

# BEACON LIGHTS

*for*

**PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH**

March 1967

*A Greater Challenge*

*Not Here - But Risen*

*Open Forum*

*Letters From Our Servicemen*



# BEACON LIGHTS

FOR PROTESTANT REFORMED YOUTH

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# A GREATER CHALLENGE

JUDY LUBBERS

*While attending Unity Christian High School in Hudsonville, Mich., Miss Lubbers won first prize for writing this essay in a contest sponsored by the National Union of Christian Schools. Judy is presently a freshman at Calvin College.*

The challenge of Christian teaching—I wondered—what could this vague but impressive phrase mean and to what did it refer. My thoughts slowly drifted back into the past.

I remembered the face of a classmate, filled with defeat and despair. Her teacher had concluded a conference with her with the ego-shattering words, "If that's the way you feel, then I don't want you in my class any more."

And I remembered another face, one shining with confidence and reassurance. This classmate had been given a pat on the back by his teacher and had been told, "You sure did a good job Friday night. Perhaps it didn't get much special attention, but I really appreciated it."

After I had thought of these two separate incidents, I understood the challenge of Christian teaching. I realized that those two remarks made by two different teachers would never be forgotten. I also realized that each teacher has the opportunity to contribute something meaningful to the life of each student.

Teachers lay the foundations for tomorrow's generation. Their words and actions today shape the character and personality of tomorrow's society. They have the challenge to establish attitudes in the student with which he can meet the problems he will have to face. They have the challenge to develop a Christian character with which the student can meet the demands of the world. Each teacher helps a student develop mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually.

A student is very much like a bud on a young plant. It has, locked within itself, the potential to slowly open up and become a beautiful blossom. But before this can

happen, the plant must be given enough water and the proper amount of sunshine. If, however, the plant is not given enough of the elements necessary for life, the bud will either die or never become fully developed. But until this bud blossoms forth, no one can tell just what color or kind of flower will emerge.

Each student has been blessed with some special talent or ability which also has the potential to fully develop. It is the duty of each teacher to discover this talent and provide the proper instruction for his development. He must guide the student toward ideals and achievement. When a student is deprived of that which is necessary, his abilities will never be brought out or will remain half-hidden for life.

Students must receive from their education knowledge which will make them able to gain a living and satisfactorily meet life. They must be taught the correct attitudes toward self, others, and the world.

But above all, they must be taught that there are higher goals to strive for other than good marks or social prestige. The final purpose of Christian education is to guide and direct students so that they will learn to appreciate the duties and responsibilities of a Christian. Teachers must instruct students so that they will be prepared for a life which is lived to the glory of God.

This is the challenge of Christian teaching. With the present shortage of teachers, this challenge becomes continually greater. It speaks so loudly that it cannot and must not be ignored. It speaks so loudly that no one can fail to hear it. Today there are many hundreds of children and teenagers who want someone to teach them, someone who understands and cares. What greater challenge is there?



# CRITIQUE

AGATHA LUBBERS

## PROTESTANT REFORMED CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTION (VI)

### V. The Pupil

Many terms have been used in the past to describe education and many different concepts continue to be propounded. Such concepts as subject-matter-centered, pupil-centered, and life-centered have all been and continue to be part of the jargon of the professional educator. The basic thrust of this series of articles, however, has been to emphasize that Protestant Reformed Christian Instruction must be Theologically or God-centered.

We believe concerning the child that he is born and conceived in sin. He is depraved, and deprived of all his excellent gifts even in things natural and has only a few remains thereof.

"Man was originally formed after the image of God. His understanding was adorned with a true and saving knowledge of his Creator, and of spiritual things; his heart and will were upright; all his affections pure; and the whole man was holy; but revolting from God by instigation of the devil, and abusing the freedom of his own will, he forfeited these excellent gifts; . . ."

"Man after the fall begat children in his own likeness. A corrupt stock produced a corrupt offspring. Hence all the posterity of Adam, Christ only excepted, have derived corruption from their original parent, not by imitation, as the Pelagians of old asserted, but by the propagation of a vicious nature."

"Therefore all men are conceived in sin, and by nature children of wrath, incapable of saving good, prone to evil, dead in sin, and in bondage thereto, and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, they are neither able nor willing to return to God, to reform the depravity of their nature, nor to dispose themselves to reformation."

Canons of Dordrecht, Chapter 3 and 4, Articles 1, 2, 3.

This is the bias of every teacher who teaches covenant seed in the Protestant Reformed Christian School. Protestant Reformed Christian Instruction is committed to the scriptural and confessional truth that the child is conceived and born in sin, that he is a child of wrath by nature and is wholly incapable of doing any good.

We believe concerning the child that there are remnants of natural light still remaining in him since the fall. These are not remnants of original goodness. There is no good in man. (Cf. Heidelberg Catechism, Question and Answer 5.) He is totally depraved. Common grace theorists would maintain and propose that there still remain in man remnants of original goodness otherwise he would have become like an animal. (In many ways he has become worse than an animal because he has fallen from such a high state to such depths of depravity. Witness the base sins of man.)

Man remains man. He is a moral, rational creature. He has faculties of intellect, of will. He retains the power to think and to reason. All these abilities have been impaired since the fall but he is still capable of many inventions and discoveries.

"But man by the fall did not cease to be a creature, endowed with understanding and will, nor did sin which pervaded the whole race of mankind, deprive him of the human nature, but brought upon him depravity and spiritual death; . . ."

Canons of Dordrecht, Chapters 3 and 4, Art. 16.

Because he did not cease to be a man he thereby retains his inexcusableness; when he sins he does so willfully holding down

the truth of God in unrighteousness. (Cf. Romans 1.)

It is also not true as Dr. Van Til wrote that "The God the philosophers were seeking for and never found is given to us by Grace through his Word and Spirit." The God that the philosophers sought does not nor ever did exist. It is true that they are doing that which is only natural for man to do but they never seek after a God who reveals himself in Christ Jesus. They have no place for such a God because they will not recognize the great Fall of man from a state of original perfection to a state of total depravity. They have no place for redemption and a Creator-Creature relationship which is rooted in salvation.

He has only a small remnant of the natural light which he had in the beginning. The Canons of Dordt speak of the small remnants of natural light as "glimmerings." In the beginning in the state of perfection man stood in perfect communion with God and could read in all of creation the great works of God. He had such super vision and such an understanding that he could rightly name all the creatures on earth. He was the King of all things, a perfect King under God. He had not become a rebel and has not attempted to usurp the position of God.

He retained after the Fall sufficient natural light so that "he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, of the differences between good and evil, and discovers some regard for virtue, good order in society, and for maintaining an orderly external deportment." Canons of Dordt, Chapters 3 and 4, Art. 4.

Even in the knowledge which he has retained he cannot use it aright. Even in things natural and civil he wholly pollutes his way and becomes completely inexcusable before God. (Cf. Canons of Dordt, Chapter III and IV, Article 4.)

Professor H. C. Hoeksema, in a seminar paper, "The Affect of Sin on the Person," proposes the following:

"The fact of sin makes all true education, in so far as it aims at the inculcation of the knowledge of God and only the knowledge of all things in relation to the knowledge of God, in Christ Jesus, absolutely impossible apart from grace. From a spiritual, ethical point of view there is no receptivity in the pupil as he is by nature for such knowledge. True

knowledge the natural man can never attain. The lie he will ever follow.

". . . The ills of the pupil cannot be overcome by natural devices, such as the employment and application of the laws of memory and laws of attention, etc., but fundamentally only by the power of grace. And if the former are not used in the sphere of grace, their use is ultimately hopeless."

It becomes evident that there is absolutely no use to teach in the hope of improving the child by means of education outside the sphere of grace. The whole Enlightenment theory and movement is basically a belief in the perfectability of man by means of education and a belief in the ultimacy of reason. We must be very careful in our own instructional programs that we do not become addicted to this pernicious philosophy. Nothing that we do in the classroom will amount to anything unless it be accompanied by the work of grace. This is Reformed, this is Protestant Reformed.

It also becomes evident that the approach of Protestant Reformed Christian instruction toward the student must be one which recognizes him as a sinner. (This by the way is not simply a problem in semantics.) A sinner is one who misses the mark. He is one who does not just shoot for the mark but has poor aim but is one who in his whole being and basic attitude is pointed in exactly the opposite direction. He refuses to shoot for the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. He cannot shoot for the mark, for he is by nature a rebel. He revolts against the living God and against the truth of God as it is revealed in Christ Jesus.

Secular theorists speak of education as an adjusting process. Some "Christian" educators speak of Christian education as a redemptive process. Neither of these will do. Christian education is adjustment or redemptive. The teacher does not stand as an aid to the Holy Spirit. Rev. G. Vanden Berg writes in a seminar paper entitled, "The Effect of Grace and the Operation of the Spirit Upon the Person":

"Instead of viewing that task (teaching, a. 1.) as one in which he is virtually required to perform the work of God of transforming the child, he (the teacher, al.) will regard the educational process as a means of God through which he furthers that work which He, in his grace has begun."

The teacher is an agent. He is one who

stands clothed with authority. He is one who must instruct in the basic truths of the Scriptures. Through the revealed Word of God he reads the works of God in the whole creation. He cannot, however, in any sense of the word be considered an agent whereby the work of grace is made effectual. His calling is simply to instruct those who come under his care as members of the family of God. His calling is to instruct assuming regeneration. His calling is to instruct so that the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto every good work.

There are always those who receive the same instruction who are not regenerated by the Spirit of grace. Teachers do not like to think of this. They do not like to think that there are those sitting in every classroom who are anti-Christ, enemies of God, part of the seed of the Serpent. Because they receive the same instruction they are assuredly inexcusable.

In all instruction, therefore, the task of teacher with respect to the student is one in which he furthers the work which God in His grace has once begun.

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## OPEN FORUM

### CONCLUSION

Since the topic of "Should Young People's meetings be held on Sunday or on a week-day?" was introduced several months ago, there have been a few interesting responses. Both sides of the matter have been argued well, and the time has come to conclude this question. But how? I cannot do it, because this is a matter of opinion, and my opinion is worth no more than anyone else's. An absolute conclusion cannot be reached. About the only thing I can do is give my opinion and let the reader agree or disagree.

I feel that society should be held on a week-night. There are good arguments for having it on Sunday, such as the question of what else would we do on Sunday afternoon, but the reasons for holding it on another day are stronger. I, too, feel that packing as much as possible in on Sunday would tend to make us "Sunday Christians;" we have church twice, sometimes a singspiration at night, and that is enough. If we have choir practice on one night and catechism on another, there are still four days left. Exclude Saturday and Friday nights and we still have two days! We should be able to spare at least one night a week for Christian fellowship with other young people.

What about our homework? We seem to be able to get it finished if there is choir practice or a Tuesday night basketball game; why could not we do the same for Young People's? What would we do on Sunday afternoon? Listen to the Reformed Witness

Hour; study our catechism; prepare for Young People's so it won't have to be done when we are so busy during the week.

Although there are problems connected with holding society on a day other than the Sabbath, I still say, "It would be better to hold it on a week-night!"

### A NEW TOPIC

There were probably no more than one hundred people at the Beacon Lights Sing-spiration held February 12 at Southeast Church. One hundred people. Not a very good representation of all our young people who could have been there. Why were no more present? It seems that in other churches in this area such hymn-sings are met with enthusiasm and sizeable crowds. Why is this not true of our song services? Was the publicity inadequate? Were the special numbers of inferior quality? Was the choice of songs poor? Or could it be that there is just no interest in a singspiration?

These singspirations are planned for people of all ages, but especially for the young people. Our young people must have a good reason for their absence. Let's have a few more opinions expressed than we did on the last topic. I ask again, "What is the matter with our singspirations?"

M.H.

### SABBATH LABOR — IS IT PROPER?

"Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work. But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work. . . ." Familiar words, aren't

they? Then isn't it strange that we so frequently forget and disobey them?

Doctors, nurses, and policemen, all these are very necessary for human well-being and safety. The maintenance of life and law are essential characteristics of a cultured society. There is a job of devotion to the safe-keeping of God's people if they be Christians.

Does your profession or occupation requiring Sabbath labor fall within these categories? If so there can, humanly speaking, be found justifiable reasons for your having chosen it and your participation in it. You are performing duties necessary to the aid of the human as a living being.

If not, then perhaps you should stop and

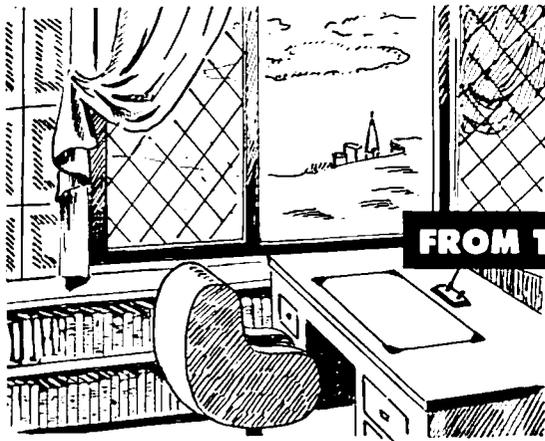
re-examine your possible mis-use of the Sabbath. We are under the obligation to God to keep the Sabbath as He directs. This certainly doesn't include those activities performed for personal or financial gain. Maybe it is time that many of us attempt to evaluate and justify our activities. If we cannot, then the obvious solution is the elimination of such activities.

Christ allows for such non-church activities as emergencies, but would not condone many of the activities performed on the Sabbath by many of our church members.

Any opinions, whether contrary or in agreement, would be appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

RUTH NOORDYKE



## FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. VAN BAREN

### NOT HERE — BUT RISEN

"And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." Luke 24:5-6.

Many things appeared very confused that morning of the resurrection of Christ from the grave. The story of the guards was already being spread. They had testified, having been paid for repeating a false story, that while they slept the disciples had stolen the body of Jesus. They did not tell the people how frightened they had been at the earthquake that early morning nor their reaction to the appearance of angels.

The women who had followed Christ in much of His ministry also had their own plans for this early morning. Because the

Sabbath had been nigh at hand, the women were unable to care for the body of Christ properly after it was taken from the cross. Now, early on this first day of the week, these women were on their way to the tomb to complete their final task of love: preparing the body of Christ properly for burial. To these women the angels at the tomb speak, "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." What few words can beautifully emphasize such profound truths!

"He is not here!" The women and the disciples had to learn that. They had seen in the Christ all of their hope. They were convinced that He was truthfully that promised Messiah for which Israel looked. His words and His works confirmed this conviction.

But their hopes had been dashed to pieces the past Friday. That horrible cross appeared to be the final end. The grave was the seal upon His death. His followers saw nothing beyond that grave. In that attitude the women had also come that Sunday morning. They came to see the last remains of one dear to them. They came to anoint His body for burial. They came to weep at this separation which had taken place.

In a certain way, this conviction that the grave is the end can be seen in the celebration of Easter or "resurrection" by the world. The world in this season will commemorate the "resurrection" by donning its Easter finery and by looking for the "new life" which begins to appear in this spring-time. But of a literal resurrection of the promised Messiah from the dead, the world will have nothing. This truth it will scorn.

The question of the angels points up the foolishness of the women in coming now to the tomb. Why do they seek the living among the dead? Christ is the Living Son of God, the second Person of the Trinity. In that sense, He lives forever. No man can kill God. But the question of the angels points also to the truth that the Christ in His human body is living. The women should have known that. They knew the words of prophecy. They had heard the words of Christ Who instructed them. Yes, He must die. This was essential for the very salvation and glorification of His people. One must bear the wrath of God for our sins — and endure that until this wrath was "burned out." The full justice of God must be satisfied. Of this both the prophets and Christ had spoken.

But Christ had also told them more. The third day He must rise again as Victor over sin and death — and the grave. The women (and all the disciples) ought to have remembered His words. They ought not to have been looking for their Savior in the place of the dead. They who confessed that Christ was the promised Messiah ought to have been waiting for the resurrected Christ to manifest Himself to them. But in their foolishness and ignorance they go to the tomb in tears.

The angels answer the women. "He is not here." That was an obvious fact, for the grave was empty — except for the grave clothing which had not been disturbed. The

women were painfully aware of the fact that He was not there. Does the obvious have to be emphasized?

But this is a significant fact. First, the empty grave with its grave clothing is mute testimony of the falsity of the story of the guards. His body could not have been stolen.

Christ is not here — because He is risen from the dead. Don't you see that, women? The tomb is empty. The body was definitely not stolen. There is then only one answer: He is risen from the dead and has the victory over sin and the grave. Christ had assumed our sins. If guilt were not removed through His sacrifice, He would remain in the tomb. But the fact that He is not here is proof that His was the victory. Sin and its guilt are taken away.

But even more. That He is not here points to the truth that Christ is no longer of the earth earthly. Lazarus and others were also raised from the dead. They came back to this earth and for a time enjoyed their former relationships — until once more they died. Christ did not so arise. He did not come forth in order to live again on this earth with His disciples. His resurrection is through death and the grave — a resurrection into the heavenly.

Christ had completed His work. Obedient He was even unto death. He had paid for the sins of His people and had merited for them eternal life and glory. And He Himself is first partaker of that heavenly life. No, He is not here — not on this earth with that old flesh and blood again. He is victorious — and therefore now possesses that body which is fit to inhabit the kingdom of heaven. The women too must not look anymore for those old relationships to be restored. He will continue to be with His people — but now through His Comforter Who dwells in their hearts.

Christ is risen even as He had said. God raised Him from the dead; but also, Christ Himself arose from the dead. It is this which the women — and we — must see. They must not look anymore for an earthly king who would reign in Jerusalem. They must now look for the King of kings Who shall ascend into heaven and reign at the right hand of God over all creation. This was the fulfillment of God's promise. The women then ought to be filled with joy. They came to mourn One whom they deeply loved. Now they must rejoice in this mes-

sage of His complete victory. Not only is the Christ raised from the tomb, but they, through His work, are also raised from the dead and given newness of life. Theirs is also the victory through Christ. Then they must rejoice.

We also rejoice in the fact of the resurrection of our Savior in this season. Beware lest we join the world in its godless celebrations! We do have reason for joy: first,

because through the resurrected Christ we are regenerated; the new life of Christ is ours. Secondly, we shall also live in heaven itself — for He shall take us to be where He is. We long for that heavenly dwelling-place. And we are absolutely certain we shall enter there on the basis of His completed work of redemption. Why, then, should we ever seek the living among the dead?

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## LETTERS FROM OUR SERVICEMEN



Dear Editor,

I am writing in regard to the section entitled "Feature" in our *Beacon Lights*, written by Don Jonker. (*Beacon Lights*, November, 1966. Ed.)

I felt this Convention Survey was well written and most interesting to read. Because by this report, others who read the article could get an idea of what other Young People in our churches think of our Protestant Reformed Churches and Schools. And too, concerning church attendance, when 19 considered their attendance good, one fair, and one poor.

When I read the part where the article speaks of school attendance, I was rather astonished to read that only eleven out of twenty would benefit from going to a Protestant Reformed High School. I didn't really know what to think of that, for it seems to me that only half of them thought very highly of our schools, and the others didn't seem to care. This is too bad, for it shows that the attitude of some people

toward our churches and schools is really alarming.

It also struck me what some think of our Church's reading material, for it seems to me that most young people don't think too highly of our denominational literature, such as the *Standard Bearer* and *Beacon Lights*. It also seems to me that reading material such as certain novels isn't bad at all. But as to more worthwhile material, I feel the *Standard Bearer* and *Beacon Lights* should be read more on Sunday, but is also very worthwhile reading on any day of the week.

I was happy to read that the majority thought that the Convention's purpose was for spiritual edification of Christian fellowship. This is a good sign, and shows that most young people feel we need a Convention of this type to make closer friends with others from our other churches, but above all to study and talk about the things of the Kingdom of Heaven, which we strive for most of all.

I feel that a sincere Christian must avoid a job which would have him work on the Sabbath day, and this is simply because of all the job opportunities there are today. I feel there is no need to work on the Sabbath day. It would also be against the great commandment of God, for in Exodus 20:8-11 we read that we must keep the Sabbath day holy, and in six days we must labor and do all our work. And according to Exodus 31:14, he that breaks the Sabbath will be punished, for his soul shall be cut off from the people of God. That is why the children of Israel had to keep the Sabbath throughout their generations. It is the day of the Lord, and we must use it to one end, and that is to serve the Lord in all that we do.

I enjoyed the Survey very much, and am wondering what other Servicemen from our churches feel about it, especially those that missed the Convention, as I did, because of being in the Armed Forces at the time. It would be interesting to hear what others in the Military Service feel about this article if they get the *Beacon Lights* and read it, because they are also away from their homes and church life.

Yours in Christ,

Sp./4 ROGER A. KAMPHUIS

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## BOOK REVIEWS

### Son of Tears

by HENRY CORAY. Published by William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 316 pages. Paperback price \$1.95.

Rev. Mr. Coray, an author of several other books, is a pastor in Orthodox Presbyterian Church in California. He was educated at Wheaton College, Westminster Seminary, and Princeton Theological Seminary. His life has been dedicated to the work of the Lord, and especially, the writing of Christian novels for the youth of today's world.

This novel centers around the life of Saint Augustine. Augustine's mother, Monica, definitely did bare a "son of tears," for his youth would have caused any Christian mother to weep bitterly. Monica wept when Augustine went to school in Carthage, and wept bitterly when he returned a Manichean student and teacher. More tears flowed when she discovered that Augustine had a mistress, Melanie, and had born him one son. But great was her rejoicing when she heard that he had repented of sins of youth, and now became a church leader of the first order. Her son of tears became a son of righteousness.

Although this novel is fictionalized biography, it is well documented from the Confessions of Saint Augustine, his City of God, and The Sermons of Saint Augustine, not only, but from the various histories of the Early Christian Church. Each chapter heading is a direct quotation from The Confessions, and the idea contained therein is expounded in the chapter.

Young people, this book should be in

your personal library because, first of all, it is Christian; secondly, it is good literature in that it presents life realistically, that is, by the way of sin and grace — Augustine repented of his sins by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Finally, as an introduction to the study of the Early Christian Church, this book is excellent. Books of this scope and quality are hard to find. D.H.

### Faith on Trial

by D. MARTYN LLOYD-JONES. Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan. 125 pages. Price \$2.95.

Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones is the preacher at the Westminster Chapel in London. He is the author of several books which include: *The Basis of Christian Unity*; *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount*; *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cures*; and *The Plight of Man and the Power of God*.

This book is collection of sermons on Psalm 73. In the Preface M. Lloyd-Jones states the problem and its resolution as follows:

*The 73rd Psalm deals with a problem that has often perplexed and discouraged God's people. It is a double problem — Why should the godly frequently have to suffer, especially in view of the fact that the ungodly frequently appear to be most prosperous?*

*It is a classic statement of the Bible's way of dealing with that problem. The Psalmist relates his own experience, exposes his soul to our gaze in a most dramatic manner, and leads us step by step from near-despair to final triumph and assurance. It is at the same time a grand theodicy. For these reasons it has always appealed to preachers and spiritual guides and counsellors. . . .*

Throughout the book he presents this great Psalm lucidly and simply. Even you young people can understand this book. For he writes in the second chapter, "Getting A Faith-Hold":

*Let us get our absolutes fixed, let us get certain things established irrevocably. Young people — although it does not apply to you more than to anybody else, yet while you are young and are not guilty in these things — put down your absolutes. If you cannot be helpful, say nothing. Never do God's cause or your spiritual family any harm. page 30.*

Also in chapter three "Facing All The

Facts" Mr. Lloyd-Jones addresses himself to young people as follows:

The end of one is destruction, of the other, life. The trouble in life today is that people look only at the beginning. Their view of life is what we may call the cinema or film-star view of life. It always attracts, and all those who live that life are apparently having a marvelous time. Alas that so many young people are brought up to think that that is life, and that always to live like that must be supreme happiness. page 51.

These are just two examples from a book that is filled with similar passages. From these you can readily see that Lloyd-Jones is not a vague, verbose, or confusing writer; he is the opposite. And he has his absolutes clearly spelled out for you.

Without a doubt, young people, you may add this book to your personal library.

D.H.

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## CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

Prayer, true prayer is our means of expression to God, by which we can show our gratitude to him for sending his son Jesus Christ. Likewise, through prayer we show our sorrow to Him for our sins. We, as the redeemed, come before God in humbleness, humble in the presence of a father who is everything while we are nothing in ourselves. Prayer is beautiful. We do not pray to God out of fear but out of love, both because we want to and because we have to.

What bothers me is the approach of the intellectuals and others who are leaving the "King's English" (Thee, Thou, Thy, etc. . . ) and converting to the current you and your. I find with this change there is also a use of mod expressions in prayers such as "Lord, make us come alive" and "Lord, please

give us a kick in the pants," both of them referring to a student's duty to God and his studies.

When listening to prayers like that, I feel as if I was talking to a doctor and asking him for a shot of thyroxine, or asking the grocer for a bottle of Pepsi. In using such common everyday language, prayer is depicted as if one person is talking to another on an even level, while we are really approaching a great and majestic God, whom we of ourselves have no right to approach. Tradition has made the words Thee and Thou sacred and respected and I feel this also applies to our addressing of God. Therefore let us come before God in humbleness and not in the pride of our own strength.

DON JONKER

### SPECIAL THANKS

The Federation Board of The Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies and the Staff of Beacon Lights wish to express our thanks and appreciation to Mr. Henry W. Kuiper for his arduous, faithful, and diligent labor as Associate Editor of Beacon Lights. God's blessing to you, Mr. Kuiper, and we thank the Lord for the work you have done.

## WHAT ABOUT THE FUTURE?

"It's your fault and the fault of other people about your age and a little older!"

A young man about 21 years old was speaking.

"We inherited this mess from you and others like you."

This young man was a Christian, a Baptist.

"Look at the conditions this world's in! Now we have to take over and make something out of it!"

He said this with a bit of bitterness and anger as he looked me straight in the eye. I couldn't help admiring him, he was a fine looking young man, he stood erect, had black hair, was of medium height, rather solidly built, clean and neat appearing, almost always had a smile on his face and his most admirable characteristic was his frankness, let the chips fall where they may. To top it all off, what he spoke was the truth. I felt a little uneasy, although I knew that I personally wasn't responsible for the mess that the country is in today. I sort of gulped as I swallowed hard to defend myself.

"Now see here," I said, "I want you to know that in the past 24 years, I have voted consistently in presidential elections and only one man that I voted for got in office. President Eisenhower, every other man I voted for was defeated, and even Eisenhower I considered the lesser of two evils. Can I help it if all the presidents believed in the socialistic way of life?"

We were discussing the deterioration of present day America, sort of a father to son talk, and I must admit I couldn't say much in favor of the older people. Inflation, race riots, war, loss of freedom, decay of morals, the draft, sit-ins, unionism, modernism in the church, the mounting of the public debt, the constant increase in taxes, the increasing interference of the state in the personal life of its citizens, etc., etc., had all been under discussion. Now he was telling me that if you older people had been on your toes, we young people would have had something to look forward to, that is a much better life, but now we have to correct all of the evils in present day

America and what promise does the future hold for us? It doesn't look very encouraging. He believed that as a Baptist, he could get behind such men as Rev. Carl Mc Intyre and straighten things out. What do Protestant Reformed young men believe? What does the future hold for them? Better still, what do Prot. Reformed young people believe, both young men and women?

I know of no other young people in the world today who, if they understand our doctrines and have the spiritual vision they are better prepared to meet the future. I say this because I believe God gave us a prophet in the person of Rev. Herman Hoeksema who walked with us and led us for over forty years. I say this because forty years of history have proved the Protestant Reformed teachings to be scriptural and sound. I say this because we have a glorious past and a most promising future. I say this because I see church after church go apostate and die while we remain true to our calling. I say this because in our practical life marriage is still held sacred, membership in unions is forbidden, supervision of the Lord's table is maintained, discipline is exercised, and the poor are cared for. I say this because person for person, Protestant Reformed people give five to six times as much as the average church member, and the department of Internal Revenue can hardly believe the proof they are furnished with when they question deductions. I say this because those that left us admit that they are starving for the Word of God while we are satisfied. Not only that, but God's blueprint for the future, the book of Revelation, has been correctly interpreted for us, and we see its gradual fulfillment. How fortunate Protestant Reformed young people are! God has indeed blessed us and worked through us to bring glory to his name. Let all young Protestant Reformed people be thankful and never be ashamed of being Protestant Reformed.

A short time ago, I saw my Baptist friend. He was departing for the army. We shook hands and I wished him good luck.

"Good luck!," he said, "Don't wish me good luck, wish me God's blessing!" I felt

sort of silly, once again he was right. He smiled as though he had not a care in the world and walked away. I don't know when I'll see him again, or if I'll ever see him.

How about you? You have a greater blessing than he ever had. Do you appreciate it? Do you?

VERNON GRAESER

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## HELPS FOR BIBLE STUDY ON THE

REV. J. HEYS

### JAMES 3

# Epistle of JAMES

## 1. The Sin of Being Many Teachers. Verses 1-5a.

a. The word is teachers rather than masters.

(1) It takes up the thought of chapter 1:19 and 26.

(a) James has already treated the matter of being swift to hear.

(b) Now he treats the matter of being slow to speak and that, if a man does not bridle his tongue, his religion is vain.

(2) The word not belongs with the word many and not with the word teachers.

(a) James is not condemning the teaching profession and certainly is not trying to discourage entrance into the ministry, which is the highest form of teaching and the most noble. He does not say, "Be not teachers," but rather, "Be not many teachers." Discuss the difference.

(b) He warns therefore against becoming a teacher for ulterior reasons and of assuming the position of teacher as an opinionated, ill-prepared critic.

1) James is speaking of being teachers in the church and thus of teaching the doctrines of Scripture and of the way of righteousness.

2) He warns against rushing into the church to express one's own opinion, to condemn a view presented, quarreling, seeking a following, striving for a name among men, etc.

(c) In our services today only one man speaks. We are quite careful in allowing to teach. But suggests ways in which even today in our circles this situation of which James speaks is found. Is there danger of consistory members and members in the congregation being too critical, assuming to teach the "teacher" without thorough investigation? "Teachers" going off the deep end on political, social, unecclasiastical matters? What ulterior motives could there possibly be today for becoming a teacher?

b. The teachers will receive the greater condemnation.

(1) His chief tool is his tongue.

(a) The surgeon and craftman uses his hands in his work.

(b) The teacher uses his tongue and without it could be no teacher.

(2) He will stumble most often then in his use of that tongue while functioning as a teacher.

(a) The word offend means to stumble into sin and is far more serious than to hurt one's feelings. If we stumble, we fall into sin. If we offend one, we cause that person to sin.

(b) James says that we all stumble in many ways.

1) The proper reading is that we all offend or stumble and not that we offend all people.

2) This is the tremendously important truth of total depravity which the Reformed Faith maintains and is so widely denied today.

a) By nature apart from the regenerating grace of God no man can open

- his mouth without sinning. See Hebrews 11:6; Romans 3:10-18; Romans 8:7, etc.
- b) Come to Society with proof of this doctrine of total depravity from Scripture in other verses and from the Heidelberg Catechism, Confession of Faith and Canons of Dordrecht. (Ask your parents for help and look up the references in your catechism books.)
  - c) Let it, meanwhile, not be said that James maintains salvation by the works of the law.
- (3) James illustrates the power of that tongue.
- (a) By means of bits in the horses' mouths we turn horsepower in the direction that we would have it serve us; and by the small helm the much larger ship is directed in the way which we want it to go.
  - (b) So the tongue is small, a little piece of muscle in the mouth, yet it turns out whole body and life. Remember this when James presently says that it sets on fire the whole course of nature in verse 6.
  - (c) If, then, this member is the untameable one — verse 8 — and the teacher must use it in all his work, the warning is in place to be slow to speak and not to be many teachers.
- (4) The greater condemnation is then the teacher's and not those taught.
- (a) He condemns himself in his teaching. See Romans 2:21.
  - (b) He stumbles repeatedly but is also in a position where he can lead others into sin. He must be slow to speak lest he teach the lie and encourage in ways that are contrary to faith.

## 2. The Power of an Evil Tongue. Verses 5b-12.

- a. The tongue is a world of iniquity.
- (1) The broad scope of the tongue's evil is presented thus by James.
    - (a) A world is an organized whole. Thus the plant world, animal world, etc.
    - (b) James would have us see that the tongue does not commit a few isolated sins but a whole series of related and connected evils.
  - (2) Though small in size itself, it produces and brings forth a world of evil.
    - (a) A spark of fire causes a forest fire and city blocks to go up in flame, and the tongue is a fire to cause a world of damage.
      - 1) James begins at verse 5b to speak of the damage that this little member can and does perform.
        - a) The tongue was not created as an evil; and under the power of regeneration we are therewith able to bless God, confess Him, teach others concerning Him.
        - b) But since the fall that tongue is a world of iniquity.
      - 2) James still, however, has especially the teacher in mind who must use that tongue, lest there be a world of iniquity in the church.
    - (b) To grasp the tremendous import of James' words suggest ways in which that tongue breaks each and every one of the ten commandments. How does it serve in idolatry? What part does it play in image worship? What ways of taking God's name in vain? Etc. And then in self-examination observe the world of iniquity of your own tongue!
- b. It sets on fire the course of nature.
- (1) The expression is literally "Wheel of existence."
  - (2) And this is true of both the individual and of mankind in general.
    - (a) That tongue makes big boasts, exaggerates and leads the individual in a way of greater and greater evil.
      - 1) The wheel turns and makes progress because power is transmitted from the hub through the spokes to the rim.
      - 2) So the tongue corrupts the whole man and gets him moving in the direction of a world of sin. We lie to defend the lie, etc.
- (To be continued in next month issue)*

# NEWS

## from, for, and about our churches

GEORGIA HENDRICKS

### MEMBERSHIP

Gary Bylsma, Dorthca Kamps, David Korhorn, Diane Korhorn, and Karen Reitsma, all of our First Church, made their public confession of faith on February 12.

Upon request the membership papers of the H. W. Kniper family (Oak Lawn) were transferred to our church in Loveland.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Peter De Vries (First) have been transferred to our Hope Church.

Upon their request baptismal certificates were sent to Mrs. Violet Hibma and Gary Schut (Hudsonville).

Upon their request the membership papers were sent to Robert VanderKooi, and Mr. and Mrs. Homer Teitsma and one baptized child (Hudsonville).

The membership papers of Rev. and Mrs. G. Lanting and family have been transferred to our church in Edgerton, Minn.

The membership of Mrs. Marilyn Holstege (nee Ondersma) (First) has been transferred to Hudsonville Church.

Dismissal paper were sent to the home of Mr. Wm. P. Doezema (First). He intends to affiliate with the Plymouth Heights Chr. Ref. Church.

A statement of dismissal of Diane Helder Korhorn as a baptized member has been received from the First Jenison Chr. Ref. Church and has been accepted by the consistory of our First Church.

### DEATHS

On February 3, 1967, Mr. S. Veltman passed into eternal rest (First).

Mrs. R. De Vries passed away on January 20, 1967 (First).

### WEDDING BELLS

January 13 marked a special occasion for Mr. Allen Vander Beek and Miss Ruth Lanting when they were united in marriage by the bride's father in Edgerton, Minn.

### ODDS AND ENDS

The First Church has adopted proposal to purchase a new organ for the church.

Prof. Hanko delivered another one of his

series of speeches on the Five Points of Calvinism. He spoke on "Unconditional Election." It proved to be a good turn out.

A Beacon Lights Singspiration was held at our Southeast Church. Eunice Hoeksma and Donna Knoper played a piano and organ duet. But where were all the people?

Rev. M. Schipper entered Butterworth Hospital February 13 for removal of kidney stones.

A momentous and far-reaching step was taken by our N.W. Ia. P.R. School Society at its meeting on January 31. It was decided to proceed with the building of our own school with a view to providing P.R. instruction for our children in September of this year.

### BIRTHDAYS

On February 12 Mrs. N. Yonker celebrated her 90th birthday. Open house was held for her at her son's home. (Holland)

Mr. E. Van Eenenaan celebrated his 83rd birthday on February 12. (First)

### SERVICE MEN

Address of Neal Buitter (Oak Lawn)

Pvt. Cornelius Buitter

U.S. 54-814-592

Co. "C" 8th Bn.

2nd Tng Bde USATC

Fort Campbell, Kentucky 1st Pl.

Robert Blankespoor left for six month tour of duty in the service. (Doon)

Mr. and Mrs. H. B. Bonestroo left for Germany where Mr. Bonestroo still has twenty months of duty to serve in the army. (Doon)

Jay Stelling is now stationed in Vietnam. (Doon)

### NEW COMERS

The adopted child of Mr. and Mrs. M. Mastbergen was baptized. (Southeast)

A son was born to Mr. and Mrs. E. Van Egdom. (Doon)

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. E. Ophoff. (First)

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. R. Moore. (First)

MR & MRS JOHN ZANDSTRA, JR.  
492 GLENWOOD-LANSING RD.  
GLENWOOD, ILLINOIS 60425

## Attention, Young People!

### EASTER SINGSPARATION

An opportunity to offer thanksgiving  
for the purging of our sins through  
the death of Jesus Christ on the  
Cross and His glorious Resurrection  
from the dead.

To be held on Easter Sunday, March 26  
at First Protestant Reformed Church.

Sponsored by Beacon Lights.