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FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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All material for publication should be addressed to MR. ROBERT DECKER
 1004 Temple, S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan
 Grand Rapids subscribers please forward subscription dues to JUDY BYLSMA
 904 Adams, S. E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49507
 Subscribers outside of the Grand Rapids area please forward subscription dues to
 LOUISE LOOYENGA
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Editorial . . .

PRE-CONVENTION CHALLENGE

We will contend that our Conventions of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies are indeed beneficial. Spiritually beneficial for the covenant youth of our churches.

What? *Contend?*

We do not have to shield ourselves from the truth that there have been conventions in years gone by from which it was obvious that certain activities, *distinctly not* "Convention-sponsored", were of such a nature as to down-grade in the minds of many this entire, wonderful privilege which has been established and perpetuated for you, our youth. This down-grading, we would point out at once, is the result of an associative analysis on the part of many observers, and, as such, is not accurate in portraying the character of our conventions as planned and carried out for you by the "Host society" and the Federation Board.

There is, however, an important matter that may not be overlooked in standing in defense of the conventions. (You understand full well, we trust, that our purpose here is to encourage as full-scale attendance at and participation in this annual privilege as is possible to attain.) We do well, we say, to remember certain things even as we respond to those that characterize your attendance at convention merely as the long-awaited opportunity to be out from your home and its parental directives and influences. We do well, to be sure, to remember this: You stand before your fellow-conventioners, before "others" round about, but above all *before your God*, as a youth of the Church of Christ Jesus, particularly now as having been called to receive, to learn, and to walk according to Scripture's truth as God Himself maintains it in our churches. All scheduling of mass meetings, business meetings, and outings aside: be well aware that All those about you will witness your actions as a youth of that church to which has been given THE HERITAGE of the Reformed! All will witness *whatever* you do. There is no doubt about that. And following their

witnessing of your way in convention, all will quite naturally come to some type of conclusion, some type of evaluation or analysis, of your walk at "Convention, 1964", too. And although it is not proper at all to judge the merit of these meetings on the basis of the "social" aspects of your activities, this is, nonetheless, done. The important element here is that *YOU* are not disassociated from your activities, whether within or without the normal "program" of convention activities.

When you attend the convention, you are "on your own" to a large extent. Does that sound almost "too wonderful" to you as you read this? Listen once, folks. Protestant Reformed youth, who tomorrow will stand in the places of your parents as pillars in the Church of God, consider. We challenge you to have a serious discussion concerning the Convention of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies-1964, to be held, D.V., in our Hope Church *before* you leave home and *before* your societies convene. You can do that. I mean a discussion with parents, pastor, friends and fellow society members. Discuss the *entire scope of conventions* as you have come to know them. Discuss it all.

And finally, yet of paramount import, think of this year's convention in which you begin to assume additional activities as youth of His Church with your God!

You dare to try that once? You are discussing your *way*, remember. Your behavior, your social interactions, your "fun", your meetings, all of this. Will you see then that convention is geared essentially to the praise and glory of your Maker, wrought in this case through His youth in which He edifies them to that end? Without that purpose it is much better that we stay at home!

Now then: Should we be concerned about the opinions that others may have concerning us and the conventions? Concerning this, we want (1) never to give nor be the occasion that the name of our God is blasphemed, but (2) positively to know that our conven-

(Continued on Page Nine)

CONVENTIONS 1939 - 49

ED LANGERAK

For the past quarter century conventions have been an annual expectation and, with few exceptions, realization. But the event has not always been an assumed part of our youths' summer plans. For the first fifteen years of our Protestant Reformed Church history there was no convention, no federation board, no unifying event bringing all our young people into one place during one time. Each society, separated from each other society, carried on individual activities quite apart from the rest of the societies. Some of the Western societies formed a league, but its activities were confined to a limited area; no organized effort existed which sought to unite all the societies in any way.

Many young people felt a need and desire to have closer connections with their fellow societies, but it was not until 1939 that something was done about it. In that year the South Holland Young People's Society decided to hold something entirely new to our churches — a convention of all the Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies. Early in the year invitations were sent to all the societies asking them to send delegates and visitors to South Holland in August. A tradition was about to begin.

1st Convention — August 2 and 3, 1939

If you can make out the print on the badge of the first convention which is pictured on this cover, you will catch an idea of the enthusiastic optimism of that first convention. So sure of its success were they that the host society already planned it as an "annual" event. Eight societies were represented and "a motion from the Grand Rapids Young Men's Society was passed unanimously to organize permanently into a national federation" (article eight of the minutes). According to article twenty-seven of those first minutes the purpose of this federation and of this convention would be "to unite all Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies to work in close unity and in this matter secure a sense of solidarity and to seek the mutual

edification and development of talents as becomes Christian young people and that we strive to maintain with united front our specific Protestant Reformed character."

Lasting only two days, the convention had much to do in a short time and, said reporter Alice Reitsma, "it was spent in appointing committees, passing resolutions, electing officers, and discussing pertinent matters: in fact, laying the foundation for a permanent organization and paving the way for future conventions." The delegates put a committee to work drawing up a constitution for adoption at the next convention and the first convention closed with what soon became the traditional close of the conventions — the banquet.

2nd Convention August 21 and 22, 1940

Fuller Avenue's Young People's Society was host of the second convention. Beginning the practice of having a definite theme each year, they chose for their theme "Attitudes". Our attitude toward the church, toward politics, and toward missions were some of the speech subjects. Three more societies joined the federation, bringing it to a total of eleven. The important step of adopting a constitution was this convention's main work. After a full day of discussion and debate, a constitution was agreed upon which was suitable to all. Nearly 300 young people attended the banquet that night where the first official Federation Board was introduced. The announcement that Oak Lawn would be the hosts for next year brought to a happy close the second convention.

3rd Convention — August 21 and 22, 1941

Those attending the third convention at Oak Lawn were surprised and pleased with the presentation of their first "souvenir booklet." Consisting of 24 pages of messages and programs, it included the federation financial report which showed a balance of \$22.65. The theme for that year was "Thoroughly

Equipped" and no less than four speakers gave what must have been a thorough development of it. Two societies joined the federation as the delegates busied themselves with the matter of the federation magazine and of their relationship to the Western League. Friday morning was devoted to a tour of Chicago after which the young people heard and discussed two speeches. After the banquet, a debate was held on the intriguing topic: "Resolved, that Principle is the only possible reason for affiliating with any denomination". With the introduction of the new president, the convention closed.

Beacon Lights

Closely connected with the history of the early conventions is that of *Beacon Lights*. Already at the first convention the South Holland Society was given the task of publishing a column in the *Church News* concerning society life. The second convention decided to find a more suitable means of expression than that column and again the task was given to the South Holland society. Five months later, in January of 1941, *Beacon Lights for Young Protestants* came off the press. Rev. C. Hanko was the editor of this new Federation venture. During the third convention, this paper was discussed and criticized. It was decided to make the magazine a permanent function of the Federation Board. Its size decreased and the number of pages increased. Since "Beacon Lights" was only a temporary name given by the South Holland committee, a name had to be chosen. A contest was held and the judges picked two names to be voted on — "The Witness for the Protestant Reformed Youth" and "Our Youth's Guide". By special motion the delegates added the name "Beacon Lights" to the list. After some discussion the delegates voted and "Beacon Lights" was chosen with a seven vote majority. The Federation Board set up a permanent staff and since then *Beacon Lights* has been a continuous project of that staff . . .

Two Years Without Conventions — 1942 and 1943

The April, 1942, issue of *Beacon Lights* advertised the 4th Annual Convention to be held at Roosevelt Park Church. "We have selected our theme for this year and it has to do with youth. What is always character-

istic of youth — Of what is youthful? And that's the theme of the 1942 Convention."

It never materialized. The October *Beacon Lights* of that same year tells why. "In one word, who could have imagined that it would be possible for the war to so soon make such inroads into our lives that the Federation Board would deem it advisable to call off the 1942 meeting, even while the plans were in the making?" The rubber shortage had reduced traveling to a minimum. Most societies had their ranks greatly depleted by the call to service. The war with all its horrors tended to depress spirits. All in all, the board felt that a convention was out of the question for some time. For two years federation activity was reduced to the production of *Beacon Lights*.

4th Convention — August 30 and 31, 1944

The first wartime convention was held as a result of the young people's societies voting overwhelmingly in favor of it. The Young Men's and Talitha Societies of Fuller Avenue chose "Christian Liberty" as their theme. The two meeting days were changed from Thursday and Friday to Wednesday and Thursday. Since the terms of all five officers had expired over the two year interval, the board proposed that all five offices be again filled. The 43 delegates also dealt with an invitation from the Western League to have the Federation dissolve into an Eastern League and have a Board elected from these two Leagues. Assuring the Western League that the Federation did not want to break it up, the delegates decided to remain as Federation and invite the Western societies to join it in addition to their League. The first pancake breakfast was held on Thursday morning and the banquet was held that night. As a fitting close, a denominational service flag, with a star for each boy in the service was displayed. With this reminder of both their spiritual unity and their physical separation, the young people ended the convention.

5th Convention — August 29 and 30, 1945

Had there been seven more delegates to the second South Holland convention, it would have been illegal. Government wartime regulations limited the amount of delegates to any type of convention to fifty.

"Steadfastness" was the theme around which the convention centered. An innovation consisted of a girls glee club which sang at every meeting. Still operating a tight budget, the treasurer reported a balance of \$87.92. One society joined the federation as the delegate board decided to initiate a major revision of the constitution. A full report of this convention can be found in the October, 1945, issue of *Beacon Lights*. Here also are registered the impressions of some of those who attended. One reported that he counted ten ministers present. With few exceptions, the impressions seemed to be very favorable. The excursion to the Aquarium and the Museum of Science and Industry was especially enjoyed.

6th Convention — August 21 and 22, 1946

"Well organized" was the almost unanimous opinion of those who attended the sixth convention at Hudsonville. The speakers talked on "The Strength and Beauty of Youth" and one of the orators called his listeners "the most beautiful audience in the world." One more society joined, bringing the total to fifteen societies in the Federation. One example of the efficiency of the Hudsonville Society was the ability of one former navy cook to prepare 170 pancake breakfasts.

7th Convention — August 19-21, 1947

The Fuller Avenue societies sponsored the first three day convention. The business took almost that long as the delegates discussed and debated the revised constitution for two days. Between time they found the opportunity to accept four new societies and to raise the price of *Beacon Lights* from \$1.25 to \$1.50. The treasury finally began pulling ahead with a \$372 balance. The extra day gave time for a really long outing at Townsend Park, complete with a treasure hunt and a ball game. The four speakers developed the theme "Fellowship in Christ". Having decided to accept Holland's invitation to meet there next year, the delegates adjourned and enjoyed the banquet. After the banquet they watched and listened to a chalk talk which brought to a close the longest convention yet.

8th Convention — August 18 and 19, 1948

The delegates to the Holland convention

had to seriously take stock of just what the Federation and the convention should be, since there were proposals which would greatly affect both. First of all, two more societies joined, leaving only five societies which were not Federation members. Round Robin society letters were adopted to be tried as another means to unite the societies. South Holland proposed that the western societies leave the Federation and join the Western League in order to cut down on costs. This was defeated. Oak Lawn's society wanted to see a definite separation between the edification part and the fun part of the convention, e.g., have all the speeches one day and the outing the next. They felt that to mix the two took the spiritual matters from the center of attention. The delegates referred this suggestion to all future host societies. The theme of Holland's convention was "Faith of our Fathers". Going back to a two-day convention, the banquet seemed too soon over and the convention at an end.

9th Convention — August 22-25, 1949

Everyone expected that the ninth convention would be held in Manhattan, Montana. Plans were being made and everything was going fine. But in the February *Beacon Lights* this announcement appeared "But — this morning after checking and re-checking during the past weeks, with the C. & O. Railroad Co., and after being assured each time that the rates were as reported and that we could go ahead with plans —this morning, C. & O. called and stated that Detroit had quoted the rate as \$86.35 instead of \$42.64 as formerly reported." So because the cost would be too high, Manhattan was lost as the host society. But, in this confusion, Pella and Oskaloosa came through. Choosing as theme "Redeeming the Time" they hosted a three day convention filled with essays, debates, and round table discussions. Oak Lawn again proposed the same idea as the last year regarding convention activities and much the same action was taken on it. Many proposals by the Federation Board to improve the convention proceedings were debated and some adopted. The banquet was held in the Kletzing College Dormitory and after Second Church in Grand Rapids was announced as the host for the 1950 convention, the closing prayer brought to an end one decade of annual Protestant Reformed Young Peoples' Conventions.

Conventions 1950 - 64

MARY BETH LUBBERS

At the beginning of a new decade, the 50's, few could have envisioned the disturbing scenes which would create cacophony in our already smallish denomination. Scenes which would leave pulpits in pitiful plight, pews in barren desolation, and conventioners bereft of number. But in 1950 not even the hoary heads much less those strong in body and fair of face visualized such harsh realities . . . and so, everything went on as before. Ministers preached efficaciously, parishioners listened avidly, and the host society of Second Protestant Reformed Church, made plans for the tenth annual convention.

Twenty churches were represented at this convention, including such enigmas as Manhatten, Montana; Hamilton and Chatham, Canada; Oskaloosa, Iowa; and four delegations from First Church — Talitha, Esther, David, and Young Men's Society.

Ominously enough, the theme for the 1951 convention, chosen by Kalamazoo Society, was, "The Last Hour" taken from I John 2:18, "Little children, it is the last hour . . .". Rev. H. Hoeksema, Rev. James Howerzyl, and Rev. L. Doezena developed this theme.

Added to the roster of representative churches were Sioux Center, Iowa, and Bellflower, California. Interesting to note is that Creston Young People's Society, which in the early 60's was composed of five members (one official capacity for each member), at this time boasted a Junior as well as a Senior Society.

The First Protestant Reformed Church of Hull, Iowa welcomed those who were 1952 convention bound. At the business meeting of this convention two proposals were heatedly discussed and then passed. The first stipulated that all Federation Board members, except the president, be selected from members of member societies. Prior to this proposal, anyone from eight to eighty could have been

nominated to the Federation Board. The second proposal, originated by the Oaklawn Society, made the convention free to all members of member societies by assessing each society during the year.

The thirteenth annual convention was held at First Church, and centered around the theme, "The Armour of God". Because many young men had entered the service at this time, each meeting was opened with an audience singing for these "warriors" who must serve their country. A debate was also given this year, 1953, by the Randolph, Fourth, and First Societies featuring the subject, "Resolved That Doctrinal Controversy Is Healthful for the Church of God." The affirmative side won this debate.

And in 1953 the beginning faint rumblings of dissension crescendoed into vibrating claps of thunder, simultaneous with the lightning streak which rent the denomination in twain. Consequently, the fourteenth convention held in South Holland, Illinois was comparatively small, reducing the representation from First Church to two (the more familiar Senior and Junior Young People's Society), and depleting several other delegations.

Still in effect, though not used to date, is the proposal made and passed at this convention that if the Federation Board and host committee so decide, the second speech of the convention may be substituted with various discussion groups.

Another feature of this convention was the extemporaneous speeches orated by several brave young people. Winners of this contest were: Dwight Monsma in the men's division and Bernice Bleyenberg in the women's division. Prizes, however, were awarded on the basis of need; hence, contestant Evie Veldman received a teething ring and Jim Jonker a toy horn.

Hudsonville's young people welcomed the conventioners in 1955, selecting as one of its

speakers the late Rev. G. M. Ophoff. Once again a debate highlighted the special numbers. This time the topic dealt with the place of television in the Christian home. Bob Decker, Jim Jonker, David Engelsma, and Jake Kuiper participated in this debate. This convention adjourned with the exciting announcement that the following year the convention would be held in Iowa.

So in 1956 many enthusiastic young people boarded a chartered bus and headed across the country to Doon and Hull, Iowa. Upon arrival the many exhausted young folk gratefully tumbled into the arms of western hospitality (and beds).

Although this convention pattern was similar to those previous, style was indeed distinctive. Even the usual pancake breakfast was replaced by a cornbread breakfast. Lakes continue to pose a problem in Iowa, so the swimming took place in an aqua-colored pool in Rock Rapids Park.

Each back in his own territory once again, the young people were saddened to hear of the tragic death of a fellow conventioner. Gordon King, member of Creston Society, was killed in an auto collision on his way back from Iowa to his army camp.

The Fourth Young People's Society had invited all the young people to be their guests in 1957. So at this convention the West had to undertake all the tiresome traveling, but they at least could relax in the near-freezing waters of Lake Michigan. Rather than another debate, a witty game of Twenty Questions was played for one of the numbers of the programs. Lamm Lubbers, Jim Jonker, Al Buitert, and Bernie Huizinga were participants.

Hope and Creston joined hands in 1958 to plan the eighteenth annual convention. Once again a debate seemed to be in order. This debate consisted of panel members, David Engelsma, James Jonker, Rev. B. Woudenberg, and Rev. H. Hanko who debated on the tempestuous subject, "Resolved That It Is Necessary To Believe in a Young Earth". Indeed, a lively and vehement debate ensued.

Also to be keynoted was the program, "This Is Your Life". By means of narration, pictures, and actual personalities, a history of the Protestant Reformed Young People's Federation was portrayed. Rev. C. Hanko, first editor of Beacon Lights, Rev. G. Lubbers, first convention speaker, Homer Kuiper, first Federation Board president, and Alice

Reitsma, instrumental in the workings of Beacon Lights, were introduced to the young people. Children of early conventioners were also introduced during this program.

At the Oaklawn convention in 1959, the "hard-nosed" proposal was adopted that any delegate who was not present at all business meetings would not receive traveling expenses. Strangely enough, attendance soared, and even participation seemed less languid.

The twentieth convention held in First Church will go down in history as the fosterer and developer of the Scholarship Fund Program whereby aid is and will be established for future ministers and teachers. Possibly a few years from now some young man or woman receiving financial aid will remember the 1960 conventioners and inaudibly thank them for their resounding "ayes" when the vote was called.

"Protestant Reformed Young People of the Nation Meet Here" was the bold, black type found in the Loveland daily after the twenty-first convention was held in Loveland, Colorado. The theme "The Beauty of Holiness" was developed through inspiring messages as well as the majestic beauty of the area itself. In addition to going west for the first time, many young people also experienced their first train ride.

In 1962 Hudsonville Society once again welcomed its guests. The convention booklet was dedicated to the memory of James Jonker, always an eager and zealous promoter of conventions and other young people's activities. Dune scooter rides at Saugatuck and swimming at Goshorn Lake along with the rustic atmosphere of Dune Schooner Lodge, decorated with driftwood and wild animal pelts, climaxed the enjoyable outing. Again the excitement was heightened with the announcement that the 1963 convention would be out-of-state (that is, for "easterners"), Edgerton, Minnesota.

The Edgerton convention undoubtedly still reverberates for many of you young people, and Edgerton was probably thankful that you could meet in their recently repossessed church edifice. If one incident stands out in your mind, it is probably that of the group singing in the natural open amphitheater, or possibly the "Buffalo and Indian" banquet given in your honor.

And so, young people, the conventions are rather old, steeped in traditions and memories. The doctrinally discordant notes heard

in the mid 50's have not recurred in our present decade. Those disconcerting bass vibrations have been stilled and you young people hear once again the familiar trumpet calling you to commune together in holiness. The cadences of last year's Edgerton convention still pulsing in the distance, you feel the old notes of unity, good fellowship, and inspiration stirring as Hope looks forward to

presenting this year's theme, "Youth and Holiness". The feeling of delightful suspense as the tuning instruments are hushed and become one — waiting, listening as the baton is lifted — the feeling of uplifting, expectant one-ness of spirit and confession — that is the feeling which young people have experienced in past conventions and, prayerfully shall continue to experience in years to come.

FEDERATION BOARD REPORT

As another Society season comes to a close, we, the members of the Federation Board, would like to take this opportunity to report on our activities of the past year.

Since the Board feels that it is vital for our Protestant Reformed Young People to have fellowship not only in our own societies, but also together, a Society visitation schedule was drawn up for the various Societies in the Grand Rapids area.

Our annual Mass Meeting, which is usually held in the fall, took place on February 25, 1964, in Southeast Church. Seminarian Robert Decker spoke on the topic: "Love Your Enemies". As part of the after recess program, Mr. Donald Faber showed us pictures of his trip to Jamaica.

The Board appointed a Spring Banquet Committee. The Banquet was held in First Church, on May 12. We would like to thank the committee for the many hours of work and effort which were put into this banquet.

The Board has also been active in the operation of the *Beacon Lights*, which has so large a part in strengthening our faith, and edifying our spiritual life. The Board has appointed writers for the Bible outlines, and filled vacancies on the staff when necessary. During the past year, the following people have been assigned posts on our staff: Lois Schipper and Dale Kuiper — Scholarship Committee; Mary Beth Lubbers — Alternating with Miss Lubbers on "Critique"; Pat Kamps — In-town Subscription Manager, replacing Judi Bylsma; Karlene Oomkes — "News, From, For, and About Our Churches" — Replacing Mrs. C. Kregel.

The 1964 Annual Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention is being held in our Hope Church on August 25, 26, and 27. At this time, the Board has received and approved the following information:

Theme — "Be Ye Holy"

1. "Be Ye Holy Personally"
2. "Be Ye Holy With Friends"
3. "Be Ye Holy in the World"

Text — I Peter 1:15-16

Theme Song — Psalter Number 321.

What more wonderful opportunity can we Protestant Reformed Young People, have than to all unite together, whether from far or near, and praise the Lord our God.

The Board would like to present the proposals which have been drawn up for the 1964 Convention:

It is proposed:

1. That the study of the book of Genesis be continued during the 1964-65 season,
2. That the assessments remain the same as this year per person. (\$10.00 — \$6.00 for Society dues, \$2.00 for *Beacon Lights*, and \$2.00 for the Scholarship Fund).

It will also be necessary to elect the following to the Federation Board: President, Secretary, Librarian, Vice-Treasurer, and Advisor.

As we look back on this past year, we thank our Heavenly Father, who guided and directed us in all that we have done, and ask His continued blessing upon us in this coming year.

See you at the 1964 convention.

THE FEDERATION BOARD
SHARON PRINCE, Librarian

preview of

'64 CONVENTION

Convention time is again swiftly approaching. The high light of the society year is now but a few short weeks away. The date of the coming convention has been set at August 25, 26, & 27, and is to be held at Hope Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan. We, the host society, hope you will be on hand to enjoy the convention by renewing old acquaintances, making new friends, and, by participating in the activities we have planned. We are now working hard to make this convention an enjoyable experience for you the conventioneer.

The success of this convention, as of any convention, depends not alone on the planning of the host society, but primarily on the attendance and enthusiasm of the conventioneer. Without conventioners, needless to say, a convention could not be held. Therefore, your presence at the coming convention is our primary concern. We hope you will not let us down.

For your enlightenment we would like to give you a brief preview of the 1964 convention. If you need encouragement we hope this will encourage you. If you are uninterested we hope this preview will stimulate your interest. If you do not intend at this time to attend the convention we hope this will influence you to change your mind.

First of all a few remarks about the regular events of the convention. We are planning as usual a mass meeting on Tuesday evening preceded by registration and concluded with a get acquainted hour. On Wednesday an outing is being planned and on Thursday of course the breakfast and the banquet.

On Tuesday, when you arrive, you will be registered at Hope Church. Here you will receive your convention badges and your booklets. We have found that these make interesting souvenirs that help to bring back fond memories years later. Lodging also will be provided for those who arrive from out of

town. Tuesday evening the Rev. H. Hoeksema will speak on the theme "Be Ye Holy — Personally;" this is the first of a series of speeches to be delivered on the theme "Be Ye Holy." After the speech by Rev. Hoeksema a get acquainted hour will be conducted and refreshments will be served.

August 26, 1964, the second day of the convention, is the day of the outing. First of all a brief business meeting will be held after which lunch will be served at John Ball Park. Early in the afternoon we plan to leave the Park and go to Townsend Park where the traditional ballgame between East and West will be played. Those interested in swimming will be driven to Bostwick Lake. Wednesday night the second speech of the convention will be delivered by Rev. H. Hanko. The theme of his speech will be "Be Ye Holy — With Friends". This speech will mark the end of the second day.

The following morning breakfast will be served and those interested in seconds and even thirds will be catered to. After breakfast another business meeting will be held and Federation Board officers will be elected. Also, all unfinished business will be taken care of at this time by the delegate board. Following the business meeting a short debate will be given on a theme dealing with "Be Ye Holy."

Thursday evening, formals, hair-does, perfume, and perhaps corsages will mark the girls and suits. ties, white shirts and after shaving lotion will distinguish the guys. This happens to be the night of the banquet. Those preparing the banquet wish to keep the theme of the banquet a secret. However good food will be served and an interesting program has been prepared. After eating, the last speaker of the convention, Rev. David Engelsma, will speak on the topic "Be Ye Holy — In the World." This will mark the first time that Rev. Engelsma, formerly the

President of the Federation Board, will speak to us the young people in the capacity of minister of the word of God.

The above has been a brief description of the regular features of the convention. However, we are also planning some irregular features or surprises. We intend to set up a number of eye-catching exhibits, show a motion picture entitled "Beacon Lights," and hold a debate followed by discussion groups.

Three exhibits are going to be set up. One will be a colorful display of all the convention badges. The first badge is dated 1939 and the last one will be dated 1964. This means that the first convention was held exactly twenty-five years ago. A second display will deal with the subject of convention booklets. Find out what was on the Agenda in 1945, where the convention was held in 1950, who was president of the board in 1955, the theme of the banquet in 1960, and many other interesting facts and figures. Finally the third exhibit will be a display of convention pictures. You, if you are a younger conventioneer, will be able to find your parents before they were married, or older brothers and sisters, or even yourself if you have attended previous conventions. We hope to have a complete collection of all badges, booklets, and convention pictures by convention time.

The second surprise is a movie dealing with Beacon Lights. This magazine is published by you the young people through the Federation Board and the Beacon Lights Staff. Seeing that Beacon Light is your magazine we feel that you are entitled to know the problems involved in making Beacon Lights and the work that goes into publishing it each month. This will probably be shown Thursday evening after the speech by Rev. Engelsma. If you are at all interested in your magazine you will not want to miss this added attraction.

The third addition to this years activities is the formulation of discussion groups. We decided to take this step as a result of your reaction to the contest which we promoted in the early part of the year. Your interest and entries exceeded our highest expectations. A large number of essays were sent in and are presently in the process of being judged. We feel that we would perhaps be letting you down if we did no further follow up work, therefore, these discussion groups. Groups will be kept as small as possible in order to

stimulate discussion and very able leaders have been selected to keep discussions moving in the proper direction.

Another reason we have decided on this venture is that conventions in the past have centered around social activities. Speeches are given, sure, but the conventioneer never becomes actively involved mentally. Hopefully this step will increase conventioneer participation. Past conventions have been sadly lacking in this respect. This part of the program is being carefully planned and we anticipate a highly successful event. We hope that in this way the young person will be strengthened spiritually and go home from the convention experiencing that he or she has indeed increased in the knowledge about his misery, the exceeding greatness of God, and what it means to be Holy.

The above has been but a brief glimpse of the 1964 convention. It should give you some indication as to what to expect. We hope you will all be able to attend the convention and join together in Christian fellowship with other young people of our denomination.

We, therefore, extend to all of you our warmest welcome and hope to see you at the 1964 convention.

THE HOST SOCIETY



PRE-CONVENTION CHALLENGE

(Continued from Page One)

tion as a God-glorifying activity is received as such of the Most High. By His grace, *show* that you want this!

Let us then joyfully yet humbly attend our convention this year. And you know the theme that has been selected? *Be ye holy!* And although the sages of this age are going to shout that it really is getting quite "stuffy" in this column, we want nevertheless to ask this question: are you going to make the injunction of *that theme* a matter of prayer before and as you leave for convention?

Do you respond to our challenge?

May God richly bless you in your convention this year!

H. W. K.

Open Forum

“HARANGUES”

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Although there appeared in the Open Forum of the April, 1964 issue of *Beacon Lights* a contribution¹ which contained reflections and questions concerning the February, 1964 editorial entitled “*The Need For Protestant Reformed High Schools*”;² there was, nonetheless, no response to nor analysis of that contribution. Let the readers of *Beacon Lights* understand that the undersigned editor did not receive these comments and questions prior to the distribution of the April issue, nor did he receive that issue in sufficient time to submit these comments prior to the deadline for the May issue. Let that serve as reason for the undesirable tardiness of this response, as it appears now in our June issue. Without poetic preamble, therefore, here follow our comments and analysis of the questions and assertions of the contribution submitted last April. H.W.K.)

We are discussing, covenant youth, matters which involve the heritage which has been given to the Protestant Reformed Churches in America, and particularly as that aspect of our modern age, called *formal education in the high school years*, bears on the perpetuation of that heritage according to the commands of God's Word. You will concur at once (not that this has been contested) that Scripture is replete with instruction that the ministry of the Word as it is instituted and maintained by Christ, and the parents of the covenant seed are His approved means of educating that seed in His ways. This is *not* man's way. It is *God's* commanded way. That is basic to our present discussion as well.

Concerning the writer's first point, we affirm first of all that it is indeed a very daring thing to assert or express that it is the desire of one's soul to establish, to have and to maintain our own Protestant Reformed Christian High Schools. It is, in fact, the daring and boldness of faith, rooted in the

lucid instruction of the Scriptures and an unmistakable evidence of our sincerity in the solemn and sacred vow before the face of God which we made at our children's baptism.

Secondly, the number of years, given by the writer, since the establishment of an elementary system of parental Christian education in a given area has no bearing whatever on the necessity or propriety of the *expression* of our soul's desire for that which God commands us in His Word. There is no contingency existent here, whatever. That command is absolute, and it is conditioned or dependent on nothing temporal. The statement in the editorial and also in the writer's contribution speak, we would have you note, *of the expression of the desire.*

Finally, therefore, it is not in the least presumptuous for the children of God to strive diligently for those things that God Himself has commanded for us in His Word. Also, although this perhaps escaped the attention of the writer, prior to the establishment of either of the two Protestant Reformed elementary schools in her locale, there had been a movement or society in that area to establish education at the secondary level along the lines of Protestant Reformed principles and convictions.

Concerning her *point 2*, the writer's impression that our lower case “g” means idol is not contested. That cannot be a troublesome consideration, when attacking heresy, for by nature “apart from the grace of God in Christ, we are all idolaters.”³ We must affirm that in that instant and to the measure that any rational moral creature asserts that God, the Sovereign of this whole universe and of everything that is, was or ever shall be, is graciously inclined to all men (and that includes the reprobate!), in that instant and to that measure he denies the GOD of Scripture and has, according to Q. and A. 95 of our Heidelberg Catechism, contrived another

object in which he places his trust. We see this as idolatry. Let us hasten to add that this is indeed a hard saying. And yet if by His grace we are to hold that the Scripture is revealed Truth, and based upon It, that our Confessions are indeed our confessions, it will behoove all of us to speak clearly, and without camouflage use the lower case "g" as we did in the editorial.

In addition to this, we do well to remember that the infamous ouster of 1924 followed a clear and lucid exposition of the question concerning the recipients of God's grace. Thus their confession is not the result of "accidentally" adopting an error without much study. Quite the contrary! It is a premeditated stand based on a lie against God!

Concerning her *point 3*, the writer proceeds on the supposition that they have diluted the truth. We assert that Truth *cannot be diluted* and yet remain Truth. The specious reasoning employed to put into the editorial the accusation of "false church" is obvious. But the writer's point concerning "voluntarily" placing oneself under that (Christian Reformed) confession is certainly cogent. That illustrates a point, considered with the paragraph immediately above.

Concerning her *point 4*, we must simply state that whatever the affinities of others are for heretical "mother church" is for each to assert and affirm for himself. Personally, undersigned is of the opinion that we are called to make continual "harangue" against such wickedness perpetrated in 1924's heresies of doctrine as well as their unchristian procedures with brethren. And we strongly exhort all of our youth to procure for themselves *for reading and study* the book treating of that origin of our churches.⁴ Should you forget the basis and history of our genesis, *very soon* the lines of our distinction will be forever erased! The youth realizes that I make these statements at the risk of incurring more controversy. But the youth may be assured of this: If we see tigers in every bush, (it is only the unwise that will not be wary) we maintain: let them be identified as such!

But allow me to shout encouragement, nonetheless, to an old warrior, to an aged servant of God, whom it hath pleased God to equip and sustain in the defense of His truth, through year after year of strife, as he writes:

"And let not . . . others with them

camouflage or cover this up in order that, for the time being, at least, they may appear to be Reformed or even Scriptural, for it is neither! As long as God gives me life and breath I will shout from the housetops: anyone that claims that God loves all men is neither Reformed nor Scriptural, but is simply a heretic and nothing else!"⁵

If that is harangue, then we say harangue is alright. No, it is *necessary!*

Concerning her *point 5*, the writer evidently misread the statements in this matter. It was not stated that such activities were or were not academic or silly, neither that they were *comparable* to idolatry or blasphemy. These activities were *identified as being* idolatrous and blasphemous. We are glad that the question mark remains for the writer behind the word "blasphemy", for then it is not denied at least.

We have not had sufficient time for a thorough perusal of the *types* of writings throughout the history of the church to determine the accuracy of the parallel set forth, but we feel that the writer undermined all 5 of her points by the quote given concerning Antoine Marcourt. Calvin did not say, we note, that the placards were untrue and erroneous. He states that when they were printed and distributed that the faithful received great fury. We understand full well who it is that flares up furiously against the faithful, of course. And further, in whose sight the cause of the faithful was made odious ought also to be well understood. The cause of the faithful is always made odious (hateful) when there is a forthright confession by the faithful. We cannot believe that the cause of Protestant Reformed Christian High Schools was made odious to our people by the editorial. The possibility exists that it is odious already in the spheres of those who 40 years ago found the truth of Sovereign grace to be odious in their midst. Thus we will concede the application as valid.

And you as youth of the covenant realize that to the degree that we are faithful in heeding the commands of our God with respect to you, and with respect to the generations which follow you, in your instruction according to the Word, "to that degree of intensity we defend ourselves against all those who corrupt that self revelation of our God."⁶

Allow me to quote from one of our former ministers, in conclusion:

"Our own schools are the only answer. Else, our churches are doomed, because we refuse to keep our pledge. Or should I say: our reluctance to want to keep our Baptismal Pledge is proof that we are lost already?"¹

Strive for them, then, with your whole being, and you shall not be put to shame!

H. W. K.

¹Lubbers, Mrs. Mary Beth. 1964 Open Forum. *Beacon Lights* Vol. XXIV, No. 3, pp. 4-5.

²Kuiper, H. W. 1964. Editorial: "The Need For Protestant Reformed High Schools". *Beacon Lights* Vol. XXIV, No. 1, pp. 1-2.

³Hoeksema, Rev. H. 1955. *Love The Lord Thy God: Worshipping The One God. An Exposition Of The Heidelberg Catechism*, Vol. 8, p. 151.

⁴Hoeksema, Rev. H. 1947. *The Protestant Reformed Churches In America: Their Origin, Early History and Doctrine*, pp 1-410.

⁵Hoeksema, Rev. H. 1964. Editorial: *De Jong-Dekker. The Standard Bearer*, Vol. XL, No. 13, p. 293.

⁶Engelsma, Rev. D. J. 1964. Lecture: *Protestant Reformed Education: The Calling. Given in Doon, Iowa.* (March 17) From mimeographed copy.

⁷Weldman, Rev. R. 1945. Editorial: *Our Own School - An Injunction? The Standard Bearer*, Vol. XXI, No. 18, p. 423-426.

Letter to the Editor

THYS FEENSTRA

I have asked Mr. H. Kuiper to prove some of his statements made in his Editorial in *Beacon Lights*, entitled, "The Need for Protestant Reformed High Schools". Brother Kuiper answers me in "Open Forum" in the *Beacon Lights* of April 1964. I want to say first of all, that Mr. Kuiper in his answer to me multiplies words, but does not cover up the fact that he is evading the issue. The issue is not, Does Christ bless the heresies of a church, but whether God blesses the efforts of these churches when they do preach Reformed and teach Reformed truth. Now Mr. Kuiper writes that he does not believe that the Lord blesses the Christian Reformed church as institute any more.

And a little farther in his writings he states, (and that in bold letters) that as institute they deny the Christ in all their confessions and thus cannot know Him. I cannot let this go unchallenged. Maybe I do not understand the English language. but to me, when you say "in all their confessions they do not know him", that is exactly what it means. You wrote me that my difficulty is with the structure of the English language. But I believe that the trouble is *not* with the English language but with Mr. Kuiper who makes no distinctions that can hold. And maybe it would be a good thing if you could discuss in *your men's society* the question. "What do we mean when we say that as institute they deny the Christ in all their confessions and thus cannot know Him." That would be interesting. Now your men's society will tell you that the task of preaching must be fulfilled by the church, considered as an institute. The person of the minister has the commission to preach, but the church has, as

institute, and therefore it is this calling by the church, that is the all-important factor in the determination of one's being sent by Christ to preach the Gospel. "How shall they preach except they be sent?" Now this preaching of the Word is indispensable to faith in Christ, it is the work of Christ through the Church as an institute. That is what your men's society will tell you. But if it is true what you say, that as institute they deny the Christ in all their confessions, and thus cannot know Him, you have no church left but as Mary Beth Lubbers correctly interprets then the Christian Reformed church as an institute is the false church, and members that belong to that church do not hear the voice of Christ, and have not the preaching of the Gospel. That's exactly what it means when you say that as institute they deny the Christ in all their confessions. Now you say you don't believe that the Christian Reformed church is the false church, well brother you will have to retract this statement that is sure, that as institute they deny the Christ in all their confessions.

Now let me say, for I wish to instruct the young people in *Beacon Lights*, that a church adopts a heresy, that does not mean (as is plain from the churches in Asia) that this church throws away all the truth. If I have cancer, does that mean that my whole body is corrupt already? Does it mean that I am dead already? The C. R. church has cancer. I will never deny that. But I maintain that they also have the truth in some of its parts. For how can there still be elect children of God who for forty years were fed by that which denies Christ, and does not know Him, and still did not starve to death? I would like

you to explain to me and to the young people how there can be a single believer left, after forty years when all that time he has been fed *nothing but poison*. Are all the efforts in the school and C. R. church based on heresy? If so, why did we ever try to have conferences with such? Why do we send our children to their schools when we have not our own? and help support them? Now Mr. Kuiper, the churches of Asia Minor have false doctrine too. See Rev. 2:15 and 2:24. Yet Jesus has kind words for them and blessing, and he prays for them. And what about the church at Corinth with its corruption? The Holy Communion and denial of the resurrection was false doctrine, far worse than common grace. For then we are yet in our sins and we have believed in vain. See 1 Corinthians 15:14-18. What an awful doctrine! Did that make the whole church institutionally corrupt and so that confessionally it did

not know Christ? And what about the Protestant Reformed church; *pure, Holy, without blemish*? And I would ask you also whether the official stand of the Kings of the Kingdom of Judah, when they embraced idolatry – which is false doctrine, did not result in the whole church and the whole Kingdom being in such a position that confessionally they did not know Christ. Then for a time there simply was no true church on earth for the whole institute was corrupt and did not know Christ. The ten tribes did not, the two tribes did not; and so during the reign of Ahaz (11 Chronicles 28:2 etc.) there simply was not a church on earth that knew Christ, only a few individuals here and there in the institute. What kind of confusion do we get? And therefore I want to say again, that the trouble is not with the English language but with Brother H. Kuiper who makes no distinctions that can hold.

REPLY TO MR. THYS FEENSTRA

Dear Brother Feenstra:

Again I extend Christian greetings in the Lord. Your letter centers on the affirmation made, not in my editorial originally, but in my answer to your 1st letter. Our readers will recall that the original editorial carried “. . . I am not speaking head for head, but confessionally they deny Him . . .” Concerning this, you interpreted that they must then have no confession except that which denies Him. And I pointed out to you that grammatically this simply was not in the editorial.

However, in that same letter, I go beyond the editorial’s stand to affirm that the conclusion which you erroneously take from it is, nonetheless, true. I now purpose to show the reason for having taken the stand that I have on this matter.

Remembering that we are speaking of the official confession of an institute, whether this is ever preached or not, I will ask myself a few questions here, answer them and invite you to do the same in your own mind and soul.

(1) Since we are all bound to the instruction of the Infallible and Holy Scriptures, do I believe that the official addenda to the doctrines of the Christian Reformed in 1924, namely the now infamous Three Points, are, before God and all men who encounter them, confessions of *The Only God and The Only*

Christ of those Scriptures? I certainly do not! Rather, I believe that they are premeditated assertion, based on a lie against His Holiness, namely that God, in the final instance, is not God at all!

(2) What consequence does this have for me, logically, in assessing their doctrine? I affirm that the Christian Reformed therefore must either/or

(a) maintain a double concept of God, i.e. one from the Scriptures as held and interpreted for us in the Reformed confessions, and the other as advanced and confessed in the Three Points.

(b) maintain a single concept of God, which in this case would necessarily have to be the “god” of the Three Points.

The former is impossible. God is not mocked! Even though man claims such abomination, God simply does not give them the desire to serve Him who wilfully serve and confess the gods of their imagination. Scripture’s God was hurled out the window in 1924, not just men.

(3) Therefore, it must needs follow that officially the “god” of their heretical innovation is superimposed upon all the beautiful Three Forms of Unity, as well as over the whole of the Word of God. Read the candid exposure of this very thing as we find it currently in the editorials of the *Standard*

Bearer. There it is shown that the latter is explicitly correct. Their leaders who have imbibed this heresy and support it in their souls are not concerned with denying our allegations as to what sort of God we say they must necessarily have and confess in the maintenance of heresy. Of course they don't! And I can read all that and say that it is not a denial of God? I cannot.

And when they superimpose that "god" on the Forms and Scripture, the Word, which is Christ, is denied. That is my basic reason, brother, for my stand. For some reason, you ask if the Protestant Reformed Church is "pure, holy, without blemish". Let me answer that first. No, we are not! We all know that God Himself continues to develop His truth throughout all the ages; but I believe we are in principle perfect, doctrinally. Of course, I believe that! Dare I say that for the Christian Reformed church. To do so would be to repudiate the Word of God itself. And because you ask that question, I want to say to our youth, that it simply is not true that the church must be perfect in order for it to instruct its youth against the satanical craftiness of those that wilfully walk in apostasy. Show us the error of our doctrines, and will

we not by His grace repent and teach against that very evil? The question is not whether we are perfect. The question is whether we wilfully walk confessionally in a way which is shown to be contrary to the Word of God!

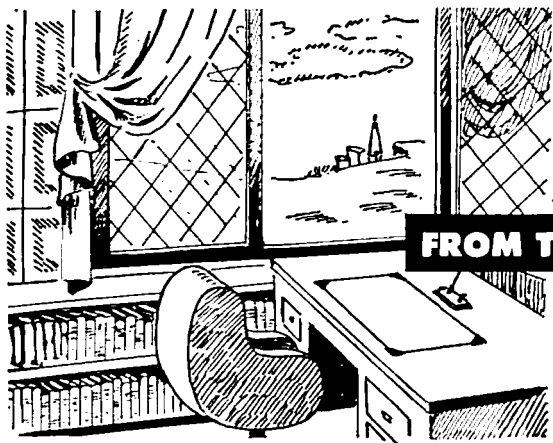
And let us not forget, either, that the God-dishonoring and God-denying heresies of the Christian Reformed from 1924 and following years are exactly the affirmations which are in the hearts of us all as we are by nature and apart from His grace. Let us not be ashamed to engage in the conflict to which it has pleased Him to call us. And let us in all of our life show the beauty of that grace. And let us in humility and joy strive to teach it to our children in all their ways. And we, I repeat, shall not be put to shame!

Brother Feenstra, forgive me for "multiplying words". Categorically I deny your friendly allegation that I try to or do evade the issue. For some of your remarks, with respect to the "false church", I refer you and our readers to Art. XXIX of the Confession of Faith. Take a long hard look at that once. Is it all wrong?

May peace and unity in the truth reign in Zion!

Fraternally,

H. W. Kuiper



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. LUBBERS

FILLING THE PASTOR'S CUP OF JOY

It is a good thing for a minister to read the book of Proverbs. It is a painful reminder that the problems of sin and sinful men are not one-day-flies! They are perennial problems, as old as the sinful heart of fallen man. It is good to remember this, my youthful amici!

Paul was a great preacher. He should be

every preacher's ideal to imitate. It is a difficult course to follow his footsteps. He had learned the lesson so well, that it should be enough unto a servant to be like his master. He had fallen down at the feet of Jesus once, when the latter said unto him "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Profoundly this Saul of Tarsis had learned to know the Christ,

in His death and in the power of His glorious resurrection. Christ had mercy upon him and counted him worthy unto the ministry of the gospel. He, the chief of sinners, was counted worthy! He had tasted the great grace of God; he knew what it meant that the Son of man came to seek and to save the lost! God had made a great preacher of him. He had made him, who was separated from his mother's womb unto the Gospel, a preacher of the righteousness and the grace of Christ. He that persecuted the church in times past now preaches Christ in all the world. And many generations have glorified God in Paul.

Paul has a great preacher's desire. He often speaks of the deep intents and yearnings of his heart. What passionate expressions he employs to express this. Reflect upon this gem from Paul's heart and pen "My little children of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. I desire to be present with you now, and change my voice; for I stand in doubt of you." What prayers this great apostle offers before the throne of God for the Churches! Attend to this from utterance from Paul proceeding from the bowels of Christ Jesus, "Even as it meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; in as much as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. For God is my record how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." Phil. 7, 8. What an expression of sincere concern for the real, true and eternal well-being of the flock of God; yea, for each individual sheep and lamb!

This great preacher has suffered many things for Christ. He has long ago joined the ranks of the blessed, the prophets who were persecuted because of the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Without boasting he can write, "from henceforth let no man trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Such a man as Paul certainly must cherish within his breast unique joys and sorrows. It is the joy of his Lord and the grief of the Holy Spirit which dwells within him. It is really Christ in him, the hope of glory. Writes he ". . . that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that have not run in vain, neither labored in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. . ." Phil. 2:16, 17. Such is his suffering

and sorrow, and such is his joy as he hopes upon the living God!

Did you know, youthful friend, that every true preacher, every faithful elder, every believing and concerned parent has kindred joys and sorrows with the apostle. They may not reach his heights and depths, may not have his breadth and scope, still it is present. Every minister installed and ordained into office feels this "burden" upon his soul. He cannot escape the charge of his Lord "Feed my sheep, tend my lambs!" He cares for your soul as one who must give account. Heb. 13:17 I know it, I know it, my young reader, you do not often understand this concern at all. All we like sheep go astray. Only one who has been or is in this office of responsibility understands. He knows a bit of this if he has received a shepherd's heart from Christ, of which Paul had received such a bountiful share according to the grace given him from above.

Now, I concede that you do not understand. It is better that way. Only, wisdom dictates that you believe the word of God on this score. The Bible says "A wise son maketh a glad father; but a foolish son is the heaviness of his mother." Prov. 10:1. Or again we read "A wise son heareth his father's instruction; but a scorner heareth no rebuke." The term "son" here refers to the true sons of God. Such "sons" are they in whose heart the fear of the LORD dwells! That fear is the very seed, the principle of wisdom! The principal question is: do you fear the Lord, and walk in holy fear and trembling. Do you work out your salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do you have the mind of Christ, or are you of a reprobate mind?! Do you walk according to the Spirit, crucifying the works of the flesh, or do you simply serve the flesh!

You are an exemplary type of young man, young women? You live a good moral life, virtuous, and chaste? You are virgins fair? Yes, that warms the cockles of the heart of your pastor and elders. But you don't get along too well with your friends in Christ? You have rivalry in your mind, striving for superiority? A good dose of vainglory? That is the fly in the ointment of Christ, is it not? It is a little leaven which will affect the whole. Sin is such a terrible putrefaction in the fibre of our spiritual life. Such was the case in the church at Philippi. There were Eudias

and Syntyche who were not of one mind in the Lord. They did not mind the same thing. They had not truly learned the meaning of the act of Christ washing His disciples' feet at the institution of the Lord's Supper; they did not follow that great case-study and example.

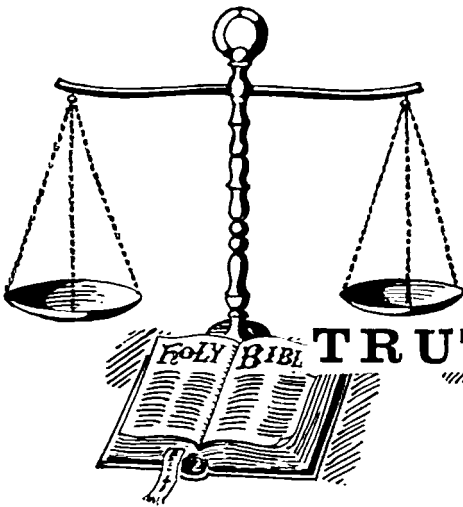
There was much in this church which caused the apostle to rejoice. There is much in your life which causes your minister and elders to rejoice. However, the measure is not full and to overflowing unless all party-strife and vainglory is rooted out altogether. One cannot be a little bit vainglorious. Sanctification is not so much percent. The great "shamah" is "Hear, Israel, the LORD our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy

mind, with all thy soul and with all thy strength — and thy neighbor as thyself!"

When the Spirit is no longer grieved because of us, when we walk as wise sons which maketh a glad father, then will the cup of your pastor overflow!

If there be any exhortation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Holy Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill the love of your minister, elders, parents and teachers. Let the same mind be in you which was in Christ.

Such admonition and nurture is NOT moralism, but is rooted in your new relationship to Christ; that you are not your own but belong to Jesus Christ, your Lord and Savior!



TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

BILLY GRAHAM ON CONVERSION

What does Billy Graham say? He says that Christ did "provide man with salvation" (Peace With God, p. 40). By these words he does not mean that Christ actually effected salvation for any, but rather that God made "it possible for us to have access to Him." The Cross, then, in Graham's conception is not an atonement; Christ's death does not atone; it merely provides for atonement. The Cross does not save any, it merely makes possible a salvation for all. You see, the Arminian, to maintain his heresy, must destroy the atonement. For either the atonement is saving, and not a mere provision of saving grace, or it is no atonement. Imagine an atonement which does not atone, but merely, like a reservoir, stores up what is

necessary to atone!

What, further, does Graham mean by this? He means that God "wanted to do something for man. He wanted to save man . . . How . . .?" For "God could not freely forgive man's sin," for then He would have been caught in the impossible position of lying, for He had said, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." So in some men's going lost God saves His veracity by pointing out that He only said that He *wanted* to save men, not that He *would* save men! But how does this save God's face? He wanted to but wouldn't! How does this save His sovereignty, to say nothing of His omnipotence? For He is not able to save all, which He really wants to do (p. 86). The

God who worketh all things according to His *own* will, and who saves, not by man who willeth, nor of man who runneth, but by Himself who hath mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth — this almighty, independent, self-sufficient God is limited, hindered, even disappointed and frustrated by man's "free" will?! But the impossible, the unthinkable is swallowed and regurgitated to the masses by Graham.

What does Graham say about conversion? This: "Biblical conversion involves three steps, two of them active and one passive. In active conversion, repentance and faith are involved. Repentance is conversion viewed from its starting point, the turning from the former life. Faith indicates the objective point of conversion, the turning to God. The third, which is passive, we may call the new creation, or regeneration" (p. 107). "These three take place simultaneously" (p. 114). You see immediately that according to Graham's philosophy conversion has its starting point not in the sovereign grace of God, where actually every part of our salvation originates, but in the initiating act of man. Man sets the experience of conversion in motion. Man, negatively, turns from a life of sin, and, positively, man, in faith, turns to God. So that the second step of conversion, that of faith, is also as much an autonomous act of man as conversion. Now Graham does say that these three steps take place simultaneously, which might appear, at first glance, that he does not make regeneration take a back seat to the other two graces of salvation. But closer scrutiny reveals that regeneration, in his estimation, is a *tertium quid*, a third rate element of salvation. Of necessity, according to Graham—"theology" (Arminianism), regeneration must come logically in a place subordinate to both conversion and faith. For only if a person turns to God in faith will he be regenerated. Graham consciously rejects the scriptural teaching of regeneration the cause of faith, and faith the effect of regeneration. The simple truth is, "as many as (1) received Him, and (now) (2) believe on His name, *were*. (sometime prior to either, and with a view to both (1) and (2), born of God" (Jn. 1:12, 13). No Arminian yet has ever gotten this Scripture straight.

But Graham makes it even plainer that he intends the Arminian conception of conversion. He conceives of it as a "voluntary change in the mind of the sinner from sin to

Christ." By a "voluntary change" he means not only that it is "man's turning from sin to Christ," but that it "all depends on free will." (Radio broadcast, 5/24/64). Almighty God is therefore made to depend upon puny man.

But worse than this, Graham completely denies eternal, unconditional election, and in doing so he puts natural, unregenerate man on a throne antithetical to God's. It is possible, in his dreamy reveries, for man to deny God's election from before the foundation of the world, to refuse to have his name written in the Book of Life. The latter proud man will refuse because he particularly rebels against the idea of having his name placed in the book of God's eternal decree from before the foundation of the world, without first consulting with man to secure his permission for such use of his name. The best that the Lord may do, then, under the circumstances, is to rely upon His foresight of man's faith, of man's turning to God, and on that basis, man-centered as it is, write man's name in the Book of Life. "We can refuse to be chosen. We can refuse God's call." (ibid.). The elect can, negatively, refuse to be elect and, positively, choose to be reprobate. In fact, to begin with, no man is either elect or reprobate by any divine, eternal, unconditional, independent, sovereignly free (God or) decree. Election is not something predetermined by the eternal counsel of God's decree of predestination. Man himself decides his own election or rejection. "Man has a moral independence in himself. He therefore is free, even from God, but man needs God's help" (ibid.). For we are commanded, "Turn ye . . . make you a new heart." But we are "too weak (note: not dead spiritually in sins) to turn of ourselves" and so need the help of the "Holy Spirit to move us" (ibid.). Now this is rather interesting: man is too weak to turn of himself, yet he is a sovereignly free individual who suffers not from moral impotency because of his own innate moral independence. When you get right down to it, right down to Graham's low-slung Semi-Pelagianism, man is "almighty" man. Two almighties, admittedly, do not make things easy in the same world, hence "almighty" man must cooperate with almighty God. This he can do and does do for "the free will with which we choose is God's gift," and "conversion is the merging of the divine with the human" (ibid.). Salvation is, then,

of necessity, not all of God, but partly of God and partly of man. Man has something of which to boast before God. "Salvation is of Jehovah" as long as man gives God a chance!

Truthfully, conversion presupposes the prior work of regeneration. The change which first takes place in the mind and heart of the sinner is not one that is voluntary, but one that is regenerative, a principal change which removes man out of death into life. (Jn. 5:24). In regeneration, man is born from above. In conversion he becomes conscious of his regeneration. In regeneration the renewed man has spiritual life, lives in newness of life. In conversion the renewed man becomes active in his new life. Regeneration is the work of God whereby the elect but spiritually dead sinner is born again and so made to pass out of death into life. Conversion is the work of God whereby the elect, regenerated sinner is turned from the way of sin to the way of righteousness. It is not the dead, natural, would-be autonomous man who converts and turns to God, but the man reborn, with the new life, he repents, turns to God, confesses and forsakes his sin. He must have a new heart before he can love God. He must have a new life before he can walk in God's commandments (Ezek. 37:25-27). He must have the gift of faith so that he can believe. He must also be granted repentance before he can repent (Ac. 11:18, refs.). He must have a new will before he can will the will of God (Phil. 2:12f). He must be regenerated in order to be converted. The dead must be quickened before they can turn to God.

Regeneration is not in the least partly the work of man, nor the result of any help from man, or any cooperation with God, but is wholly the sovereign work of God alone. Man is passive, not active, in regeneration, just as the dead are passive in the divine work of resurrection. In conversion, man is not first, nor is his turning to God first of all his work. God must first turn man, activate man, then man can turn and act (Lam. 5:21). Regeneration is God's work. Conversion is also God's work. Man's turning in conversion is the fruit of God's work.

To illustrate evidence of regeneration in a man's life Graham tells the story of the "man who used to hitch his horse in front of the saloon," but after being born again he "hitched in front of the Methodist Church"

. . . he "changed hitching posts." But this better illustrates "a man of the street" leaving his old, stark Pelagianism for a more refined "semi-Pelagianism", or modern Arminianism, the religion of Methodism. This better illustrates the natural man becoming a religious natural man. Today, for a man to park his car outside and to frequent the tap-room would not be as dangerous as parking it outside and frequenting the Methodist Church. For the one might contribute to the destruction of the body, but the other, a front for Arminianism, socialism and pro-Sovietism, is destructive of the soul.

In the view of the Graham ministry of error, to what is the converted man converted? *The Charlotte Observer*, reporting on Graham's "sermon" at the Roman Catholic Benedictine Belmont Abbey College under the headline, "Billy Wins Catholics to Billy," said, "Baptist evangelist Billy Graham may not have won any Catholic converts to Protestantism . . . but he won a number of them to Billy Graham." As a sample of audience reaction, "in the college administration building a priest remarked, 'He (Graham) comes so close to the catholic line. He walks right up to it and then backs off . . .'" (ibid.).

But Graham's yoking himself up with such modernist unbelievers as Bishop Kennedy, Bishop Pike, E. Stanley Jones, et al., and now we expect that he will in his Alabama campaign yoke himself in some way with that modernist-neo-orthodox Martin Luther King, —all this leads us to believe that Graham is not too interested any longer in converting sinners and heathen to Christ, but is more interested in syncretizing the various shades of religions into the false ecumenical church. ". . . the ecumenical council and the reforms started by the late Pope John have brought a new dialogue, and a new understanding that might bring a great Christian revolution . . . What is happening in the ecumenical revolution is of interest to people all around the world — to Catholics, Protestants, Jews and Buddhists" (ibid.).

Notice the laudation of that antichrist Pope John, the word "dialogue" instead of "controversy" (or "debate"), the word "revolution" instead of "reformation." This language is not that of a preacher or of an "evangelist", but that of a leftist. Surely Billy Graham and the great central current of the Christian church have come to the parting of the ways.

BOOKS



With Heart and Mind

KENNETH L. PIKE. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids. 140 pages, \$1.75.

One of the crucial problems which every serious student begins to face in high school and meets head on in college is that of faith and science. Sometimes, an apparent conflict will lead to a rejection of faith. This reaction is a tragedy. Other times, it will cause a complete rejection of science. This answer, being intellectually dishonest, also is one to be avoided. In both cases, an alleged solution is found by ignoring the facts of one side. Rather than resorting to this poor way out, the real answer lies in harmonizing whatever can be shown to be factual. Since the student who does this faces no easy task, it is with pleasure that he reads the books of men who have successfully done so. Such a man is Dr. Kenneth Pike of the University of Michigan and the Wycliffe Bible Translators. Dr. Pike calls his book a personal synthesis of scholarship and devotion. Claiming that evangelicals have "vigorously attempted to obey the command to serve God with heart and soul while, belligerently, they have sometimes ignored in the same command the order to love God with *mind*," he says he has tried to obey both and "the present essays try to let the reader see just a bit of the religious and philosophical struggle that lies behind the growth of this personal synthesis."

The book is divided into four parts — intellect, viewpoint, commitment, and outreach. The first part is a discussion of the limits and responsibilities of academic ability. Dr. Pike contends that logic is basically a tool and "should not be made into a religion." To use this tool correctly, premises, whether known or assumed, must be true. But arriving at truth is only half the task. Using the negative example of Pilate, Dr. Pike insists that a recognition of truth im-

plies a responsibility to act on it. Pilate knew the truth of Christ's innocence but he sought to dodge the obligation to act on it by asking "What is truth?" "This was a clever bypass, and is, incidentally, the best bypass used today." Quoting II Corinthians 6 ("Now is the day of salvation"), Dr. Pike further argues that each time one refuses to recognize truth, his heart becomes more hardened against it and in his intellectual idolatry he becomes the fool of Romans 1. To avoid becoming this intellectual fool, Dr. Pike gives a "prescription for intellectuals." Intellectuals, he says, in contrast to the down-and-outers, always analyze help when it comes to them. They must know the whence, why, and wherefore of it rather than just trust in it. They will never arrive at salvation this way. That is why Christ tells Nicodemus that he must be born again and just as he doesn't see the wind, yet believes it is there, so must he trust the Promise. Intellectuals must forget their logical systems and receive faith as a little child.

The second part — "Viewpoint" — begins with the observation that the framework from which one views things determines his understanding of them. He points to Christianity as an all-inclusive framework for living. He effectively refutes liberal theologian William Hardern's position that since truth cannot be communicated, the Bible does not give true information and Christianity is no more than subjective knowledge of God, by showing that truth is really in another dimension from Hardern's idea of it. The rest of this section is a personal justification of God's ways with men. It is interesting enough, although in some places his theology seems to be a bit weak. For example, his comparing sovereignty and responsibility to God's putting the world on "automatic pilot" is both incongruous and wrong.

"Commitment" opens with the most important chapter in the book — "Why I believe in God." In a personal account, reminding this reviewer of C. S. Lewis' *Surprised By Joy* (whom Dr. Pike admires), he gives the reader an inspiring story which alone would justify procuring the book. Continuing, Dr. Pike shows how we become strong only when we realize we are weak and how failure is sometimes success. He concludes this section with a good reason for reading the genealogies of the Bible — to realize that individuals are important in God's plan.

The final part — "Outreach" — is well worth reading when he tells of his personal work with the Wycliffe Bible Translators. But sometimes, such as when he compares life to playing on a volleyball team with God as the Senior Player, it is not good reading.

The book is generally well written, is attractively printed, and has handy summaries at the head of each chapter. Sometimes, due to its being a collection of essays, it suffers from a lack of unity; but the continual

presentation of original and usually excellent ideas make this hardly noticeable. With the reservations I have stated I urge you to read it.

EDWARD LANGERAK



Innocently unaware of the prejudices held against him, an old colored man, staunchly religious, applied for membership in an exclusive church. The pastor attempted to put him off with all sorts of evasive remarks. The old Negro, instinctively becoming aware that he was not wanted, said finally that he would sleep on it and perhaps the Lord would tell him just what to do.

Several days later, he returned. "Well," said the minister, "Did the Lord send you a message?"

"Yessuh, he did," was the answer. "He told me it wasn't no use. He said, 'Ah been trying to get in that same church myself for ten years and Ah still can't make it.'"

— *Holland Home News*

HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE

Genesis 24

REV. DAVID J. ENGELSMA

Book of GENESIS

This chapter relates God's faithful fulfilling of His promise to Abraham in His supplying for Isaac a God-fearing wife. God's promise to Abraham was, centrally, the Christ, including the promises of the land of Caanan (Gen. 13:15), of an innumerable posterity (Gen. 13:16), and of the blessing of the nations of the earth (Gen. 18:18). The fulfilment of the promise demands that Isaac, in whom Abraham's seed is to be called (Heb. 11:18), marry and have a son to be, with Abraham and Isaac, heir of the promise. The repeated reference to the providential control of God in the matter of Isaac's getting a wife (cf. vs. 27, 50), the confidence of Abraham that God would prosper the venture through the agency of His angel, evidently, the "Angel of Jehovah" (vs. 7, cf. Gen. 22:15), and the stress throughout the chapter on God's covenant name, Jehovah,

point up the truth that the search for a wife was more than an "ordinary" endeavor by a believing parent to get a believing wife for his son. Involved is the realization of the promise of God in the coming of the Christ. In this light Abraham's vehement insistence that Isaac not marry a Canaanite woman must also be viewed. It was, at bottom, an abhorrence of entrusting the Christ to the goddess.

Abraham's advanced age motivates him to instruct his servant concerning the marriage of Isaac. Since he approaches the time of death, he takes precautions against the possibility that Isaac, now about forty (Gen. 25:20), fall into a marriage, after Abraham's death, with one of the heathen women among whom he lives. Since Isaac is forty when he marries Rebekah and since Abraham was one hundred when Isaac was born (Gen. 21:5),

Abraham is about one hundred and forty years of age, at this time. Sarah has been dead three years (cf. Gen. 17:17 and Gen. 23:1), which also must have impressed Abraham with the nearness of his own death. In fact, however, Abraham lives for thirty-five more years (Gen. 25:7), dying when his grandsons, Jacob and Esau, were about fifteen years (cf. Gen. 25:26).

The opposition of Abraham to Isaac's marrying a Canaanite is absolute so that the servant must swear by "Jehovah, the God of heaven and the God of earth" (vs. 3) not to get a Canaanite woman for Isaac. The form of the oath is the placing of a hand under Abraham's thigh, which curious rite is only elsewhere mentioned at Genesis 47:29. The explanation of Abraham's charging the servant rather than Isaac himself seems to be, in part, the extraordinary status of the servant and, in part, the tractable nature of Isaac. The servant is probably Eliezer of Damascus, mentioned previously in Genesis 15:2, although he is never referred to by name in chapter 24. The servant of Genesis 24 evinces faith and Godliness in high degree which is implied of Eliezer in Genesis 15:2. Besides, the servant occupies a position of highest rank in Abraham's household (vss. 2, 10) so that even the son and heir was accustomed to obeying him which harmonizes with the description of Eliezer in Genesis 15:2, "steward of my house." Abraham's assumption that Isaac would honor instruction by the servant, against marriage with a Canaanite speaks well of Isaac. But at the same time Abraham's firmness on this matter contrasts with Isaac's toleration of Esau's marriage to not one but two of the heathen (cf. Gen. 26:34, 35 in the light of Gen. 25:28 and 27:1-4). The reason for Abraham's refusal to allow such a marriage lay in the Canaanites' being an accursed race. God's curse upon them is to be traced back to Noah's prophetic curse upon his grandson, Canaan (Gen. 9:25). The Canaanites were an idolatrous, depraved race, fitting the description of Romans 1:18ff. Of their impending destruction, God had made Abraham aware in Genesis 15:16 ("Amorites") standing for all the Canaanites) and in the visitation of wrath upon Sodom and Gomorrah.

Excepting the special factor of Isaac's bringing forth the Christ, believers today are prohibited for similar reasons from contracting marriages with unbelievers. Thus, I Cor-

inthians 7:39 commands marriages "in the Lord" and II Corinthians 6:14-18 inveighs against an "unequal" yoking of believer with unbeliever. The societies might well discuss the practical implications for dating and marrying. Note that Abraham makes no allowance for any "conversion through marriage."

In response to the servant's question whether his inability to bring a wife from Mesopotamia to Isaac would necessitate the servant's bringing Isaac to Mesopotamia (vs. 5), Abraham forbids Isaac's ever returning to the land from which Abraham came. The idea of the servant is that it might be necessary for Isaac to woo his wife personally. Abraham reacts strongly against the suggestion that Isaac go back ("Beware thou," vs. 6). The reason why there may be no return is given in vs. 7. The fulfillment of the covenant, salvation, was bound up with the land of Canaan and in the land of Canaan the heirs of the promise must strictly abide. To leave Canaan at all, except in cases of direct Divine command as in Genesis 46:1-4, gives evidence of carelessness concerning salvation and doubt concerning the promise. It would be, *a fortiori*, worse to leave Canaan for that country out of which God had called the patriarch. But Abraham is confident that no such reluctance will foil his intention and that God will assuredly direct a maid ("the woman," vs. 8) to marry Isaac "sight unseen." Abraham, here, as throughout his life, rests upon the promise. Jehovah had sworn to bring forth "the seed of Abraham" from Isaac so that He is responsible for supplying the wife that is necessary. The concession of Abraham in vs. 8 is not due to his nagging doubt but to the conscientious qualms of the servant who hesitates to swear to perform something that he may not be able to accomplish. The servant, reassured not only by Abraham's concession but also by the unwavering faith of his master, swears to seek a wife for Isaac in Mesopotamia, not to marry Isaac to a Canaanite, and not to take Isaac back to Mesopotamia. (vs. 9).

Although the primary concern in the first nine verses is for the coming of Christ, several other truths also stand out. Abraham manifests that careful oversight of his ^{c1} marriage that ought to mark every ¹ parent. Carelessness of parents to the dating and marrying children reflects disdain for God-gi-

bility. Isaac's submission (at forty) to his father's guidance on the matter of his mate condemns any defiant independentism of children also on the selection of husband or wife. Calvin remarks on vs. 3: "it is not lawful for the children of a family to contract marriage, except with the consent of parents; and certainly natural equity dictates that, in a matter of such importance, children should depend upon the will of their parents." It is obvious, finally, that if the alternatives are singleness and marriage with an unbeliever, singleness is alone the approved course.

As directed by Abraham, Eliezer goes to Abraham's country and kindred (vs. 4), that is, the "city of Nahor" in Mesopotamia (vs. 10). This place is not Ur of the Chaldees, where Abraham originally lived (Gen. 11:28ff.), but Haran (or, Charran, as in Acts 7:2, 4), to which Abraham had moved with Terah and Lot (Gen. 11:31) and from which Abraham and Lot had come to Canaan. Although there is no mention of Nahor's having moved from Ur to Haran, it is evident from Jacob's flight to Laban in Haran that Nahor and family were also in Haran. (cf. Gen. 27:43; 28:10)

The faith of the servant is worthy of notice. He commits himself and his task to Jehovah in prayer (vs. 12), worships Jehovah in gratitude for the successful outcome of his journey (vs. 26, 27), and ascribes to the Lord the glory (vs. 48). If the servant is Eliezer of Damascus, his Godliness is a realization already in the Old Dispensation of the New Dispensational fulfilment of God's promise that in Abraham all the nations of the earth would be blessed. He is saved but only in Abraham, a true child of Abraham, that is, not merely by physical descent but by faith (cf. Gal. 3:7). Besides, the complete reliance of the servant upon Jehovah and, especially, upon God's promise to Abraham and the covenant relationship of God with Abraham ("Lord God of my master Abraham," vs. 12) underscores the main idea of these verses, Jehovah keeping His promises, bringing forth the Christ and saving His people. Even the obtaining of Rebekah comes not by might or human wisdom but by the gracious activity of the Lord.

To some, Eliezer's prayer in verse 14 is suspect. They view it as tainted by the servant's presumption in dictating to God the way in which God should bring the woman of His choice to the servant. The servant errs in a

manner roughly comparable with the tempting of God by Israel in the wilderness (cf. Ps. 78:19, 41). That the specific arrangement of details by the servant (vs. 14) was not motivated by unbelief but by faith is evident: 1) from the fact that the servant bases his request upon the covenant promise to Abraham (vs. 12). 2) from the fact that the servant is praying. 3) from his basic assumption that God had appointed a woman to be Isaac's wife (the servant does not leave it an open question whether God would provide a woman as Israel left it an open question whether God intended to care for them). 4) from God's speedy answer to the request in exactly the manner described in the servant's prayer. The servant's concern is not whether God intends to provide a woman but how the servant may recognize the woman. The identifying characteristic of the bride-to-be is hospitality, a love for the neighbor, which the servant expects in that woman chosen to be a help meet for the heir of the promise (vs. 14).

The maid that God has chosen and whom He brings to Eliezer is the daughter of Abraham's nephew, Bethuel (vs. 15, vs. 48 employs the word *brother* in a broad sense).

Terah

Abraham — Nahor

Isaac — Bethuel

Rebekah — Laban

Besides being related to Abraham and Isaac, Rebekah is a beautiful virgin (literally, "of a good form exceedingly, a virgin") and hospitable. She not only accedes to the servant's request for water for himself but offers to water his camels and carries out both functions with haste (vss. 17-20).

The reaction of Eliezer in vs. 21 merely indicates that in so weighty a matter, the servant desires further confirmation that Rebekah is the right woman, the information that she is related to Abraham (vs. 27), the permission of her parents to let her go (vss. 49, 50), and the consent of the maid herself (vs. 58). That he gives her valuable jewelry (vs. 22), even before he knows who she is, indicates that he rests assured that she will prove to be God's choice. Calvin faults the servant for lavishing Rebekah with these ornaments (bracelets and a nose ring, not earring as rendered by the A.V. cf. vs. 47 and Is. 3:21). Regarding the use of such adornments, Calvin, thinking evidently of I Timothy 2:9: "women (should) adorn them-

selves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety: not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array," states that "because the cupidity of women is, on this point, insatiable; not only must moderation, but even abstinence, be cultivated as far as possible." (*Commentary on Genesis, in loc.*)

The dominating figure in Nahor's household is his grandson, Laban. He takes the lead in welcoming the servant to the house (vss. 29-31), provides for the comfort of the servant (vs. 32), advises Eliezer to state his mission (vs. 33), and wields authority with Bethuel over Rebekah and the marriage proposal (vs. 50, where Laban's name appears first. cf. vss. 53, 55). Laban's crafty, greedy nature, glaringly evident in his subsequent dealings with Jacob (Gen. 29-31), appears already here. His greeting of the servant is motivated by the jewelry displayed by Rebekah (vs. 30) and the warmth of his welcome is proportional to his notion of Abraham's wealth. From the beginning, he aimed at the dispensing of presents (vs. 53). Nor was he displeased by the prospect of an alliance with affluent Abraham. His seemingly pious "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord" (vs. 31), rings hollow. No doubt, Laban had picked up from Rebekah the fact that Eliezer had worshipped Jehovah (cf. vss. 26-28).

The servant, singlemindedly pursuing the end of his journey, refuses to eat until he has related to the family his intention and obtained their verdict (vs. 33). The theme of his speech (vss.34-49) is Jehovah's revelation that He wills the marriage of Rebekah and Isaac. This becomes clear to the listeners as is shown by the response of Laban and Bethuel in vss. 50, 51. In the speech the servant conveys to his audience the prosperity of Abraham (vs. 35), the status of Isaac, as the only son, to inherit Abraham's riches, and the marriageable age of Isaac (vs. 36). This latter fact becomes relevant when it is remembered that Isaac could conceivably be as old as Bethuel, Isaac's cousin and Rebekah's father. Although Laban probably heard nothing more in this speech than that Isaac would make a naturally suitable marriage partner, spiritually sensitive ears, such as Rebekah's could hear a deeper truth, the truth that the blessing of Abraham was the blessing of the covenant, that the birth of Isaac was a wonder, that the hand of Jehovah in selecting her was the hand that meant to use her to perpetuate the seed of the covenant until Christ

came. This consciousness, in whatever degree of clarity it might have been, produces Rebekah's simple "I will go" (vs. 58) so that she leaves behind family and friends for a strange land and an unseen husband. Too often, the incident of her deception of Isaac is allowed to obscure the fact that she was a remarkable woman in many respects but also of faith.

With Rebekah's consent (vs. 58), a consent not only to leave immediately but also agreement to become Isaac's wife, the servant retraces his way to Canaan. The familial blessing of Rebekah seems to have been a customary formula (vs. 60). It consisted of the desire that she mother a numerous and victorious offspring. To "possess the gate" of one's enemies means to dominate one's enemies (cf. Gen. 22:17). "As gates were in ancient times the principal places of resort, as not only their markets were held there, but also their courts of justice and their deliberative assemblies, hence it is common for the scriptures to speak of the power of a city being concentrated in its gate or gates. The possession of the *gates* was therefore the possession of the *cities* to which they pertained" (Bush, *Notes on Genesis*). Regardless of the consciousness of the pronouncers of the benediction, God blessed Rebekah with precisely this blessing. Typically in the nation of Israel and centrally in Christ and His Church, Rebekah brings forth the innumerable and victorious host.

The meeting of Isaac and Rebekah occurs when Isaac is in the field meditating or praying. His meditation concerned the promises of God, specifically, the current mission of Eliezer. That God presents him with Rebekah at just this time must speak to him of the faithfulness of God and of God's regard for the prayers of His people.

God's crowning benefit to Isaac is the gift of love between the two, a love rich and deep since rooted in the love of two believers for Jehovah and His covenant, a love ardent with the ardency of the bond of perfection between Christ and His Church.



*A wedding ring
is a one man
band.*

NEWS

from, for, and about our churches

LOIS E. KREGEL

The following contribution is from the Radio Committee:

The Encyclopedia Britannica tells us that "the island of Guam, lying in the Pacific Ocean, between the Philippines and Hawaii, about 1,500 miles east of Manila was discovered in 1521 by Ferdinand Magellan. In 1898, as a result of the Spanish-American War, Guam was ceded to the United States. Guam is 30 miles long and 6 miles wide. The capital and only city is Agana. The climate is healthful, but earthquakes and typhoons are fairly common. Under American ownership the island has a good school system, a hospital, an agricultural experimental station, and a high power naval radio station." Our readers may well ask what this has to do with Radio News concerning our Reformed Witness Hour? Just this — The Program Committee reports to us that some of the residents of this tiny isle also enjoy our radio broadcasts. Tapes are mailed regularly, and are heard and enjoyed by the Quengas (members of First Church) and other people on the island by means of their tape recorder. The cost of mailing each tape to Guam is — a four-cent stamp. Surprising, isn't it?

Trios:

Two trios were made by the consistory of First Church:

For minister: Revs. J. A. Heys, G. Van Baren, and B. Woudenberg.

For missionary: Revs. R. C. Harbach, J. Kortering, and H. Veldman.

Called Home:

Mr. Jacob Lont, a member of our Randolph Church, at the age of 85 years.

Membership changes:

Mr. and Mrs. E. Medema transferred their membership to South Holland from Oaklawn.

Wedding bells

rang for Judith Bylsma and Donald Doezema (First) on June 26; for Darlene Alsum and Robert Hoekstra (Randolph) on May 8; for Marilyn Alsum and Arch Quade (Randolph) on May 1; for Percy Scholten and Joan

Vander Kooi (Hudsonville) on June 12; for Mary Ruth Decker and Carl Potjer (First) on June 17; and for Glenn Kooiker and Betty Van Roekel (Hull) on May 29.

New arrivals:

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Vink (First)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. John Buiter (First)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Ted Looyenga (First)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. George Vroom (South Holland)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kamps (Hudsonville)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Robert DeYoung (Hudsonville)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Phil Lotterman (Southwest)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. B. Kamminga (Southwest)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Van Overloop (Hudsonville)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Kooiker (Hull)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Ken Schipper (Southeast)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. E. Kuiper (South Holland)

A daughter, born to Mr. and Mrs. Erwin Dotson (Loveland)

A son, born to Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Schipper (First)

Items of interest:

From Randolph's bulletin we learn that there are now 885 copies of the Reformed Witness sent out at each mailing. The latest one is entitled "The Lord's Supper."

Hope School Circle sponsored a Strawberry Festival on June 11 at Hughes Park in Hudsonville.

The organization of a Ladies' Circle to promote the cause of our own high school took place on June 9 in First Church. On June 23 a second meeting of this group was held, this one for the purpose of adopting a constitution.

A congregational farewell for Rev. and

Mrs. C. Hanko was held in First Church auditorium on June 24. After a brief program, Rev. Hanko was presented with a tape recorder and a gift of money; later refreshments were served in the church basement and opportunity was given to members of the congregation to say good-bye personally to Rev. and Mrs. Hanko.

The Young People's Society of South Holland Church sponsored a program by the Hope Herald's on June 19 in the church.

Senior Young People's Society of First Church recently sponsored a car wash and also a baked goods sale in an effort to raise money to send the clothing which they collected to the churches in Jamaica.

Rev. G. Lubbers was installed as pastor of Southwest Church on June 7, Rev. M. Schipper officiating. A reception to welcome Rev. and Mrs. Lubbers was held on June 9.

Rev. C. Hanko preached his farewell sermon in First Church on June 28. He and his family planned to leave on the following day for Redlands, going by way of Randolph, Doon and Loveland.

Thirty-six children in our Hull congregation had perfect attendance records in catechism for the past season.

Confession of faith was made in South Holland church recently by Joanne Flikkema and Henry Zandstra.

Oaklawn's bulletin contained a "thank you" from Rev. and Mrs. Vandenberg for the gift of \$124.00 which they recently received from the congregation.

The Northwest Iowa Protestant Reformed School Society was to have a meeting June 15 to consider the purchase of Perkins School. Thus progress is being made toward a school of our own also in this locality.

On Hull's bulletin there appeared excerpts from letters received from Jamaica thanking the congregation there for the gift of Psalters.

Those in the Grand Rapids area who might happen to drive past Southeast Church would no doubt be impressed by the attractive new sign in front of the church, the result of the joint efforts of some of the members; it even makes mention of the Reformed Witness Hour.

Convention Text

I PETER 1:15-16

But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;

Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

Convention Theme Song

THE BLESSEDNESS OF OBEDIENCE

1. *How blest the perfect in the way
Who from God's law do not depart,
Who, holding fast the word of truth,
Seek him with undivided heart.*
2. *Yea, they are kept from paths of sin
Who walk in God's appointed way;
Thy precepts Thou hast given us
That we should faithfully obey.*
3. *My wavering heart is now resolved
Thy holy statutes to fulfil;
No more shall I be brought to shame
When I regard Thy holy will.*
4. *To Thee my praise sincere shall rise
When I Thy righteous judgments
learn;
Forsake me not but be my guide,
And from Thy truth I will not turn.*

JOHN ZANDSTRA JR.
R. R. 1 BOX 227-A
CHICAGO HEIGHTS, ILL.

