schools; therefore, their devotion to the former no longer exists when a thousand dollars salary difference is involved. Money, then, seems to be the biggest factor; nevertheless, there is still a small percent who are convinced that they have a very definite calling to fulfill in the public schools.

However, no one has to be in any public educational system very long before he dis-

covers that he cannot fulfill his calling in a very dutiful manner. In a bulletin, *The Role of Religion in the Public Educational System*, prepared by the Grand Rapids Board of Education, the Board explains its philosophy and what the teachers' attitude should be toward religion.

Our philosophy must begin with the premise that most Americans are, in varying degrees, religiously motivated. Our government has no control or supervision over religion. The choice of one's religion is entirely a personal freedom.

It is a further part of the American way that teaching a RELIGION is the responsibility of the home and the church, not the school. The schools support the home in this important responsibility, but like our government must ever remain neutral and impartial.

It is the responsibility of the school to respect each child's belief or disbelief as taught in his home. It is, however,

the further responsibility of the school to teach this same child to respect the religious beliefs or disbeliefs of other children. Comparison or evaluations of children's beliefs have no place in the public schools.

It is impossible to understand world affairs of today without some knowledge of the religions of the world. To the degree that a knowledge of religious influence is necessary to understand general school subjects, this teaching is an essential element of nonsectarian general education. (pp. 2 - 3)

The teacher's role in this is to "instill respect for people of all faiths. He must regard all religions objectively and never by any mannerism reflect any expression of adverse feeling that he might have for religions other than his own. He should never try to impose his own religion on someone else in the classroom." (p. 4) Furthermore, religious holidays can all be observed with some of the proper emphasis, except for Good Friday and Easter - in which the religious significance must be left entirely to the home. As pertaining to the Bible reading, when it is read, it must be done so without any interpretation.

Generally, this is the attitude all public school systems have taken concerning the place of religion. To go beyond this, would be violating the very purpose of public education. Since it is impossible for anyone to remain neutral, atheistic teaching usually results. At a panel discussion I recently attended, one of the members made some

very pertinent remarks on this question. He stated that it would be very dangerous to have prayer and Bible reading in the public school, because if no interpretation is added, then it is only very superficial and meaningless. He went on to say that religion is a private matter and only the church must train.

Certainly it is evident that the mission-minded teacher will not be able to carry out his calling in this system; and if it is the duty of the teacher to teach the child all about Jesus Christ, which I think it is, no Christian should ever be able to find his place in the public school system.

However, something should be said about studying in public institutions. There are locations, even within our own denomination, in which no Christian education is available for the children. Parents must in this situation take upon themselves a very heavy responsibility, and often do a more thorough job than in areas where we have our own Protestant Reformed Schools.

Many times parents forget that the school is an extension of the home (not of the state) and supplements the home, not substitutes it. Instruction in the home is foremost, as it will characterize the attitudes toward the school. Whenever and wherever possible, children should be sent to Christian educational institutions throughout their learning careers. Above all, it should be realized that education is very important and necessary, and teachers, parents, and students alike have a great obligation toward their God to be educated in The Truth.

---

## HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE

# Book of GENESIS

## GENESIS 3

REV. H. VELDMAN

### THE FIRST SIN\*

#### INTRODUCTION

##### Adam's Antithetical Calling

Scripture calls our attention to two trees: the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Whereas the former had the power to perpetuate the lives of Adam

and Eve (Gen. 3:22), the fruit of the latter was forbidden them.

The tree of knowledge of good and evil was so called because through it Adam and Eve learned good and evil: the good (fellowship with God) when not partaking of

it, and the evil when partaking of it; eating of the forbidden tree they would experience death, the evil of death as the curse of the living God.

This established Adam's antithetical calling. God did not issue this prohibitive command to give Adam an opportunity to gain eternal life (everlasting, heavenly life) in the way of obedience. Man can never merit anything. Besides, Christ is the One eternally ordained of God to realize eternal life for us — how, in the light of Ephesians 1:9-10, could God offer Adam that which will be realized for us by Christ according to the purpose of His will? But Adam must serve God antithetically. He must choose the good and reject all evil. He must say Yes and No. Therefore this prohibitive command.

### **Sin's Entrance into the World**

How awful! What a night of sin and misery and death has resulted since Adam's sin engulfed the world! Hence, how awful from the viewpoint of its effect!

The story of Adam's sin follows immediately upon the narrative of creation. We believed that it occurred soon after Adam's creation. After all, it was not the purpose of God that Adam and Eve should live in the earthly Paradise, but that the way must be prepared for the coming of the Second Adam. It is Adam's purpose to lead all mankind (God's purpose with them) into the depths of sin; the Second Adam must lead us into glory.

### **THE FALL OF MAN**

#### **The Truth of Man's Fall Tremendously Important**

Read carefully what we read in Questions and Answers 6 and 7 of our Heidelberg Catechism. They treat this matter.

We cannot deny the reality of sin and misery. To do so would be folly. Apart from salvation it is the most astounding thing that confronts us! It affects and controls everyone of us. Imagine, if you please, that God had created us evil! Our salvation would then be hopeless. God created sin? In sin and death He delights? How, then, could salvation ever come from Him?

To one more matter we wish to call attention now. Here we have the difference

between all truly Christian instruction and the instruction by the world. The Bible narrative places man at the beginning on a high level. He was created good. But he became evil. And in that sin he has been developing ever since. The world, however, places man at the beginning on a very low plane. He descended from the monkey. His sin is due to ignorance or lack of development. He is ever striving to better himself. All this, we know, is to no avail. Hence, according to the world man began at the bottom and is gradually ascending, "going up." According to the Bible man began at the top and is gradually "going down." And according to the Bible man's misery and death are the direct result of the curse of God, whereas salvation is from God alone. What a difference: man can save himself or all he does is sin and salvation can come from God alone.

### **How Conducted**

The devil uses the serpent. He did not come to Adam and Eve in the form of a serpent, but in a serpent. We understand that the story as recorded in Genesis 3 is real, historical. There was a real serpent. And that serpent actually talked. The account of Genesis 3 is not a myth, or an allegory, but a real fact and historical incident. This animal, we read, was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. This must not be understood in an evil sense. Every creature, also the serpent, was good. The serpent was more subtle in the sense that it was the most brilliant of all the animals. We also believe that, prior to the fall of man and the entrance of sin into the world, it walked on legs and feet. That it crawls upon its belly is because of the curse of God. Moreover, this animal could talk. I have already remarked that the serpent did the speaking in Genesis 3, although, of course, it was prompted by the devil. The devil is a spirit, does not speak directly to us, does not have a body and therefore a tongue. He spoke through the serpent. He was in that serpent. And he selected the serpent because that animal undoubtedly stood closest to man. It was Adam's "pet"!

Satan approaches Eve first. This is intentional, of course. This was part of his devilish strategy. Eve was not the head of the

human race. Adam was that head. Eve's sin would not affect the human race. Of course, to suppose a situation in which Eve would have sinned and not Adam is foolishness. Both must fall, according to the unchangeable will and counsel of the Lord. But, had Eve sinned and not Adam, God would undoubtedly have created another woman for Adam. Hence, the devil approaches Eve because he would use her to tempt Adam. Such was the devil's clever plan of attack.

It is not necessary for me to repeat what we read in verses 1-5. Satan presents the idea that man may not eat of all the trees in the garden as absurd. Were they not all good? How ridiculous, therefore, that one may not eat of all the trees in the garden, that there could actually be a tree in that garden of perfection whereof Adam and Eve were not allowed to eat! Satan reveals himself here as Satan (the word means: adversary) and as devil (this word means: liar). He is Satan because he opposes God. He places his word over against that of the Lord. He contradicts God. He always does. He is God's adversary. Not dualistically, as if the devil can ever resist God. Of course not! God uses him also! But he is God's adversary spiritually, hates God, and seeks to dispose of Him in the world. He would have men serve him and not the living God. He also reveals himself as "devil," the liar. He makes God a liar. He declares that God lied when He told Adam and Eve that they would surely die. God knew that they would not die, but that they would become as He. The Lord was afraid of that. He, therefore intimidated our first parents. How diabolical. And, how foolish! Did not the Lord make that tree also? Would its fruit cause anyone to become as the Creator? Incidentally, Eve's first mistake was that she entered into conversation with the devil. She should have silenced him with the Word of the Lord and turned her back upon him. It is folly to converse and argue with the devil. Jesus did not argue with him. Notice what we read in Matt. 4:10. He quotes the Scriptures and commands him: "Get thee hence."

### **Man's Terrible Sin**

The modern, unbelieving world ridicules Genesis 3, speaks mockingly of the eating

of an apple, and that all man's misery should be the aftermath of such an innocent deed. However, we know better. The sin of Adam was not so innocent.

Adam's sin was terrible because it was wanton, wilful, deliberate disobedience. Adam deliberately disobeyed God because "the fruit was pleasant to his eye." He eagerly grasped the opportunity to be as God. He resented the role of a servant. He tired of serving God. He was wantonly disobedient. This was the essence of his sin. Adam did not sin ignorantly. He did not sin because he was forced into it; he did not really want to sin but was forced into it. He sinned deliberately. Sin is always deliberate, wanton. After all, the only thing involved in Genesis 3 was the word of the Lord. Adam was not forbidden to kill his wife. He might not eat of the tree. Why not? Because God had said it. Why must we do this and not that? Because the Lord commands and forbids. This is the essence of all true obedience. It is also the essence of all disobedience: our refusal that God be God over us.

Adam's sin was also terrible because he chose for the devil. After all, he believed the word of the devil and declared God to be a liar. He therefore certainly allied himself with Satan and he did this over against God.

Adam's sin was terrible, in the third place, because he sinned as the head of the human race. Let us grasp this to see the awfulness of it. This does not merely imply that his sin would involve all his posterity in the sense that all would share his death. It surely also implied this. Adam's sin would render the entire human race guilty before God, worthy of death, and subject to sin and death in all its phases. But the sin of Adam also implied that he would "line up" all mankind behind the Lord and in fellowship and alliance with the devil.

### **The Result of Adam's Sin**

A word about this will certainly not be remiss. God had said that he would die the day he ate of the tree. And we know that this happened. Of course! What God says always comes true. This applies here also.

The Christian Reformed Churches (our

mother-church) deny this. That is one of the reasons or points of doctrine which was the ground for our expulsion in 1924. They teach that man is not by nature dead in sins and trespasses. They teach other heresies also, such as the general offer of salvation in the preaching of the gospel. But this particular heresy is upon the foreground now. And a heresy it certainly is. Because of "Common Grace" man can do good before the Lord without regeneration. This, however, is emphatically not true. When Adam sinned he died. Also physically in the sense that the power of death now controlled his body and no world science can stop its power. Also spiritually. Man became corrupt. See Ephesians 2:1-3; Art. 1-4 of the Canons, III and IV. And he also died the eternal death, became by nature object of Divine wrath, worthy of everlasting hell.

#### GENESIS 3:15

##### **This is the "Mother Promise"**

This is the first promise. Out of it all the other promises flow. It includes, of course, all the other promises.

The "seed of the serpent" is the devil and all reprobate men. The "seed of the woman" is the elect Church with Christ as its Head.

##### **Struggle and Victory**

The text emphasizes an intense struggle. Not between people and serpents, but between the Church and the World, the Party of the living God, in Christ Jesus, over against the powers of evil and darkness. This struggle rages throughout the ages. The Old Testament is full of it. We need not, cannot treat this now in detail. Think of Israel vs. Amalek, Israel in Egypt, etc. And this continues throughout the ages.

The victory will be complete. The heel of the woman will be bruised. God's Church will suffer persecution and affliction. Christ did! Also His people. But the head of the seed of the serpent will be crushed. This means that he will be destroyed, and all his followers. The Church will emerge completely victorious.

##### **God's Promise**

"I will set enmity." God will do this. God will cause separation between the seed of

the woman and that of the serpent. He will do that by pouring out His love into His own, upon the basis of the atoning sufferings of Christ.

God will do it alone. Unconditionally! That always characterizes His promise. After all, we are dead and blind and deaf and dumb, and God promises life. We chose sin. But God maintains His covenant. And this He does alone. All by Himself! Thanks be to His Name!

#### GENESIS 3:21

##### **Man Would Clothe Himself**

Notice what we read in verses 7-8. Adam and Eve made themselves aprons of fig leaves. They were naked and knew it.

Indeed, man always seeks to clothe himself. He would save himself! He would, in the way of his own works, seek to present himself acceptable in God's sight. He wants to work his own way into the favor of God.

Notice what we read in verse 21

The Lord made Adam and Eve coats of skin. We understand what this implies, do we not? This means that an animal was slain in their behalf. And I am sure that the Lord explained this to them.

The first sin is accompanied by the first sacrifice. It has been said that Adam fell into the arms of Christ. How true! Adam and Eve were children of God according to election. When they sinned the Lord revealed to them salvation, salvation through the Seed of the Woman (primarily Christ) who would crush the seed of the serpent. And salvation through Him in the way of blood. God's justice must be satisfied. And it will be satisfied, our sins will be paid and eternal life merited. Salvation is of God alone, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

\*A reprint by Rev. Veldman's permission from *The Teacher's Guide* of June, 1955. — Ed.

#### GENESIS 4

REV. C. HANKO

##### **Cain and Abel**

1. Their birth. Adam and Eve looked forward to more than a richer family life when they anticipated the birth of their first child. For them it was the evidence that God's promise of Genesis 3:15 was being realized, for there God had promised salva-

tion through the children that should be born to them. Therefore when Cain, Eve's firstborn arrived, she joyfully cried: "I have gotten a man from the Lord." It is very well possible that she thought for the moment that Cain might be the promised Seed, the Christ. And, although we know now that in that respect she was sorely mistaken, it was still true that by the birth of this first child God assured her of future generations through which the promised Seed should be born. The Lord would teach her that Christ could only come by way of struggle, struggle between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman.

How different her attitude when she looked at Abel. It is possible, although not certain, that Cain and Abel were twins. Yet there was such an outstanding difference between them. While Cain was strong and robust, the very picture of health and strength, Abel was small and weak. Therefore she called him "breath", "vanity", as if she could plainly read in him the results of their sin and the curse. But God's ways are not our ways. God was pointing out that the carnal seed would always be larger and superior to the spiritual seed from every natural point of view, so that the carnal seed would persecute the spiritual seed and try to destroy it. The whole world would unite as one man against the Christ *the* great promised seed.

2. Their marked differences. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." Cain, in harmony with his robust physique, chose to wrestle with the soil. The more strenuous life of the farmer appealed to him. While Abel, as we can readily see, chose the less strenuous, but meditative life of a shepherd. Cain was the man of great earthly ambitions, Abel sought his delight in fellowship with God in prayer and meditation. Although they both had the same covenant training in their youth, the result of this training for Cain was that it brought out the depravity of his nature, while for Abel it revealed the work of grace, strengthening him in his faith in the promised Savior and the hope of eternal life.

This difference revealed itself particularly in their sacrifices. Cain could not entirely ignore or forget his early training. He was willing to bring a formal sacrifice to

God, if for no other reason than to give some of his gifts to the Most High. It tickled his vanity to do something that God should appreciate. Abel, on the other hand, manifests a deep humility. He brought the firstlings of his flock, the very best, thereby confessing that God is the sole Possessor of all things and that even these small gifts came to him from God's hands. Therefore also the choice of a lamb was significant. Ever since God had given to Adam and Eve the skins of animals to cover their nakedness, it was evident that blood had to be shed as an atonement for sin. This Cain ignored. But Abel understood. Therefore when he sacrificed his lamb, he did so to confess his sins before God and express his hope in the promised Christ. Cain's sacrifice was the Arminian attempt to appease God with our own works, while Abel's sacrifice was an act of faith. Hebrews 11:4. Therefore God also accepted Abel's sacrifice, and rejected Cain's. Just how it became evident to Cain and Abel that the one sacrifice was accepted and the other rejected, we do not know. But we do know that Abel experienced peace with God, while Cain did not. Therefore "Cain was wroth, and his countenance fell." Even then the Lord warned Cain, pointing him to the fact that the Lord (Jehovah) is a righteous God. God pointed out to him that those who keep God's commandments are approved and accepted of God. While on the other hand, those who defiantly transgress His law must experience a transgressor's reward. The soul that sins becomes a slave to sin, for sin is like a lion crouching in his den, ready at the first opportunity to pounce upon his prey and devour him. It is the duty of man to have mastery over sin, to oppose and resist all evil. This statement does not imply that Cain was capable of keeping God's commandments or of doing good in the sight of God, as it is often interpreted. But it does point out the righteousness of God and His just punishment upon the transgressor. This even Cain cannot deny, even though he turns a deaf ear against it.

Cain soon shows that he is very really "the seed of the serpent", a child of Satan, who was a murderer from the beginning. For in his hatred against God, Cain also hates those who love God, and thus turns

against his own brother. Whether Abel admonished him or not, whether this contention went on for some time or not, we have no way of knowing; but we do know that Cain's furor arose to a fever pitch against Abel, so that he arose and slew him. I John 3:12.

Since this was still at a time when God spoke directly to men, the Lord also spoke to Cain, pointing him to the atrocious crime that he had committed before the face of the living God, and assuring him that God would certainly vindicate that shed blood. The curse of God upon Cain was twofold: First, Cain would have a still more bitter struggle to wrestle his existence from the soil. The ground would produce only enough to give him a bare existence. And second, he would shift and stray about in the earth. He was driven from the covenant family to shift for himself as one who was an outcast before God, as is always the bitter experience of the wicked, even when they revel in luxuries. Cain reacts to this sentence of condemnation with both impudence and despair. He shows no sorrow, but complains that the same lot might befall him that befell Abel. He would be like a hunted beast. But God assures him that he will live out his divinely appointed days upon the earth, since he must serve his own purpose, even if it is in the sphere of wickedness. The answer of God contains not an iota of grace or mercy, but only shows that vengeance belongs to the Lord, Who will recompense in His own time and manner. The sign that is mentioned in verse 15 as a "mark upon Cain," was evidently not some visible mark, but rather a sign to Cain, an assurance of God that he would not be killed. It is only after the flood that we read that the death penalty upon the murderer was introduced. Gen. 9:6.

3. The development of the seed of the serpent in contrast to the seed of the woman. 17-26.

First is mentioned the development of the seed of the serpent in Cain's generations. Here we have the first evidence that Adam and Eve had more children than the two already mentioned. Here is also evidence that among the sons and daughters of Adam there were others besides Cain who were wicked, as must have been the

case with this sister who joined Cain in marriage and continued in wickedness with him.

Here it is also evident that Cain defiantly seeks his future success and happiness apart from God in the things of this world. The great strides of progress through discoveries and inventions were made by the men of this world, the descendants of Cain. Cain proceeds to build himself a city. This may have been nothing more than a few simple houses in an enclosure. And the original purpose may have been to protect their families from wild animals that roamed about. But soon this city became an expression of their proud boast that they could get along perfectly well as enemies of God. They sought a name for themselves. As is evident from the fact that this city was named after Cain's son Enoch. Psalm 49.

In these generations of Cain we find names that include the name of God, as is evident from the repeated "El". At first there must have been some formal mention of God, but gradually even the thought of God was banished from their minds. Moreover, in these names we also see the development of sin. This is especially evident in a man like Lamech. He committed bigamy, taking to himself two wives. And the names of these wives express his carnal lust. Adah means "ornament," while Zillah means "the shady one". In this family appeared the corruption that is so blatantly displayed in our present world, as represented by Hollywood. See I John 2: 16.

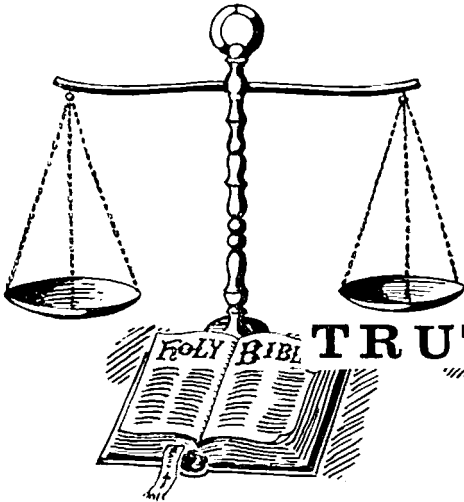
Lamech also expressed his defiance of God in his wicked "sword song". We can readily visualize him, arrogantly holding his son's invented sword in his hand, reciting poetry to his wives to express his deep contempt for God's justice. He has heard of the punishment that God had once pronounced upon all those who would kill Cain; and he scorns it with his whole soul. Possibly he already had avenged himself on his enemies, as he intends to retaliate in the future. Let God recompense him if He will!

It was in this wicked family that the great men of renown appeared. "Adah bare Jabal." And Jabal became a nomad, devoting his time and effort to producing cattle and sheep. He introduced cattle grazing as

a means of livelihood. "The name of his brother was Jubal." He was the originator of musical instruments, both wind and stringed instruments. Zillah's son was also an inventive genius, producing instruments and utensils of bronze and iron. Imagine what an influence these men had on the development of Cain's city. Jubal was the shrewd business man, Tubal Cain improved the manner of living with his instruments of bronze and iron. Jubal helped to provide the entertainment with his harp and organ. A miniature metropolis of wickedness had sprung up, throbbing with a life of sin.

That accounts for it that Tubal Cain's sister is mentioned, Naamah, "the pleasant one." She fits in that scene of carnal lust, craving pleasure, ease and luxury.

In contrast to the generations of Cain, a brief account is given of the descendants of Seth. God remembers His covenant and gives to Adam and Eve another son in the place of Abel. Seth very fittingly means "substitute," or "one set in the place of another." Was he a reminder to Adam and Eve of the real "Substitute," the Seed of the woman who would come to bear away their sins? This we know, the sons of Seth were characterized by their simple life and devotion to God. They sought a better country, and were strangers on the earth. Heb. 11:13-16. Moreover, in the days of Enos public worship was introduced. The believers also felt the need for a common bond of unity, but they sought it in the communion of saints for the purpose of worshipping God and the strengthening of their faith.



## TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. R. C. HARBACH

### THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

#### I. As to Doctrine

That the most important branch of the Eastern church is the Russian Orthodox Church is today easily seen. This church came into being in the tenth century when Christendom was introduced to the Russian barbarians by way of an ikon and the rite of immersion. Denominational headquarters became centered in Constantinople until 1461, when the Metropolitan (a bishop next in rank after a patriarch) of Moscow was advanced to Patriarch (bishop of the highest rank), making Moscow the Rome of Russia.

When Peter the Great came to power, he founded St. Petersburg (1703), and made it

the religious capital with the Czar as emperor-pope of Russia. When a later Czar caught in the Russian revolution of 1917 was assassinated, religious liberty was also slain. Then priests were jailed or executed and a tidal-wave of atheism smashed over the country. In such times the patriarchate was re-established in the face of constant opposition from the Soviet state. A few years later the church adopted the position that hierarchical authority inhered not in a papal head, but in the broadest ecclesiastical body. Priests with anti-Soviet policies were banished or jailed. It was "be kind to the Soviets - or else!"

In 1930, the Communists legislated against

religion, forbidding religious instruction to any under 18, banning meetings of women and children for prayer or Bible study, prohibiting church-sponsored libraries and reading rooms, removing all religion from the schools. Church buildings were confiscated by the state, some being used as museums. Icon worship was destroyed as well as reverence of relics and of dead bodies of saints. The only dead to be honored were deceased Communists. Naturally, other hierarchical saint-worshipping churches resented this treatment of the Russian clergy. Therefore the pope and the archbishop of Canterbury sent expressions of sympathy to the Russian church, and sent resolutions to the Soviet government protesting the cruel aggression. But keep in mind that Canterbury always persecuted the true church, and that Rome has always made friendly gestures to the Russian church, calculating to win recognition as the only real and rightful church in the world. Hence, members in the Russian church were not by Rome castigated as heretics, but were called "distant brethren" or "separated brethren." So today, Protestants, at least those who have been baptized, are in the interest of a world church no longer stigmatized as heretics, but as "separated brethren." Pope Pius XI was of this spirit somewhat. He prescribed a prayer that the ROC return "to the fold and communion of the [Roman] Catholic Church." Then the Anglican church, not to appear unecumenical, also called for prayers for the Russian church. Today the Presbyterian church (UPUSA) calls for prayer for organic union of all churches in one world church. So does the Romish church in its present Vatican Council. There seems to be no opposition to this sliding back to Rome on the part of the great bodies of "Protestantism." Apostate "Protestants" are heading in that direction. They are not Protestants. At best they are protest-ants. But they are in the ecclesiastical woodwork.

To get back to this Russian Orthodox Church: it was indeed orthodox in rejecting the Apocrypha, but not so in requiring proselytes to read it in preparation for admission into the church. It was so in receiving Scripture as the Word of God, but not so in placing tradition on the level with the authority of Scripture, nor in its discourag-

ing the reading of Scripture. It was so in appealing to the Nicene Creed, but not so in rejecting the *Filioque* clause (cf. the Holy Spirit "who proceedeth from the Father and the Son"). It was so in referring to the church universal as including the churches of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople, but not so in ignoring the churches of Germany, Switzerland and England. It was so in teaching the Lord's Prayer, but not so in including the *Ave Maria*. It teaches the Decalogue, but with the second and fourth commandments abridged. Examination of candidates for the ministry is mainly disciplinary and pastoral, doctrine being touched only incidentally. Transubstantiation is held in the strongest language. It also teaches the Arminian philosophy that election is according to God's foreknowledge of those who make good use of their free will to accept salvation, and that reprobation is according to His foreknowledge of those who reject it. "The Calvinistic doctrine of unconditional predestination is condemned as abominable impious and blasphemous." On divine providence, God foresees and permits evil: He does not foreordain it. A common grace is also taught which "God has predestinated to give to all men and has actually given them" for the "attainment of happiness." As to the ascension of Christ, it is not physical, but spiritual. The penitent dead are in purgatory until delivered by prayers, alms and masses. There is also a contradiction in Russian Orthodox theology which is doctrinally, historically and anthropologically opposite to fact. It is that God made Eve from a rib of Adam "to the intent that all mankind might be by origin naturally disposed to love and defend one another"! Other doctrinal peculiarities are: The true church cannot be conceived of apart from the hierarchy, nor apart from an ecumenical council. It still in this modern day obtains that love to sovereign and country go so far as to make subjects ready to die for them. Grace may be manufactured by making the sign of the cross on the forehead, on the breast, on the food and the cups at the table, and is a practice to be encouraged upon going to bed at night, on arising in the morning, on going out for the day, on the daily rounds, and on return to home. The sign of the cross makes one a holy terror to the devil.

## II. As to Correspondence

For this denomination, intercommunion and cooperation with other church organizations was at first non-existent. The Reformation was not out of the Eastern Church. It had no part in the Reformation movement, and paid no particular attention to it. The Lutherans did make some approach to the Eastern branch of Christendom. Melancthon, an ecumenicist of the day, made overtures to the church at Constantinople, but failed. The Greek Orthodox Church condemned the Lutheran Augsburg Confession, and the Synod of Jerusalem (1672) rejected both Lutheranism and Calvinism as dangerous heresies, pronouncing in Romish fashion anathemas against Protestantism. Some Anglicans in the early 1700s attempted correspondence with the Russian church. The Russians were polite; certainly not as harsh as the Greek church. They answered that the British brethren visit Russia "to hold a friendly conference, in the name and spirit of Christ. . . (to) ascertain what may be yielded and given up by one to the other, what, on the other hand, may and ought for conscience' sake be absolutely denied." The proposal was never realized. Negotiations ended with the death of Peter the Great, and Russian charges that the Anglicans were infected with "German heresy" (Lutheranism) and Calvinism.

In the mid-nineteenth century arose a de-protestantizing movement in the Anglican church with hundreds returning to Rome. This occasioned renewed correspondence, including the American Protestant Episcopal Church, with the Russian churches. The churches were visited, fraternal letters written and social amenities exchanged, followed by conferences between Anglican and Russian ecclesiastical dignitaries. The Russian church went far enough, however, only to admit that the Episcopal churches alone were anchored to the true church. Other Protestants were cut off and set adrift. They also re-affirmed the infallibility of the church, and rejected all Protestant baptism because it is not administered with that most essential to baptism, as they see it, namely, triple immersion.

More notable were the gatherings in 1925 at Westminster Abbey with the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Eastern churches and Russian Metropolitans represented. Basis of

unity did not put first Scripture as the infallible Word of God, but (1) the authority of the hierarchical church, then (2) Scripture, but as interpreted by the hierarchical church, (3) the Nicene Creed, similarly interpreted, and (4) the decrees of the ecumenical councils. The first formal contact in nine centuries between the Roman Catholic and the Russian Orthodox church was when two Russian delegates attended the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council in Rome. Thus the Orthodox church remains in its historical and present heterodox and unreformed state.

## III. As to Ecumenicity

An important representative in this church is Georgi G. Karpov, chairman of the Council of Affairs, also major general of the Soviet secret police, appointed by Stalin to be in charge of all religious affairs and a minister in the Soviet cabinet. The late Metropolitan Nicolai was an identified agent of the Soviet secret police, and had been in charge of the foreign affairs of the church. He had also toured the U. S. In 1950 Nicolai had written, "The greedy tentacles of the octopus across the ocean are trying to engulf the entire universe. Capitalist America, this fanatic prostitute of the new Babylon . . . is trying to seduce the peoples by pushing them into war." Archbishop Nikodim, replacing Nicolai, after the latter's death, is the foreign spokesman for the ROC, and is scheduled to visit the U. S. with the Russian delegation in February, 1963. He has dictated to the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches and the UN that it is their duty to press the U. S. government to abandon its blockade policy on Cuba. Soviet churchmen dictated U. S. foreign policy thus: "It is the duty of American church leaders to use all opportunities in pressing the U. S. government to abandon its crazy policy." Marvelous advice from the Soviets — the U. S. is "crazy" to defend itself against Soviet aggression 90 miles from our southeastern border! It is Patriarch Alexei who is head of the ROC. He not only endorsed the Khrushchev proposal for total disarmament (which did not include UN inspection of whether Russia was disarming!) made at the UN, but sent a message to the WCC the day after the ROC was received into membership in the

World Council asking the Council to endorse complete disarmament. From this it ought to be plain that the ROC is in the WCC to promote the cause of Nikita Khrushchev.

Alexei was awarded a high Soviet government decoration, the Order of the Red Banner of Labor on his 85th birthday. He has referred to Stalin as "a wise, God-appointed leader." Whether he was wise is more than questionable. But he certainly was a "God-appointed leader." Hitler, too, was a God-appointed leader. So was Herod. So was Judas. Alexei swore allegiance to Stalin as the "deeply honored and dear Joseph Vissarionovich," head of the Soviet Fatherland. Truly, "the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will, and setteth up over it the basest of men" (Daniel 4:17).

Is it, then, saying too much to say that the Russian Orthodox is an arm of the Soviet government, and agent of the Kremlin and part of the Red propaganda "peace" program? that it is Communist-controlled? The last synod of the Reformed Church in America thought so and rejected the charge that the ROC is *completely* controlled by the Soviet government. One wonders whether that synod had better information than the sworn testimony given before the U. S. Senate Internal Security Subcommittee and the House Committee on Un-American Activities by Peter Deriabian and Yuri Rastvorov who gave in detail account of complete and total control of the Soviet government over the ROC and all the churches permitted to exist behind the Iron Curtain. The NCC itself, in which the Reformed Church of America has membership, made a statement last September that the Russian churches "made it perfectly clear . . . that Christians in the Soviet Union are a loyal segment of the 'new socialist society' which is being built." Then there is Archbishop Iakovos, primate of the Greek Orthodox Church, N. & S. A., who was suspicious about admitting the ROC to the WCC. He said, "They cannot, of course, go any place without first getting instruction from the Kremlin foreign office. They are not a free church."

In 1956 certain clergymen of Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and the Ukraine issued a declaration and protest

against a trip of delegates from the National Council to Moscow. In part they said, "We know the plight of the churchmen under the control of the Soviet regime. It compels them to lie, to distort their functions, and to become obedient instruments in the furtherance of the Soviet expansion. This is something so horrible that we, when given even the remotest opportunity, have risked all in order to flee this role . . . Christians behind the Iron curtain . . . are not invested with the role of spokesmen; they are suffering in prisons, being tortured in slave-labor camps and resting in mass-graves . . ."

In 1954 a book came out in Germany entitled *Die Katakombenkirche* by Arfved Gustafson. He points out that the Orthodox Church in Soviet Russia had been persecuted by the programmed atheistic state power, i.e., Communism, but has now entered into a union with this state power and in doing so was compelled to deny the persecution. The excuse given for this attitude is that this church "has taken upon itself the martyrdom of the lie for the sake of the preservation of its life." For this stab-in-the-back compromise, a great number of Christians withdrew from the Orthodox church. They could not go along with that ecclesiastical union with the atheistical state. For this stand they have had to retire into "official non-existence," become a "catacombs church." If this is true, and there is no reason to deny it, then the true continuation of the Russian Orthodox Church is not the church of the "martyrdom of the lie," but the underground church. The Russian author, T. Andreev, writing on the history of the ROC, said, "Orthodoxy, having surrendered to the Soviets, and having become a tool of the world embracing anti-Christian deception, is not Orthodoxy any longer, but the misleading heresy of Anti-Christendom, dressed up with the rent clothes of Orthodoxy."

How then can our government welcome the Russian UN delegates and the ROC delegates to our country? To do so is to admit spies into the country. It can be explained why the present administration can so readily and easily do this. It is part of the principle of integration, not only integration of races, but of all nations into

a one-world united nations government, which is based on more than "peaceful co-existence" — on the universal brotherhood of man. There is, therefore, no longer any place for colonialism, private initiative or unilateral action, for we must build a world-wide Christian community in which we

have an open society operating with all kinds of exchange programs. To speak of "spies" within such a sophisticated, "advanced," civilized (?) context is to set yourself up as a candidate for a visit to your friendly psychiatrist. You are a victim of "negative fear reaction."



# CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

## LET ROME RETURN TO THE BIBLE

The 2,200 council fathers met in St. Peter's Basilica were addressed by the ailing Pontiff in their last meeting of the year 1962. This council, which has been called by Pope John XXIII is dedicated to the proposition that all faiths and all men shall ultimately be united in one great world church. Pope John stated that "a good beginning had been made" and that "an exact target date of 1963 could be set for the council's conclusion." This would be a rather remarkable conclusion because it would fall on a centenary year; the Council of Trent met from 1545 till 1563.

Both Protestants and Catholics are concerned with this Second Vatican Council. Four hundred million Catholics over the world will be affected by the decisions of the council which has temporarily adjourned. One hundred and fifty million Protestants in several continents will also be affected by these decisions.

The Pontiff has stated that the "voice of the laity" shall be more clearly heard and at least one voice has been heard. Evelyn Waugh, Catholic layman and novelist, writes in the *National Review*, December 4, 1962, in an article entitled "The Same Again Please: A Layman's Hopes of the Vatican

Council" and opposes many of the proposed changes to be considered by the Vatican Council. Concerning the reunion of Christendom, however, E. Waugh had the following to say:

Most Christians, relying on the direct prophecies of Our Lord, expect this (reunion of Christendom a.l.) to occur in some moment of historical time. Few believe that moment to be imminent. The Catholic aspiration is that the more manifest the true character of the Church can be made, the more dissenters will be drawn to make their submission.

This position expressed by E. Waugh is rather remote from the position expressed by the historic creeds of the Reformed Church. In 1563, when the Council of Trent was attempting to create an unbridgeable chasm between Roman Catholicism and Protestant "heresy"; the Heidelberg Catechism made its appearance. In question and answer 54 the composers speak concerning the "holy catholic church" of Christ. The profound and soul-stirring answer to this question is:

That the Son of God from the beginning to the end of the world gathers, defends, and preserves to himself by his

Spirit and word, out of the whole human race, a church chosen to everlasting life, agreeing in true faith; . . .”

The position of this Catholic layman is remote because he writes from within the Roman Catholic Church. His concern is not the same as Ursinus and all those who left the Romish shell. It is this false conception of the authority of the Church thoroughly imbibed by E. Waugh that results in such an expression as he makes. The members of the hierarchy assembled at Trent declared that the Bible rests upon the authority of the Church, and that tradition, as it comes down through the ages in the Roman Catholic Church has an equal validity with the Scriptures themselves. This rejection of the *Scriptura sola* of the Reformers sets the tone for all errors in the Romish Church. These errors are repugnant to those who live and die by the Scriptures.

The Romish Church is not concerned in the least with the gathering and defense of the church by the Son of God. As long as men are members of the Romish Church then all things are right. It is Rome's claim that the only basis for approach is the necessary admission by all dissenters and all denominations that the Church of Rome alone possesses the whole of revealed truth.

Don Francisco Lacueva, former Canon in the Roman Catholic Church in Spain, writes an article printed in *Christianity Today*, October 12, 1962, "Should We Return to Rome?" In this article he states that the Roman Church claims:

The Bible without Romanist notes is unprofitable and even dangerous. Its reading is therefore forbidden.

Hence says Don Francisco Lacueva in the same article:

The only possible basis for a mutual approach between the evangelical church and Rome would be that both parties recognized the supreme and indisputable authority of Holy Scripture. . .

With this position we heartily concur; and yet the sand in the hour glass of time is slowly running out. Rome has definitely established herself as the false church. Our creeds classify the religion of the Romish Church as "accursed idolatry." Mutual agreement between the Romish Church and *the Church*. Impossible!! Agreement between nominal Christianity and Catholicism. Inevitable!!

Let Rome and all dissenters return to the Bible.

---

---

## *The Possibility of Christian Labor Unions*

REV. C. HANKO

This article deals with Christian labor unions in distinction from the labor unions organized by the world, which are sometimes referred to as "neutral" unions. The question we are concerned with is whether it is possible for us as believers in the midst of this present evil world to organize such a Christian union. We want to know, is it principally right? Moreover, is it practical for and beneficial to Christians to organize?

Obviously when we speak of Christian labor unions in distinction from the already

existing unions, we are thereby implying that we have some serious objections against the non-Christian unions. There is no need for increasing the number of unions as they already exist. The Christian must have some very sound objections against the existing unions or the thought of organizing separate unions would not even enter his mind. Therefore it may be well first to summarize these objections very briefly in order to refresh our memories.

First we object to the existing non-Christ-

fian labor unions even in spite of the fact that they are often referred to as "neutral" organizations. We object that it is impossible for anyone to be neutral in any sphere of life, as Jesus most emphatically teaches us, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth." Luke 11:23. The believer is very conscious of this, for he knows that he is friend-servant of God, called to love the Lord his God with his whole being and in every aspect of his life, in his family life, in the church, but also in his position in the midst of this world. He is a Christian every day of the week and every hour of the day. He heeds the admonition of Scripture, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." 1 Cor. 10:31. For the believer to join the worldly union is the same as putting himself under the same yoke with unbelievers. And that he cannot do, for the Word of God teaches him, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? . . . Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord." 2 Cor. 6:14, 17.

Second, we object also to the principles and practices of the worldly unions.

1. The worldly unions are based on the principle of the class struggle. They proceed from the assumption that the rich oppress the poor, capital takes advantage of labor, the employer oppresses the working man. And since this becomes an impossible situation, the only thing that the oppressed working man can do is insist upon his rights and demand equal advantages with his employer. Although there is no doubt about it that these conditions do exist, the Christian is not interested in dividing the world into two opposing camps of capital and labor, but is interested only in maintaining truth and justice. To him the two opposing camps in this world are light and darkness, and as a child of light he must and will oppose all that is of darkness and defend the name of His God in every sphere of his life.

2. The worldly unions are interested in the material advantages that can be gained through labor organizations. They demand ever higher wages, ever shorter work-week, more and more fringe benefits, insurances,

and other advantages, on and on without an end in sight. As an example, we have all heard of the twenty-five hour work-week that was demanded in the East. The believer seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. His interest is solely in earning his daily bread, that he may care for the needs of his family and also do his share to support the kingdom of God. He is interested in proper working conditions and fringe benefits only in as far as this is necessary toward fulfilling his calling.

3. The worldly unions defy all authority by taking the law into their own hands. They refuse to work, and yet they will picket the plant in order to prevent others from working. They take possession of the plant, so that the owner cannot carry on his business. This is contrary to the fifth commandment, which requires of me, that "I show all honor, love and fidelity to my father and mother, and all in authority over me, and submit myself to their good instruction and correction, with due obedience; and also patiently bear with their weaknesses and infirmities, since it pleases God to govern us by their hand." Heid. Cat., Lord's Day 39. That this applies also to the relationship between employer and employee is evident from Eph. 6:5, 6; Titus 2:9.

4. The worldly unions seek to gain their ends by the use of force and coercion, strike and boycott. This is contrary to the command of God, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Rom. 12:19.

Since we do have objections against the existing unions, we ask ourselves, is it principally proper for the believers to organize Christian labor unions?

To that we can answer, first of all, that it is not wrong for a group of believers to organize. Organization as such is perfectly proper among believers. We have our organizations or societies within the church, in which the individual believers exercise their calling in the organism of the Body of Christ according to the office of believers. We also have our various school societies. When believers have common problems and common aims, they can well unite to discuss and strive together for them. This is sometimes even very necessary.

The problem becomes somewhat more

involved when we speak of organizing a labor union, but the fact remains that it is perfectly legitimate for believers to unite their efforts in the common problems and aims that confront them in the field of labor. It is not out of harmony with the Word of God for a Christian to seek improvement in working conditions or higher wages when this is necessary. When the management demands slave labor under squalid and unhealthful conditions, or pays only a minimum wage while he makes a fair profit, then the Christian has the right to object, and to do so in conjunction with his fellow-Christians.

We are not Anabaptists. An Anabaptist believes in local and physical separation from the world and all its activities. He seeks an isolated spot for himself and his fellows in order that he may live an isolated life in separation from the world. Often he takes the world along with him into his isolation, for the simple reason that he loses sight of the fact that the isolation of the believer is spiritual. It is our calling to live our lives in the world, yet antithetically opposed to the evils of the world. We are friend-servants of God, enemies of the prince of darkness. We are children of light, so that our very life is a protest against the works of darkness. If that can be maintained by a Christian labor union, such a union is indeed possible.

But then it must also be understood that such an organization must be based upon Christian principles. The purpose must be to help the believer fulfill his calling in the midst of this present world. Let it be understood that the goal must not be to make this a better world. It is a vain dream that "the kingdoms of the world" will become "the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ" by way of social reform, better employer-employee relationships, improved working conditions, and the like. The political, economic and social structure of this present world is under the dominion of the prince of darkness. The imaginations of man's heart are only evil continuously. Covetousness lies at the root of all present evils. Therefore the only thing that can change a sinner is the renewal of his heart by regeneration and conversion. Only the new man in Christ is able to walk in "good works," for only the new man in Christ can per-

form those works that proceed from faith, are done according to the law of God and to His glory. All else is and remains *sin*. In the midst of an evil world that is filling the measure of iniquity in preparation for the final judgment, the believer considers it his calling "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with (his) God" Micah 6:8. He does that as an individual as well as when he organizes with his fellow-Christians.

What then must be the principles that govern such a labor organization?

1. Such a Christian labor union must, by virtue of its very existence, be a constant protest against all worldly organizations. It must take a positive position overagainst all the evils of the worldly union, and even voice its protest against them.

2. Such a Christian labor union can accept as members of their organization only those who maintain the infallibility of the Scriptures and its sole authority for faith and life, who desire to apply the principles of Christian stewardship to every phase of their lives, and who seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness even in the affairs of labor and industry. II Cor. 3:16, 17; Matth. 6:33.

3. The purpose of this union must be to seek the material interests of its members only in as far as the believer is called to earn his daily bread in the midst of this present evil world. Matth. 6:11, Eph. 4:28.

4. This organization must recognize at all times that the employee is bound to the fifth commandment, which requires of him that he show all honor, love and fidelity to all that are in authority over him, submitting himself in due obedience. He may not hold any unjust claim to his job after he has left it, nor may he assume authority over the plant of his employer by preventing others from entering it to take his place. He must respect the authority of his employer. I Peter 2:18, 19.

5. Finally, this organization must be ready at all times to witness against the injustices experienced by its members, yet without resorting to violence or the use of force. This implies that the Christian has no choice but to make his appeal to his employer, either individually or as a group, to present his legitimate claim, or, if he fails to gain his end to quit his job and hold no further

claim to it. He may not resort to strikes, boycott, or other uses of force to obtain his goal. He may never take the law in his own hands, for his trust is in his God. James 5:1-6.

That leaves us with the question, would such a labor organization be practical, beneficial for the believer?

It would certainly not be able to boast of a large membership. Nor could it expect a wide spread appreciation, even among those who are considered members of the church. Nor could it exert the pressure of the larger organizations upon the employer. It is even questionable whether in most cases it could collectively bargain along with the larger unions.

But that does not mean that it could serve no positive purpose. If such an organization would witness of its sound Scriptural principles in the realm of labor and industry, it might not be popular, could not even expect to be accepted, but could nevertheless witness of truth and justice in the midst of this world. It might also be a big support to its members. It is conceivable that the time may come when the believers will be forced to band together to present their common cause to the government or to management and business. In the last days when antichrist assumes power in this world, this may be the very last witness that the believers can give. They may feel the need of taking a united stand to present a united front against the growing wickedness round about them, giving account of the hope that is within them.

There remains yet one question that must be answered, even though very briefly. That is, what must we think of the Christian Labor Association in the light of all that has been said? What must be our criticism of it?

First, the membership is far too extensive. Quoting from one of its leaflets, "The C.L.A. accepts as members all who pledge to uphold the Christian principles, regardless of their church affiliation." Surely only those who maintain the infallibility of the Scriptures, bow before its sole authority, and accept its sound teachings, can unite together on a common basis of Scripture and the Confessions. That would limit it quite well to those of *Reformed* persuasion.

Second, the goal and purpose is far too broad. Quoting again from one of their leaflets: "The term 'labor' has also another, more popular connotation. It refers to the masses of workers who are striving for justice in labor relationships and working conditions. The C.L.A. uses the term also in that sense. It proceeds from the principle that all injustice, all sinful relationships and bad working conditions are a violation of Christian principles as taught in the Scriptures and therefore an abomination in the sight of God. The Christian must oppose, must fight them! He must uphold the dignity and rights of man created after the image of God! He must demand justice for the oppressed! He must fulfill the demands of the law of God in regard to love for his fellowmen! Hence a Christian *Labor Association*. To oppose all injustices and to establish conditions that harmonize with the demands of God. That's the C.L.A." Does this organization actually mean that? Do they hope to oppose ALL injustices, that is, all the opposition of Satan and his host against the Church of God, and overcome it? Do they actually intend to "establish conditions that harmonize with the demands of God"? That is, do they think that they can so improve this world by social reform that the wicked will love the Lord, the only true God, with heart and mind and soul and strength? Will the world be won for Christ by way of reform, or is Christ's kingdom spiritual and heavenly, so that it is realized through judgment?

Third, the respect for authority is not carried through consistently to the end. It is true, that the C.L.A. opposes the use of strikes except in a last extreme. But even that last extreme is condemned by Scripture. I quote once more: "Promotion of the welfare of all also rules out the use of the strike weapon to force the granting of unwarranted demands, or when its use threatens the welfare of a community or of the nation. The C.L.A. believes that the strike weapon may be used only when there is no other method by which to effect a just settlement. Strikes and lockouts are weapons of industrial war left over from an era when there were no other means to settle disputes available. Competent and impartial mediation agencies and arbitrators are now available. The C.L.A. believes fully in final ar-

bitration of all differences." (These quotations are taken from "About the Christian Labor Association" and "What You Should Know About The C.L.A.") But doesn't this last quotation contradict itself? If the C.L.A. believes in "final arbitration of all

differences" it thereby should also rule out "that the strike weapon may be used only when there is no other method by which to effect a just settlement." An unjust means is not justified under any circumstance, especially not in defence of a just cause.

---

## THAT CONTEST AGAIN

Entries for the second *Beacon Lights* Literary Contest are less than abundant, at present. For this reason, the Committee has moved the deadline back from February 1 to March 15. This date will either herald the publication of contest results or stand as the gloomy memorial of the death of more than Julius Caesar.

Last year's trial venture proved that there is much latent talent among us. We urge all who have secretly desired to express themselves in writing to give the muse an opportunity. Isolate yourself, think, pick up a pen and . . . send your contribution of creativity to Nancy Heemstra.

Complete rules appear below.

D. J. E.

### LITERARY CONTEST RULES

Due Date - March 15, 1963

1. Any *Beacon Lights* reader who is either a baptized or confessing member of the Protestant Reformed Churches may enter.
2. Entries may be submitted in the three following categories: poetry, prose, fiction and prose non-fiction, which include essays, stories, drama. There is no limit to the number of entries which may be submitted by any one person.

3. There will be a special category for grade school children alone, kindergarten through the ninth grade. Entrants may submit prose or poetry, and again there is no limit to the number of entries which may be submitted by any one person.
4. Entries must be in the following form: all entries must be typewritten; the title, but *not* the name of the entrant, should appear on the entry. On a separate sheet should appear the name of the entrant, the type of entry, and the title of entry.
5. All entries will be judged on the basis of artistic quality and truth content.
6. A prize of \$10 will be awarded for the first place entry in each of the three categories. A prize of \$5 will be awarded for the first place entry in the grade school category.
7. No entries will be returned. *Beacon Lights* reserves the right to publish any or all entries.
8. All entries must be mailed to Nancy Heemstra, 6405 Cascade Road, S. E., Grand Rapids 6, Michigan, by March 15, 1963.
9. No previously published articles will be eligible.

---

# NEWS

FROM, FOR AND ABOUT  
OUR CHURCHES

LOIS E. KREGEL

### Christmas Memories

The season which we seem to anticipate for so long and with so much preparation is

once more behind us, and in its wake are many pleasant reflections.

*Beacon Lights* helped celebrate Christmas by sponsoring a Singspiration in First Church on December 23. Besides the carols and Psalter selections, which were ably directed by Mr. Charles Westra, the program included two vocal solos by Mr. Arnold Dykstra, and a trumpet solo by Mr. Donald Knoper.

The Radio Choir of the Reformed Witness Hour sought to spread a little of the joy

of the Christmas season by singing carols through the halls of the Holland Home, and in so doing were themselves filled with a little more of that same joy.

Those in the Oaklawn-South Holland area had the privilege of meeting for a Sing-  
spiration in Oaklawn Church on December 16; it was planned by the Ladies' Auxiliary of the school.

• • • • •

### Called Home

Mrs. J. Van Winsheym (First) on Wednesday, Dec. 18, at the age of 69 years.

• • • • •

### Membership Transfers

Mr. Richard Van Baren and one child transferred to South Holland from Hudsonville.

Hope welcomed the following brethren and sisters as members: from Grand Haven, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Elzinga and five baptized children; from Loveland, Mr. Dale H. Kuiper; from Creston, Mr. and Mrs. J. King, Roger King, Marilyn King, Miss Agatha Lubbers, and Mr. and Mrs. Lammert Lubbers and one baptized child.

• • • • •

### Newcomers

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. H. Boer (Hudsonville)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Jay Holstege (Hudsonville)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Foster Wiersema (Hudsonville)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Ed Miedema (Hudsonville)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Oomkes (First)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Jake Kuiper, Jr. (Hope)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Merle Veenstra (Hope)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Kamps (Hope)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. L. Regnerus (Oaklawn)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Merle Miedema, Jr. (Hudsonville).

### Radio News

Radio Station WJBL, in Holland, Michi-

gan is the latest addition to the list of outlets employed in the broadcasting of the radio ministry of The Protestant Reformed Churches in America. The Radio Committee of the Reformed Witness Hour announces that beginning in February, our program, the Lord willing, can be heard over WJBL. This station, transmitting at 1260 kilocycles (AM) and 94.5 megacycles (FM), covers the eastern shore of Lake Michigan from North Muskegon to South Haven, and reaches inland a short distance beyond Grand Rapids; it will air our broadcasts each Sunday at 3:00 P. M. The committee welcomes comments from the young people of our churches in Western Michigan concerning this new addition to our radio stations. Can you "read" us "loud and clear?" The mailing address of the Reformed Witness Hour is Box 1230, Grand Rapids 1, Mich.

• • • • •

### At a Glance

Home on leave over the holidays was Harvey Holstege, of our Hudsonville church.

Our people in Edgerton were encouraged by a decision of the Supreme Court of Minnesota recently, in their struggle to regain their church property. The court ordered a new trial to determine the issue of membership.

The latest pamphlet in the series prepared by the Oaklawn-South Holland Church Extension Committee is entitled, "Seventy Times Seven," and is based on the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer.

Doon has extended a call to Rev. H. Hanko, of Hope; Rev. G. Vanden Berg has declined the call from Southwest in Grand Rapids.

A new name has appeared on several of our church bulletins as preaching supply: that of Robert Decker, a first year student in our seminary.

• • • • •

A thought to ponder, as we stand at the beginning of a new year (borrowed from Hope's bulletin): "A daily conversation in heaven is the surest forerunner of a constant abode there. The Spirit of God, by enabling us hereunto, first brings heaven into the soul, and then conducts the soul to heaven."

JOHN ZANDSTRA JR.  
P. O. BOX 227-A  
CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILL.

# Come to Hear

## *The Hope Choral Society*

**WHEN** February 17, 1963

**WHERE** S.E. Prot. Ref'd Church

**TIME** 9:00 P.M.

Sponsored by:

**Southeast's Young People's Society**