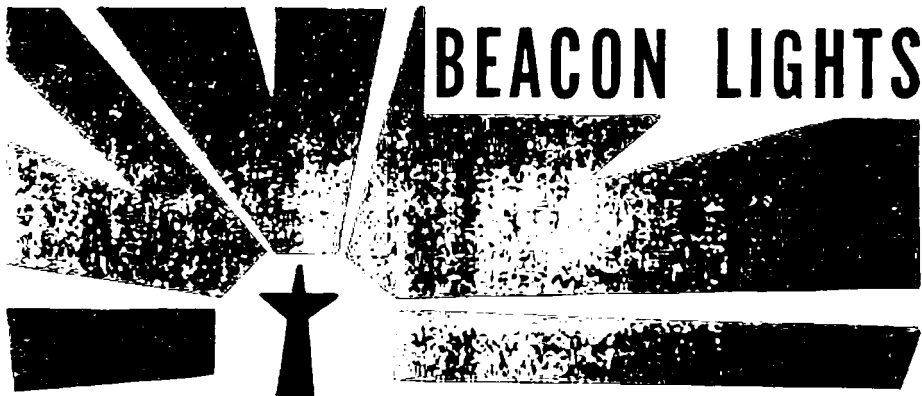


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*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*



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IN THIS ISSUE

EDITORIAL

A Dream-y Pistle to my Grand Children - John M. Faber..... 1

CONVENTION SPEECHES

The Shining Lights - Rev. J. Slopsema..... 3

The Calling to Shine - Rev. R. Van Overloop..... 7

Our Shining and God's Glory - Rev. W. Bekkering..... 9

Convention Reflections - John M. Faber..... 12

Convention Review - Cindy Buitter..... 13

Convention Pictures..... 14

FEATURE

Workers at Home - Phil Dykstra..... 16

News From, For and About our Churches - Karla Kalsbeek..... 18

Editorial

A DREAM-Y PISTLE TO MY GRAND CHILDREN

by John M. Faber

Dear Grandchildren:

Must write to you about an experience I had when most of you were at our house last Mother's Day. After that heavy Sunday dinner you must have noticed that I went to relax in my rocking chair in the corner of the family room. I closed my eyes in order to listen better to your chatter, but I must have dropped off to sleep because what I was hearing from your innocent lips could only happen in a dream. I dreamed (or did I?) that you were criticizing Charlene and her cousin Tracy who had done something or other about speed. I wondered about such severe criticism about speeding when I remembered how I had done that with our old Model T in my youth. Why, sometimes we gunned that Ford until it reached the speed of 35 mph! Then I realized that it was a noun, speed, not the verb, speeding, that was under discussion. The dream got quite hazy at this point because speed was now called a drug. That tipped me off that I was dreaming because anyone knows that speed is a swift motion, not a drug. Coming out of that haze I heard one of you, Art, I believe, accuse his sister of (excuse the expression) using pot. Now, that I could understand; but we never talked about it in mixed company. But I noticed that Art said something about smoking pot. That made no sense to me so I knew that I was dreaming (or was I?) again.

When I began hearing talk again I heard some talk about kids in your high school who were caught shooting something that sounded like coke. I drink coke sometimes instead of coffee, but I

wouldn't know how to shoot such kind of stuff. So I knew that I was dreaming (or was I?) again. Wishing I had a coke, I began my slow rocking again and imagined that I heard you speaking about two girls named Mary and Wanda, or was it one girl whose name was Wanda and she was merry? It sounded like she had gotten in trouble at school and was hiding, but got smoked out. And how you snickered when you referred to her by calling her "smoking Merry Wanda." I didn't get it. My hearing faded out for a while and then I heard you mentioning a girl who had done some kind of life-saving act, I think, because you were saying "heroine" all the time. What puzzled me was your criticism of that heroine; I thought a heroine was always admired, but this one was in disgrace, it seems. The next voice that came through was Brewster's, who was talking about his Civilian Band Radio, I think. I know all about the C.B.ers, but Bruce was pronouncing it wrongly, for he called it P.C.B. I'm sure that the Police have not joined that group, so this did not make sense until I heard that the vet had used it to tranquilize a mad dog. Then I realized he was not talking about his radio but something entirely different. The dream (or was it one?) became more confused because the teacher was so disturbed about the fact that Brewster sold some of that stuff to that fat girl, Eloise. Then I noticed that Ferris was whispering about "controlled substance" and Barry said, "Shh, Gramps might hear you"; but Noreen said, "Huh! he's way off in dream land, anyone can see that." So attention

was diverted from me in the rocking chair and directed to the shindig some of you had after the graduation exercises at your high school. It seems you went to the beach, and then I was back in my dreams again (or was I?) for the words, pot, merry wanda, speed, pcb, and coke got all mixed up; spinning around like a Fourth of July pinwheel. What a confusion!

Then, oh then I knew I was dreaming again (or was I?) for I saw the Bible lying beside me open up by itself; pages began turning, stopped, and a Voice came from it: **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinner, and purify your hearts, ye double minded."** In my dream (or was it one?) that voice from that leather-bound Book was heard by you all. I heard no more chatter until, at length, Penelope suggested going to that church on the corner to hear a Gospel Rock Group. Russ suggested listening to a few rock tapes first, which they did. That wakened me for sure! What a terrible noise! I couldn't understand the words — or I hoped I didn't! I gathered from your idle talk that such music was erotic and of a promiscuous nature, performing in music like pornography performs in literature; that it arouses the lewd side of nature. Its "beat" works on human emotions in a wrong direction. And though this awful music seemed to have religious words in it, I failed to see how you kids could label it to be Christian. Even Christian words placed above that rock music do not make the music Christian in that setting. Sodom and Gomorrah music called Christian? But, though I thought I was wide awake I must have been dreaming again (was I?). for surely none of my grandchildren would call any group of rock singers "Christian." "Christian Rock Music" is a contradiction of terms. No music originating in the world, with an emotion arousing beat in it, can ever be Christian! All you

cousins have been taught in Sunday School, in catechism, and from the pulpit that there is only one Christian Rock, and that is Christ Himself. In my further dreaming (or was it?) I saw that leather-bound Book open up again, flipping pages till it stopped and the Voice again spoke: **"...for they all drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."** More pages turned, and again the Voice: **"Wherefore it is also contained in the Scriptures, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious, and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto him therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient whereto they were also appointed. But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood...that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you from darkness unto his marvelous light...."** Thereupon, hearing the word "light" from that open Bible, your chatter turned to your convention theme and you talked about being lights, and how you could make your light shown among men that your Heavenly Father might be glorified. Now I was wide awake, and that horrible dream (was it one?) was over. And I heard Bev and Bill discuss what Psalter numbers you would choose for the convention banquet; some of which sang of the Rock and the Fortress which is God. That was a marvelous ending of a bad dream. The Bible lay at my side, closed as I had left it. The rest of the afternoon was pleasant as it usually is when all the cousins come over to our house. It was time for coke and cookies for the young folk and coffee and cake for the oldsters. I surely hope that Father's Day is not a repeat of today!

Love, Gramps

The following three articles are the speeches given at the Young People's Convention. The theme was "Called as Shining Lights".

THE SHINING LIGHTS

by Rev. J. Slopsema

It is an uncontested fact that the child of God does not always act as a child of God. We are children of God! God has made us his children. He has saved us by His grace. He has renewed us spiritually so that we are no longer dead, but alive. He has given us a place in His Kingdom so that we are citizens of heaven. He has given us the ability to love and to serve Him. We are His children. But we do not always reflect that in our day to day lives. Instead of acting like children of God, we often act as children of the Devil. Instead of reflecting the grace of God in what we say and do, we often reflect the sins of our old nature. There are many times when those around us cannot tell any difference between us and the world. That is true not only of us, but of all God's people. It was true of the saints in the O.T. and N.T. It is true of our parents and grandparents. And it is also true of us. There is no denying it. It is simply a fact. We do not always live as real children of God. It is for that reason that the Bible quite often reminds the child of God of what he is, of what God has made him; and then admonishes him to reveal that in his everyday life.

That is the basic idea of the text which we have for this year's convention (Matt. 5:14-16). This text appears in the Sermon on the Mount. The theme is "The Kingdom of Heaven." Christ begins the sermon by describing the spiritual characteristics of the citizens of that Kingdom. This is commonly known as the Beatitudes. God's people are the poor in spirit. They are those who mourn and those who are meek. They are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. They are the

merciful, the pure in heart, the peace makers. That is what characterizes the child of God.

But then Jesus begins to speak of persecution. (Cf. vss. 10, 11.) When the people of God reveal their spiritual characteristics in their day to day lives they will be persecuted. The world will speak evil of them. And what might happen? What often does happen? The people of God, to avoid persecution, will stop reflecting those heavenly characteristics in their lives. They will no longer live as the merciful, or the peacemaker, or the pure of heart. They will no longer live as children of the Kingdom.

To warn us against this danger, the Lord proceeds to use two figures. He compares the people of God, first of all, to salt: Ye are the salt of the earth. Then, and this is the convention text, He compares us to light: Ye are the light of the world. That is what you are as people of God. That is what you are as covenant young people. God has made us to be the light of the world.

After establishing that, an admonition comes: Let your light shine before men. You are light? Then let that reflect itself in your life. Light is meant to shine; not to be hid under a bushel. Thus, let your light shine before men.

And then Christ gives the purpose or reason for all this: that men may see your good works and glorify your father which is in heaven.

Tonight we consider the first part of the text: "Ye are the light of the world." Quite appropriately our host society has given me the theme: **THE SHINING LIGHTS**. Under that theme we consider:

I. The Meaning

II. The Source

III. The Privilege

I. The Meaning

When Christ says that the people of God are the light of the world, He is using a figure of speech. The Bible often speaks of light. In fact, the Bible speaks of light in three different senses. And in each sense of the word, light is always contrasted to darkness. There is, first of all, physical light. That is the light which God created on the first day of the creation week. Before the creation of light there was only absolute darkness. Thus, we read in the first chapter of Genesis: "the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep...and God said, Let there be light...." In the second place, we can speak of natural light. Natural light is intellectual knowledge and understanding. The opposite of this is darkness, which implies ignorance. We often speak of light and darkness also in this sense. When in history we speak of the "Dark Ages" we have in mind that period of history when there was little, if any, learning and the masses were terribly ignorant. But then again we speak of various "Ages of Enlightenment" when there was a revival of learning, knowledge, and discovery. In the third place, and this is the idea of our text, there is spiritual light. Light in this sense expresses the idea of spiritual goodness and perfection. The Apostle John says in his first epistle: "God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." God is light. He is spiritual Goodness and Perfection. In Him is no darkness at all. There is no sin or evil or corruption to be found in God. Light is goodness and perfection. In contrast, darkness is sin, corruption, and evil.

Now, when the Lord says that the children of God are light, He means that they are essentially good and upright. They have hearts that are spiritually

perfect. From the heart they love God and all that is good as God is Good. And that love is the deepest motive for all they do. That the child of God is light means that he has the ability to perform the will of God, to keep His commandments, and to do that which is good. He has the ability to serve God; and principally he does so.

When Christ adds that the child of God is the light of the world, He means that this is true of the child of God in every aspect of the life of this world. When the Lord speaks of the world here, He does not have in mind the world of ungodly men, or even of the godly. He rather speaks of the world as the sphere in which we live and move; the sphere of our earthly existence. And in that world there are all kinds of different spheres and relationships. There is the sphere of the home, of the school, of the church, of government, etc. And within these various spheres there are all kinds of relationships. There is the relationship of husband and wife, of parents and children, of brother and sister, of employer and employee, etc. Furthermore, God's holy law covers every aspect, relationship, and sphere of the world. There is no sphere or relationship which is not touched. God's will has something to say and governs every aspect of our life in the world. That we are the light of the world means that we have the ability to keep the perfect law of God as it governs every aspect of our life in the world. Ye are the light of the world!

In direct contrast to the people of God is the rest of humanity, which is spiritual darkness. The Church of Christ is the light of the world. But in that same world live also the ungodly, the children of the devil, the citizens of the kingdoms of this world. They are spiritual darkness. This is suggested by Christ in that he designates the church as **THE** light of the world. The church is not merely **A** light of the world in distinction from various other lights. It is not this: that the children of God are a

light of the world, but in distinction from the children of God there are also the children of Allah and the children of Buddha, who are also lights of the world. No, the children of God are **THE** light of the world, the one and only light of the world. And all the rest of mankind is spiritual darkness.

This is the truth of the antithesis. We have heard of this word often enough. Our ministers have used it from the pulpit time and again. There is an absolute antithesis between the believer and the unbeliever, between the church and the world ("world" now in the spiritual sense). They are spiritual opposites. Spiritually they have nothing in common. They are as different as radiant, shining light is different from complete and total darkness.

The child of God is the light of the world. This means, as we saw, that he is essentially good and upright. He loves the Lord God and all that is good. He is able to keep the law of God in every sphere of life; and principally he does so.

In absolute contrast are the unbelieving children of darkness. They hate God and His people. They despise the good. They love evil and corruption. They are not able to do the good, but only sin. And that they do continually in every sphere of life: in the home, in the school, in government, in business, etc. All that they have and all that God has given them in this world they use in the service of sin. There is no good in them; and they produce no good thing. Every thought they think, every word they speak, and every deed they perform is nothing but corruption. All their goals and aspirations are only evil. And as a corrupt tree can only bring forth corrupt fruit, so also all that the world produces — their art, music, literature, entertainment, etc. — is completely corrupt spiritually. It is shot through and through with sin.

We must be reminded of this fact over and over again. The truth of this

antithesis can not be emphasized enough. For we are often inclined to find much good in the world and much spiritual good in what it produces. The world has many good ideas. Many of its goals and endeavors are very commendable. There is much spiritual benefit to be derived from its entertainment and culture. There is much good in the world and from the world on the basis of which we co-operate with the world, work with the world, and play with the world. It seems as though we are always inclined towards that attitude.

There are usually one or two reasons why we are inclined to take this attitude. In the first place, we often find ourselves spiritually in the world walking as the world walks. And to justify ourselves we are inclined to make the claim that there is after all much good in the world. But, in the second place, we often find much good in the world because that is exactly what the world wants us to think. The world does not want us to think that it is completely corrupt. The world would deceive the church into thinking that she is basically good. The world puts on a false front of piety and goodness. And often we are deceived by this false show. We conclude that there is much good in the world and much good in what it produces.

But do not forget that all that the world is, all that it does, and all that it produces is complete darkness. The minute we forget this and find some good in the world we are in real trouble. For it is exactly then that we are in real danger of being swallowed up by the darkness!

II. The Source

You are the light of the world. How is that to be explained? Is it by your own power that you love God and delight in His goodness? You are able to keep His will. Is that some innate ability you have of yourself? Perhaps the question can be best put this way: are you the source of

your own light?

This is a very important question. For our answer determines who is to receive the honor and glory. If it is true that we are the source of our own light, then we have thereof to glory. We can boast in ourselves and be very proud of our own accomplishment. Besides, we are then in a position to be lifted up in pride over-against all those who are spiritual darkness and to look down our noses at them. The principle here is: let's give credit to whom credit is due. If we are the source of our own light, then we are in a position to congratulate ourselves and to boast. If not, then we must be very humble.

Let me assure you that we must not boast, but be very humble. Christ makes that very clear in the last part of the text: "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Notice, Christ does not say, "Let your light shine that men may glorify you." I am afraid, however, that deep down every one of us would have liked it had Christ said exactly that. We all like the praise of men. We like others to tell us how good we are and to congratulate us. There is a little Pharisee in every one of us. But Christ did not say, "Let your light shine that men may glorify you." He said, "Let your light shine before men...that they may glorify your Father which is in heaven." God is to be glorified and praised for the fact that we are light. And there is only one reason for that — He is the source of our spiritual light.

It is only of God that we are the light of the world. By nature we are all darkness. That is to be explained by the fall, when a terrible cloud of darkness descended upon all mankind. But God in Christ has enlightened us. Several times the Bible speaks of Christ as being "the light of the world." Here in Matthew 5 the church is called the light of the world. But the Scriptures also speak of the fact that

Christ is the light of the world. Being the revelation of God Who is light in the absolute sense, Christ is light in and of Himself. He is the source of light. And He is the source of our light. Through the power of His cross and by His Spirit, He enlightens us spiritually. He shines in us; and as a result we are shining lights. We can, therefore, compare Christ to the sun and ourselves to the moon. Christ, as the sun, is a source of light. And as the moon only reflects the light of the sun, so we only reflect the light of Christ.

God, in Christ, is the source of our light. And although being the light of the world implies a very high and lofty position, we have no reason for boasting. We must of necessity be very humble.

III. The Privilege

We must also be very thankful and grateful to God. For to be the light of the world is a great privilege. You are the light of the world. You have the ability to keep the law of God in every sphere of life. Others, the children of darkness, do not have that ability. That makes you, young people, very privileged.

For it is only in the way of righteousness and obedience to God that we can consciously receive the blessings of God and possess true joy and peace. The Scriptures emphasize this over and over again, in many different ways. Sin brings nothing but sorrow and grief. Do you want misery and trouble in your life? Then walk in the way of sin and disobedience. For the wages of sin is death. And death is the visitation of God's wrath and just judgements. And under the heavy hand of wrath there is only trouble and sorrow. But, on the other hand, the Scriptures also teach very clearly that the blessings of God, as well as true joy and happiness, are to be found in the way of obedience to God and His will.

You, young people, are the light of the world. God has made you such. He has graciously formed you so that you are

able to walk uprightly before Him and obey His will. Why He has made you and me to be light and not others, I do not know. It is not because we are more worthy than others. For we are all equally unworthy. But the fact remains that God has formed us into the light of the world. He has enabled us to walk uprightly before Him, to walk the way of His blessing and grace, to find true joy and

peace both now and forevermore. And by His sustaining grace we so walk. We are privileged, indeed.

In that consciousness, let us daily bow before our God in humble thanksgiving. And let us show that gratitude by letting our light shine, that men may see our good works, and glorify our great and glorious Father which is in heaven.

THE CALLING TO SHINE

by Rev. R. Van Overloop

You are the light of the world. Instead of being a part of the darkness of the world, you are its light.

The world is in gross darkness. This darkness is characteristic of everything that is opposed to the will of God. The devil is the prince of this darkness. Therefore this darkness signifies a hatred of God and a love of all that is sinful. It speaks of unrighteousness, unholiness and every pollution imaginable.

But you, in contrast to the world and its utter darkness, are the light. You are the light of the world.

The text pictures a scene for us. It is a dark night. Very dark. It is more than just the darkness of a moonless night. This darkness is oppressive; it is almost as if you can feel the darkness.

But off in the distance a light shines. This light is not situated low on the horizon, but is set up rather high. A closer examination shows that this is not a single light, but that it really is many lights shining. That these many individual lights are so close to each other, gives the appearance as if it is but one light.

A still closer examination of these lights show that these many lights come from the windows of many different homes which together comprize a city.

The light which emits from these many windows is the only light there is.

All else is darkness, pitch black darkness. And the light which streams from those windows never ceases, for never is the light turned off and never is the window shade drawn.

You, by the grace of God, are that city on a hill in a dark night pouring out her light. What a glorious privilege. From this great distinction comes a high and very serious calling.

As the light of the world, your calling is to let your light shine.

Light shines. When light shines it reveals. Thus it enables one to see. Light reveals things and exposes them that they may be seen by men.

If things are seen by men, then they are able to know those things. Man can then come to an understanding of that thing.

Then when men see and learn and come to understand, they are able intelligently to speak together about the things which they could see.

Therefore, without light this world would be dark, silent, and dead. There would be no sight, no knowledge, no understanding, and no speech.

This is even more true spiritually than physically.

God is THE light. He shines into the world. Because He shines we can see, know and understand what is good. Thus

He leads us into truth. We must walk in His light if we are to have the light of life.

Christ is the light of life by which the light of God shines forth upon the earth.

Therefore we are the light of the world the light we can shine.

We are like a city situated on a hill which cannot be hid. The true Christian, because he is a SHINING light, cannot be hid or escape notice. Thus it is true that the Church is conspicuous. But Christ is not talking of the conspicuousness. Rather Christ is saying that the Church must emanate its light. He is speaking of the duty of young people to make themselves conspicuous by letting their light shine.

How is this done?

Some say Christ wants us to make ourselves as conspicuous as possible so that we can improve the state of this world. Therefore, it is said, it is the calling of young people to strive for a leadership role in the activities in which the world engages: business, politics, education, science, sociology, and so forth. Then all aspects of life could be greatly improved because of the leadership a Christian would give to these fields.

This idea is wrong.

First of all, this light is hated by the world and no matter the leadership abilities of the individual Christian involved, he would soon be despised and rejected as a leader. To keep his place of leadership the Christian would be sore tempted to put a bushel over his light.

Secondly, we are not saying a Christian young person cannot strive to rise in these fields. Rather we are saying that Christ is not admonishing His people to become prominent in worldly circles (I Thess. 4: 14,15 and II Thess. 3: 6ff.)

And thirdly, Scripture teaches us that not many wise, not many noble, and not many mighty are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise (I Cor. 1).

How then does the Christian young person shine?

When a young person realizes all that the grace of God has done in him and for him, he cannot help but shine. He cannot conceal the light. He radiates the light kindled within him by the Spirit of Christ. He does so in whatever station or place of life he may be placed. He uses every organ of selfexpression (eye, hand, foot, ear, tongue, etc.) in the service of this light.

We shine when we walk holily and forsake sin. We cause ourselves to love the things above, not the things of the earth. We must kill that part of us which is of the earth earthy: anger, wrath, blasphemy, filthy communications. We must lie not one to another, seeing that we have put off the old man with his deeds. Let us put on therefore bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness, meekness, long-suffering, forbearing one another and forgiving one another, even as Christ forgave us.

But why is this admonition to shine necessary? Does not a light just naturally shine? If a young person has the light of God in Christ within him, is it not certain that he will shine?

NO!!!

A candle is lit and placed somewhere and it shines. It cannot help but shine. But a child of God is not exactly like a candle. He can shine, but it is also true that he can cover his light and hide.

Just as easily as he can light a candle and cover it with a bushel basket so that no or very little light comes out, so he can cover up his light. Anyone can turn on the light of a lamp and then cover the light bulb with black paper so no light comes out. Or one can have a light on in a room, but pull the shades and tape the cracks so that no light escapes the room. So a Christian can cover the light of Christ within him.

It is easy for the light which God has placed in us to shine outside of us. All we have to do is be in perfect agreement with the will of God.

It is easy if we are perfect.

But we are sinners in a sinful world. Therefore it is hard to let God's light in us shine forth.

This admonition to shine is necessary because we are tempted to hide our light.

We are inclined to put our light under a bushel and to hide it from men. And we often do. Our sinful nature is always with us and according to the motions of sin in that old nature, we do not love the light. Rather we hate it and are ashamed of it. so we want to and often do hide it.

Also, our fear makes us pull the shades and hide the light. We must shine in a world which despises and hates the light. Remember that when light shines it reveals. When the light of Christ in us shines in the midst of this wicked world it reveals the wickedness thereof. It condemns the works of darkness. It tells anyone when they are doing something wrong. Then they who are children of the darkness hate us, mock us, deride us and kill us. It may cost us our job or our life. Therefore we are afraid. So we pull the shades.

This admonition is necessary also because of our sinful desire to join the world. We want to be in the world and of

it. We want their respect and honor. We want to enjoy the pleasures of the movie. We want to enjoy the luxuries of a union job . We want to enjoy the pleasures of sex. But to have this enjoyment with the world we have to pull the shades. We have to cover the light. If the enjoyment which we now have is ours because of our having hid our light, then we may be assured that such enjoyment will do us no good.

Therefore, let your light shine.

Light will shine and emit itself. It always does. The gleams of light always travel forth unless there is some interference. Light has to be placed under a bushel if it is to be concealed.

But is anything so foolish? Why would anyone light a candle if he is going to put it under a bushel? One only lights a candle so that it may give its light to all in the room.

The light of a believer will shine, if we let it. It can be covered by the vices of the old man of sin.

Therefore, let your light shine. Put off the old man with his works. Put on the new man. Walk in a godly conversation. Use every means within your power to let your light shine.

OUR SHINING AND GOD'S GLORY

by Rev. Wayne Bekkering

The theme of the Convention for this year is a very timely and important one. I like especially the last subdivision of that theme, namely "Our Shining and God's Glory" because I am glad to see our young people concerned with the all important idea of God's glory. The glory of God is ultimate, that is, it is the highest good and the goal of all things in heaven and earth.

Today men have lost sight of the fact that the glory of God is ultimate. That is

true not only of the world in general, but more particularly of the church of our day. Man, not God stands on the fore. Man-his well-being, his salvation, his glory—receives the emphasis. That is not good, because that leads us into all sorts of problems with respect to the direction of our lives as God's people. It is only when we see God as the glorious God that we can walk as shining lights.

God is in and of Himself glorious. The very idea of the word "glory" is

brightness or dazzling brilliance. God's Word tells us that God is light. God is spiritual light in His dazzling holiness. We know something of the light of God, for we see it reflected in the sun. We know how bright and powerful the sun is. If we continue to look into the brilliance of the sun we are blinded by the light. God's glory is infinitely greater than the glory of the sun, for the sun is only a creaturely reflection of the glory of God. God's glory shines in His purity, holiness, goodness, love, mercy, and grace.

That glory God reveals to us as His people. Through His Word God reveals Himself to us. In the face of His Son, Jesus Christ, we behold that God is indeed a glorious God. God is Truth and the glory of His truth shines out of every page of His Word. All of God's works are a revelation of His glory. John exalts "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. (Rev. 4:11). You see, all things are created exactly to one end, and that is that God may be glorified. The psalmist tells us that "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork." (Ps. 19:1). Not only in God's work of creation is His glory seen but also in the work of recreation. God saved us to glorify Himself. In Ephesians 1:5 and 6 we read, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

When we stand in the light of the glory of God, then we see our calling to shine. Only then can we be properly motivated to let our light shine. We were darkness but God made us light. Now, to the praise of the glory of His grace, we must walk in a way that is pleasing to Him. When God's glory shines upon us in Jesus Christ then we are motivated to

serve Him with thankfulness. To see God as the God of all glory is the only possibility of letting our light shine properly. Then we see God as God and we see ourselves as unworthy sinners. As unworthy sinners God has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light and as lights He calls us to shine. That is the end then of sloppy sentimentalism, shallow spiritualism, sham holiness and work righteousness, for we stand in awe before God and cry out with the apostle Paul "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever, Amen. (Rom. 11:36).

By God's grace we are light and light is made to shine. How does our light shine? By walking in good works. That is the idea of our text. God is glorified when we walk in good works before men. The question that then comes to our mind is "what are good works?" The Heidelberg Catechism in question and answer 91 gives us a very nice definition of good works. "Only those which proceed from a true faith, are performed according to the law of God, and to his glory; and not such as are founded on our imaginations, or the institutions of men." Notice the three positive elements of this definition of good works. First, they must proceed from a true faith. Secondly, they are performed according to the law of God and finally, they are to His glory.

Our text tells us that we are the light of the world and that we must let our light shine before men that they may see our good works. That presupposes that we have new hearts. Hearts that love God and desire to please Him. In those new hearts resides the gift of true faith. By God's grace we have been saved through the faith that God gives us. We have been made light. Further, good works are those that are performed according to the law of God. That means that in the attempt to be pleasing to God we must walk in the way of the law of God. We must be clear on that point! We cannot glorify God walking

contrary to His will. We cannot sin so that God may be glorified. God forbid! This means then that we must not only be concerned with an inner holiness, but also with an outer holiness, that is, walking according to the law of God. Sometimes I fear that we lay so much emphasis on the inner holiness of the new heart that we lose sight of our calling to manifest that new heart by walking according to the law of God. If we ever take the position that how we walk before men is not so important, but that the important thing is what is in our hearts, then we stand on dangerous ground. If we say that we must not expect to perform good works in this life because of all the evil influences of our sinful nature then we are dead wrong. We could reason that we have light in our hearts by the operation of God's grace, but that light cannot come to manifestation in this life because it is enclosed by the old man of sin. That is ridiculous! That is like saying that God gave us light and at the same time He gave us a bushel to cover our light so that it cannot be seen by man. Light is meant to shine! Our text makes that clear. "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel." That would be ridiculous, would it not? We must let our light shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. That is God's will for us. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." (Eph. 2:10).

Do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that the good desires of our regenerated hearts can come to manifestation without being corrupted and perverted by our evil nature. We have only a small beginning of the new obedience and we are only holy now in principle. But that principle beginning of holiness must be seen by men in our good works. Good works proceed from a true faith and it is

through the good fight of faith that they come to manifestation in our lives.

We have a calling of God to let our light shine before men, but that is not so easy to perform. We have many forces to overcome in order to perform good works. We have a desire of the heart to be acceptable before God, but we also have a desire of flesh to be acceptable before men. If we see a group standing around exchanging off-color stories we know that God requires that we flee such activity, but if one of the group invites us to join in then we want to be accepted by our peers. We want to be sensitive to spiritual things and yet we want to appear so worldly-wise with respect to the ways of sin. That is our pride. Do we want to know what good works God requires of us? "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8).

When we let our light shine before men the result is that God is glorified. God calls us to shine so that men may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven. Our text refers to men without distinguishing between the godly and the ungodly. That may bring before our mind the question how that is possible. Perhaps we can see how the saints will rejoice in our good works and glorify our Father in heaven. We can even see how that one of God's people who is walking in the way of sin and sees our good work can be smitten in his conscience and turn from his sin and glorify God. But how can it ever be that the ungodly, seeing our good works, will glorify God? Are we not told in the Word of God that we must expect reproach and persecution on account of our good works? Will not evil men hate us when we do good? The answer to these questions is, of course, "yes," but that takes nothing away from our calling to walk in good works before men. In I Peter 2:12 Peter writes, "Having your conversation honest

among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." Here also we have the assurance that through our good works even wicked men will glorify our heavenly Father. Even though that be in the day in which God will visit the earth in judgment.

In that day all men will stand before God without any excuse and acknowledge Him as the glorious One. God takes care of all that. Our calling is to be careful about our walk, to be sensitive to holiness. We who are children of light and have stood in the light of God's incomparable glory have a high calling to walk in thankfulness before Him. May God give us grace so to walk.

The following poem by Mr. Faber is a welcome addition to *Beacon Lights*. We encourage others to do the same.

CONVENTION REFLECTIONS

by Mr. John M. Faber

"This bit of verse came to my mind after I heard Rev. Slopsema's keynote address at the Convention. If you could find room for this contribution in an early Beacon Lights it might find a response in the hearts of your young readers."

Have you stopped to consider, on a cloudless night
the awesome beauty, yea, the clear silvery light
of the moon in the heavens — the sun's reflection,
how faithfully 'tis mirrored in copied perfection?

Tho thousands of suns each shed forth its own light,
our moon ne'ertheless, in her created right
reflect not those beams, but only rays of her sun
as a lesson above us from the Almighty One.

So to learn from our Lord's "Let your light so shine"
to be flawless reflection of His Light Divine;
then let us observe in creation's example
the sun and the moon — instruction quite ample.

And how can we as children our Father best please
but to ask for His grace, fallen down on our knees,
"That we may be found shining, Thow Most Holy One,
reflecting, as image-bearers, the Light of Thy Son."

CONVENTION REVIEW

by Cindy Bulter

The 36th annual P.R.Y.P. Convention began with registration on Monday evening, August 23. Conventioneers signed up for cabins at Camp Geneva and young people from out of town were given lodging at homes around the Grand Rapids area for the first night. The rest of the evening was spent meeting new young people and getting reacquainted at Park Lanes Bowling Alley, after which refreshments were served at Hope School gym.

Tuesday morning we met at South-west Church and piled the luggage in vans, cars, and several school buses. Upon arrival at Camp Geneva, we scattered in every direction to inspect the camp. It didn't take long before young people were swimming and playing volleyball. After devouring our lunch, we were shown how to serve our own meals and clean up. It sure was surprising to see how fast things could get finished!

Tuesday afternoon brought something quite unique. Three teams from the East competed in the most ridiculous games called "Anything Can Happen." Chickens were hopping, barrels were rolling, dust was flying, and much more. We all cooled off in the lake and pool and then met for a hamburger fry. After supper we quickly took a cold shower and then gathered for our convention picture. We walked to the chapel and heard our first speech by Rev. Slopsema entitled "Shining Lights." We had two special numbers; Mr. Arnold Dykstra sang a solo and Mary Pastoor and Sheryl Peters played a flute and piano duet. After the mass meeting we gathered around a bonfire and sang. The rest of the evening was spent in swimming, strolling around the camp, and watching the moon on Lake Michigan. To everyone's surprise we fell asleep quite easily.

Bright and early Wednesday morning we were dragged from our warm bunks to

breakfast. After the first hour most of us were wide awake, and we all met in the chapel to hear Rev. Veldman introduce our subject for discussion groups which was "Shining in Our Reading and Speaking." These discussions were followed by our first business meeting.

After lunch we gathered to see three teams from the West compete in "Anything Can Happen." Have you ever seen someone trying to run across a narrow bridge, fill a pail of water (the pail full of holes, of course), run up and down a ramp, and fill a bucket with any water that is left in the pail? Wait until you see some movies that were taken! After the workout, we once again had the rest of the afternoon to do what we wanted.

After our spaghetti supper, we got cleaned up and met at the chapel for an inspiring speech by Rev. Van Overloop on "The Calling to Shine." Four girls from South Holland sang a few songs and Barb Van Voorthuysen and Janine Jabaay played a flute duet. We spent the rest of Wednesday evening singing around the campfire, swimming, and other sports activities. Lights went out a little later, but we still all fell asleep.

Thursday morning a room full of droopy eyes ate eggs, toast, and cereal. Breakfast was followed by an introductory speech by Prof. H. Hanko. We then split into discussion groups and discussed "Shining in Our Choice of Vocation." We had another business meeting and then a delicious hot dog lunch.

Thursday afternoon the competition between the First/Southeast team and the Doon/Edgerton team started. A boat race, a water balloon relay, a huge obstacle course were a few of the games which determined the winner—First/Southeast!! The whole group of young people then moved down to the beach where ten

members from each cabin used their energy to participate in a tug-of-war. We got blisters on our hands and our clothing was covered with black sand. We sure hope Miss A. Lubbers got her white shorts and blouse cleaned after being dragged through the mu! The rest of the afternoon was spent swimming, playing softball, and starting to get cleaned up for the banquet.

It sure was nice to see everyone spruced up at 6:00 p.m. that evening. We had a delicious chicken and ham dinner, and best of all, we did not have to clean our tables! Jim and Jerry Vander Kolk played a beautiful piano and trumpet duet. We all walked to the chapel to hear our last speech of the convention. Rev. Bekkering spoke on "Our Shining and God's Glory." For our last special number a quartet of girls from Grand Rapids area sang several hymns. Our retiring president, Jon Bol, turned the floor over to Rick Noorman who presented the new

Federation Board members. A thank-you was given to those who had worked on the convention.

After we left the chapel, many of us changed back into our jeans or swimsuits. The lights had a hard time going out especially since it is rather hard to sleep with frogs jumping around your cabin! The chaperones finally convinced us to shut off our lights and it didn't take long to fall asleep.

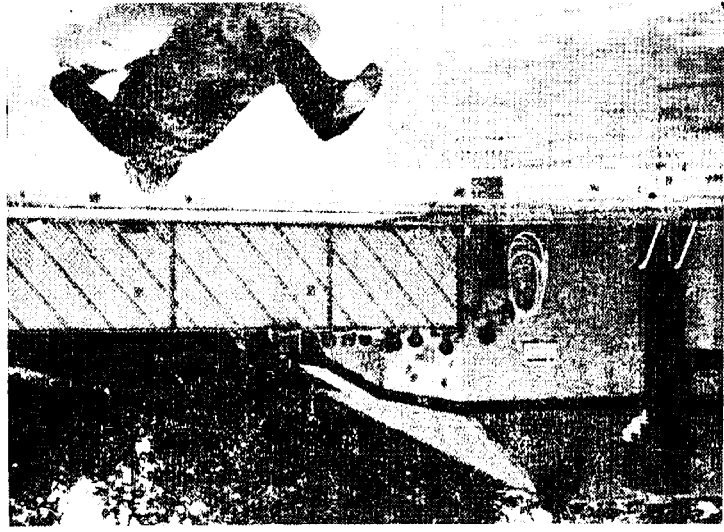
Friday morning we had a pancake breakfast and ended our convention by singing "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." Another convention was finished and we had to separate ourselves from old and new friends. But a special feeling was still left. We had a chance once again to share our beliefs, strengthen our faith, and especially to be reminded to "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."



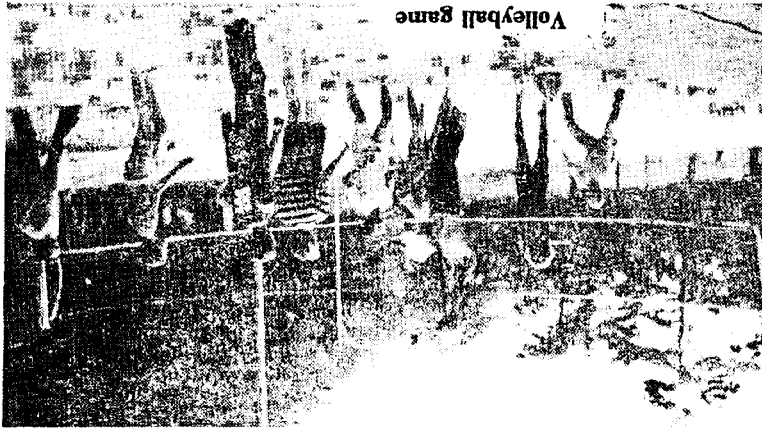
Chapel



Cleanest barrack - excluding the guys



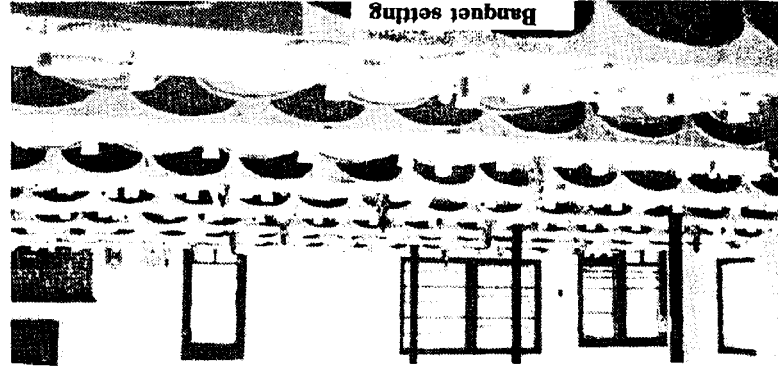
The pool splash in "Bankrobbery"



Volleyball game



The beef and the brains



Banquet setting



Mr. Convention in one of those wierd games

TO GRAND RAPIDS AREA RFPA MEMBERS:

YOU MISSED IT!!!

BUT DON'T MISS IT!!!

17 didn't miss it but 25 were needed for a legal meeting of the Reformed Free Publishing Association. The meeting was September 23 but was called off because of a lack of people. Lack of people interested in hearing about mission work, the calling of the church.

WHY??? APATHY? SIGN OF THE TIMES FOR OUR CHURCHES? No interest in the *Standard Bearer*? No interest on What it does on the mission field?

The meeting is rescheduled for Thursday October 14 at 8:00 at Southwest Church. Come and hear Rev. Hanko speak on "The *Standard Bearer* on the mission field". New members are welcome.

This announcement made for the RFPA by Jim V.O.

Feature

WORKERS AT HOME

by Phil Dykstra

Phil is a member of our Hudsonville Church.

"That aged women likewise be reverent in demeanor, not slanderers nor enslaved to much wine, teachers of that which is good; that they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sober-minded, chaste, workers at home, kind, being in subjection to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

The above text is found in Titus 2:3-5. This is the Word of God to the Church in Paul's day, as well as it is the Word of God to the Church in our day. This article

will be especially focused on the duty of mothers, aged mothers as well as young mothers; mothers in Israel. Maybe we should emphasize the truth that the Word of God is for the Church. The Word is given to us by God in His love and grace. The Gospel, you know, is particular as to its promise and content. A Gospel for all is a Gospel for none. We, as believers in Christ, must not expect this part of Scripture to be heeded by the world. Obedience to these exhortations from Titus is only possible through the sanctified work of the Spirit in our hearts and lives.

Workers at home, this is what the

Word of God says, or stronger still, what the Word of God commands. Is this true of you, older women and younger women? It should be. Many are the excuses and reasons given by our mothers as to why they are working out of the home, and thus disobeying this exhortation found in Titus. Probably the most pious excuse is, "If I didn't go out of the home and get a job, we would not be able to pay our school tuition." How often haven't we heard this reason for our mothers in Israel out working? Must we be reminded that God is not mocked? When God declares that mothers be keepers at home, God means just exactly that! One mother gave that very reason for herself getting a job. But, yet, after several months of working this same mother made this comment, "I'll just work a few more hours a week; then we can take that vacation we have all been looking forward to." We need not even comment on this type of reasoning. It's as clear as the nose on our face.

There are cases, isolated cases, I think, where it might well be that if the mother didn't go out of the home and get a job, that the tuition would not be met. What does God say about such a circumstance? Keepers at home, period. If such is the circumstance, let us use the Biblical method of solving such a problem, and not resort to sinful ways by taking the mother out of the home. Is not the Body of Christ to be knit together in love and always ready to help one another? Where is the help of the Church? If we see a brother in need, do we let him or her sin? By no means, we have to help that brother or sister in the Lord. The Church administers the mercies of Christ through the office of the Deacon. It is surely the Church's duty to see that the children of the covenant are instructed in our Christian schools, and not to let our mothers go out to work for that cause.

Other mothers will say, "I see nothing wrong with getting a job if all the children are in school," or better yet, "all

married and out of the house." Do we read that in Titus? No, God says, "keepers at home." Remember aged mothers, you are to train the younger women to be keepers at home. Can you do this if you are out of the home, working? You certainly know the answer to that yourself. Aged mothers need not say, "I can find nothing to do now that my children are out of the house." From God's Word we know that there are many very good and profitable things to do. What are some of the Scriptural things for you to do? Read I Timothy 5:10. Are there not the afflicted ones in your congregation who would delight in your visits? A day would be made full if you would faithfully visit the saints who are in need, or make a meal for those who could use it, or make a shirt or sew some article of clothing for those who are poor in the things of this earth. Remember, train the younger women also to love their husbands and children and to be keepers at home. Why? Because God says exactly that in His Word.

Younger women or mothers, what is your calling? To learn from the aged women to love your husbands and your children and to be keepers at home. Also to bear children and to instruct them in the fear of the Lord. This is what our God delights in, for this is His Word. Obey His Word, and you will also find joy in this work, for this work of motherhood is full time work. Remember, you are a mother in Israel.

We live in a day when a greater percentage of our mothers work out of the home. This should not be! Let all of our mothers return to the old paths of being "keepers at home," for this is where the Lord's blessing rests. It is a matter of principle. We must walk in the way of godliness and sanctification, and may we all hear the words of Christ say of us, "Greater joy have I none than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth. Ill John:4."

NEWS From, For, and About Our Churches

by Karla Kalsbeek

FROM OUR HULL CHURCH:

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. George Hoekstra Jr. were received from our Hudsonville Church.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. David Hoekstra were received from the Christian Reformed Church.

Mr. Jay De Wit's membership papers were also received from the Christian Reformed Church.

FROM OUR HOLLAND CHURCH:

Mr. & Mrs. B. Overway were blessed with the birth of a daughter.

At their request the membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Robert Hoving with six baptized children were sent to our Loveland Church.

FROM OUR SOUTH HOLLAND CHURCH:

At her request, Ruth Woudenberg's membership papers were sent to her home.

Mr. Howard Hoekstra and Miss Karen Zandstra were united in marriage on July 16.

Mr. Howard Brands and Miss Carol DeJong were married on July 14.

FROM OUR SOUTHEAST CHURCH:

The membership papers of the Peter Hoekstra family were transferred to our Hudsonville Church.

Dr. & Mrs. James Elderveld rejoice in the birth of a son, born August 1.

Mr. & Mrs. Bern Wigger were blessed with the birth of a son, born August 3.

FROM OUR EDGERTON CHURCH:

The membership papers of Miss Beverly Hoekstra were received from our Doon Church.

Mr. & Mrs. Peter Brummel were blessed with the birth of a daughter July 16.

FROM OUR FAITH CHURCH:

The Pre-convention singspiration was held August 22 at First Church.

Mr. Michael Kooienga and Miss Crystal Westra were united in marriage on September 3.

Mr. & Mrs. Jim Van Overloop were blessed with a son July 23.

Mr. & Mrs. David Ondersma were blessed with a daughter September 14.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Peter Vander Schaaf were received from our Holland Church. They also rejoice in the birth of a daughter on September 6.

FROM OUR REDLANDS CHURCH:

Mr. & Mrs. Kory Koot received of the Lord a daughter, Jamie Lynn, on June 15.

Mr. & Mrs. David DeJong received of the Lord a daughter, Kimberly Dawn, on July 24.

Mr. & Mrs. Jerry Ussery received of the Lord a daughter, Tahni Lynn, on July 28.

The public confession of faith of Nancy Van Meeteren took place on August 15.

JOHN ZANDSTRA, JR.
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