

BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT
REFORMED YOUTH*



APRIL, 1977

SPRING



VOLUME XXXVI

APRIL, 1977

NUMBER 2

Published monthly (except June-July and August-September are combined) by the Federation of Protestant Reformed Young People's Societies.

If any of the material of **Beacon Lights** is reprinted by another periodical, we will appreciate your giving the source.

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Second Class Postage paid at

Jenison, Michigan

Subscription price \$3.00

EDITORIAL

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REDEEMING THE TIME

by Gerald Kulper

"Time, like an ever-rolling stream, bears all its sons away." How often we sing this song, young people! How often don't we observe that "time flies." And yet, how often do we really stop and think about that creature--time?

The word **time**, you know, refers to a period, or an interval, an interval between a beginning and an end. There are limits to time--day time, night time, lunch time, exam time. All of us on earth too have a time, a life-time. That time begins at conception and ends when God calls us home, when time for us is to be no more. God gives to you and to me, according to Solomon, a time to be born, and a time to die. He gives time to rejoice and a time to weep.

Both in the Old and New Testament we are instructed concerning time and our duty to "redeem" that time. According to Ecclesiastes 3:1, we are given "a time to every purpose under heaven." In verse 13 we are instructed that we should eat and drink and enjoy the good of our labor, for it is the gift of God. There is, however, to be judgment concerning our use of that time, for we read in verse 17 of the same chapter, "I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked; for there is a time for every purpose and for every work." A sobering thought, isn't it? God, the righteous Judge, looks upon us, His creatures, and judges concerning our use of **His** time. Sometimes as young people we find it difficult to imagine that we who have "so much time" ahead of us have to nevertheless redeem every moment of that time. We forget, until we see the coffin of a young friend or of an aged

loved one, that time does bear **all** its sons away.

Did you ever think that you were going to die? What did you think about time then? Your view of your life and God's time was quite different then, wasn't it? At that moment, all those visions of time, your past joys and regrets, but especially your thoughts concerning things (usually noble things) you had not done in God's time, flashed by your consciousness in an instant. You were shaken, and yet in time you forgot.

We need to be reminded that redeeming the time means that we are to conduct ourselves wisely in our daily walk and conversation. Paul writes in Ephesians 5:15 and 16: "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil." But how foolish we often are in the way we walk. Paul says we are to walk "circumspectly," within boundaries, the boundaries of that liberty wherewith Christ has made us free! Only the fool goes outside that line. Perhaps Solomon sums up this idea the best when in his final words in Ecclesiastes he writes, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment...whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Striving to obey that command to walk as required by God is a lifelong struggle.

Each of us can perhaps think of many examples from our own experience, when we ignored God's command concerning time. We rebel against God Who gave us

our life, and we show that we want time for ourselves, for our own pleasure. We find that the wrong use of even a few moments of time has terrible consequences in our lives. These consequences are with us for the rest of our lives, whether only in our own memories, or whether obvious to all. A "good time" often is in reality a "bad time." A careless word results in the loss of respect which our Christian friends previously had for us. Those worldly friends we chose to associate with dragged us down with them to the exact opposite of what we knew to be a Godly walk. Sometimes, in our pride, saying we are weary of well doing, we desire to "let our hair down," saying "just this once." As a result, we may end

up bearing dire consequences of a moment of wordly lust or passion for all our lives. We cannot call back time, not even one moment in our everyday lives.

Young people, pray with me for wisdom from above that our time may indeed be valued as God's gift to us, and that we may be stewards of that time. Then we will not walk as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time God entrusts to us. Then, too, in our prayerful seeking for guidance regarding our proper use of that time from day-to-day; we will truly experience the joy of abiding in Christ, now in time, but soon in that timeless abiding with God and the saints in perfection.

Feature

THE BEAUTY OF CREATION

by Rev. B. Woudenberg

Having just moved from the great Northwest, I have been asked to write for you an article on the beauty of creation.

It is certainly true that the northwest corner of our country, and particularly the northwest corner of the state of Washington, in which Lynden is located and where we were privileged to live for many years, constitutes one of the most beautiful portions of our great land. Many a time have I ridden around through Whatcom county marveling at the magnificent beauty of the white mountain peaks on every side standing out in sharp contrast to the blue sky above and the dark green of the fir trees and fields below. Many a time have my family and I gone down to the bay to watch the glory of the setting sun across the deep blue waters of the Puget Sound dotted as it is by the many small islands which are uniquely its own. Many a pleasant hour

have Phil and I spent hiking along mountain trails up through forests of towering cedar and fir to the meadows above, covered with mountain flowers and looking out at the jagged peaks of black and white which make up the Cascade Range. Is there an experience of beauty anywhere that can compare to standing on the high white glacier fields of Mt. Baker when the breaking dawn fills the sky on every side? One does not look out at it, he is in the very sunrise with its glory that fills the sky. The heavens do declare the glory of God, and creation shows His handiwork. We have seen it and will never forget it.

And yet, through it all, there was one great frustration which I could never quite meet.

From the time I was a student, my hobby was taking photographs; and scenic photography I preferred above all. It has

always seemed to me to be a hobby which teaches one to see and note little beauties in creation that otherwise are apt to be ignored.

I did what I could of this while still in school; but it was not until we were settled in Edgerton that I was able to apply myself to it with any regularity at all. There in the area around Edgerton, as well as in South Dakota and Colorado where we often went on classical appointments, I was able to spend many a pleasant hour searching for those small, unrecognized points of beauty which could be caught by the camera and so remembered for myself and for others. It was a satisfying pastime, searching the creation that way for those marks of beauty which otherwise one never thought to note. To this day, I have many cherished photographs which serve to restore to my memory thrills of joy which I once had at some point of creation's glory, and without which they would be forgotten forever.

When, therefore, we were called to live and work in the middle of the spectacular beauty which is so much a part of the great Northwest, it seemed to me that one of the great bonuses for me would be the photographic opportunity which it afforded. And for a time I went at it with enthusiastic joy; but it wasn't long before I found myself deeply disconcerted. The great and spectacular beauty of mountains such as Baker and Shuksan and Ranier was so evident that no one could pass it by; and when photographed the results were seldomly any different than what one could find already printed on calendars and postcards everywhere. And, even more, with everything dominated by such great and self-evident beauty, it was hard, and sometimes it seemed impossible, to look once again for those small beauties which would provide a fresh and

new viewpoint to be recorded. The great, spectacular beauty of that country made it harder, not easier, to take the kind of photograph I liked.

And I think there is a parallel to this in all of life, particularly for a Christian.

There are things in life whose greatness and importance seem evident to all; they are like great mountain peaks that dominate the horizons of time. These are the things to which the important people of this world direct their attention, governmental heads, the wealthy, and the learned. And we, standing by in our smallness, are apt to think that if only we could be involved with things like that then certainly we could serve our God best.

What we so readily forget is that the greatness and beauty of God is everywhere, in the small things as well as the great.

It may be quite true that the majesty of God's greatness is to be seen in the great spectacular peaks of high mountains; but don't forget that it is also there in the rolling prairies, in fields of grain and lakes and streams, and even along city streets. And maybe sometimes we can see it best when the great and spectacular is not there to detract.

For your life and mine the same obtains. It may seem to us in moments of dream that we could do God great service if our lives could be involved in some of the world's great things. But God is in the small as well as the great; and our service of God is equally well given in the small things of ordinary living. It might seem to us that we could give better service if we could work with things that are great; but the likelihood is that they would only detract. To learn to see God in the small things of life and to praise Him there is where your service and mine is given best.

The way to escape the pitfall of fornication is to avoid all that stirs up lust. This is what Paul means when he cries out: "Flee fornication" (I Cor. 6:18).

p, 63,64 **Marriage** by Rev. David Engelsma

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SPRINGTIME

by Sherry Van Beek

Sherry is a member of our Southwest Church.

The chill of winter soon will pass.
For this there is a reason;
God made it His eternal plan
There be more than just one season.
T'will be another season.

The snow-white ground will soon be green.
The weather will be fair.
We, the creatures, will receive this,
A gift from God so rare.
T'will be another season.

The trees of Spring will soon appear;
The birds will once more sing.
We stand and marvel at it all:
This is the work of God, our King!
T'will be the Springtime Season.

The Springtime flowers soon will bloom
And feed upon the gentle rains.
The farmer working with the plow
To supply his yearly gains.
T'will be the Springtime Season.

It's hard for us to understand
The changes being made;
How Springtime soon is present
And Wintertime doth fade.
We reach the Springtime Season.

And Springtime soon will leave us
And open up the door
For yet another season,
Another of the four.
But now, the Springtime Season.

Through a year of changing seasons
God's wonders all unfold:
Springtime, Summer, Winter, Fall
He gave me eyes to behold
The changing of the seasons.



Truth vs. Error

REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH

Modern Speech Versions of the Bible RSV CONTRADICTS THE TRUTH [Continued]

To choose a modern language Bible in order to understand the KJV better is not as simple as one might suppose, certainly not if one's choice is the RSV. For, to read that Bible safely, to know just where you really stand as to the text of Scripture, you will have to go through it very painstakingly, "with a fine-tooth comb." But it would not be merely just as well, but very much better to work at and in the KJV in that fashion—with a fine-tooth comb. Yet, it is too much to expect, too much of a task to do this with any modern Bible, much less with all of them. So specialize in the KJV, and you will learn God's Word as you could not, limited to some other version.

Now back to the OT, RSV. Where Psalm 2:12 has "Kiss, the son," the RSV has "kiss his feet," with the notation, "Cn: The Hebrew of 11b and 12a is

uncertain." Cn means "correction," so that the Hebrew at this point is erroneous in "Kiss the Son" (KJV), so it has been corrected to "kiss his feet"! But if the Hebrew has to be corrected, we wonder, from what language standard? From the Greek LXX? From the Latin? Or from some Martian tongue? But the Hebrew (Bar) is neither incorrect nor uncertain; and it is hard to see why it is adjudged so. This word, as many words in Hebrew has many meanings, but this fact is cause for no uncertainty, nor does it justify this so called correction. An adjective **bar** means "chosen," "pure," "clear." Another noun **bar** means "grain" (cleansed, winnowed), and there is the noun **bar**, "open field," all in addition to the noun **bar, son**. This same word of Psalm 2:12 is also found in Proverbs 31:2. It does not mean "his feet," nor does it have the

suffixial "his" connected with the word. This Psalm already contains one reference (v. 7) to Jesus as the Son of God. But it is plain that the RSV editors had a great deal of prejudice against the Messianic tone of the OT Scriptures.

Another prejudiced translation appears in Isaiah 52:15, where the KJV reads, "So shall he sprinkle many nations." This was fulfilled by the Messiah in the execution of the great commission (Matt. 28:19-20), and in the Dispensation, the elect scattered throughout the countries of Asia Minor, who were saved through the "sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 1:1,2). But the RSV changes **sprinkle** to **stattle**, with the note, "The meaning of the Hebrew word is uncertain." But it definitely is not uncertain. It is the same word as in Isaiah 63:3 and in Leviticus, chaps. 4,5,6,8,14, 16. The word is never rendered by anything else but **sprinkle**. RSV editors should not criticize the KJV and its "grave defects"!

To return to the NT, at Matthew 6:13, the doxology of the Lord's Prayer is omitted with the words, "Other authorities, some ancient, add..." It used to be "**many** authorities" (ASV), and, indeed, there are **many** in support of the doxology. But these marginal notes are worded differently as new Bibles are published. Now it is only "other authorities" which sustain the ending to the "Lord's Prayer." Matthew 13:51, RSV, has, "They said to him, 'Yes,' " with no note of any kind, when there is plenty of authority for "Yes, O Lord!"

Since this Bible drops the archaic thou, thee, thy, thine, except when referring to God, Peter's words at Matthew 16:6, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" form a contradiction. For "you" refers to a mere subordinate creature, while "Son" refers to a divine person. Yet, the RSV has God speak from heaven to his Son, "**Thou** art my beloved Son; with **thee** I am well

pleased (Mk. 1:11). Are these contradictions mere inconsistencies, or are they Origenic heresy—attempts to conciliate advocates of the deity of Christ and, as well, its enemies?

Is the following a "correction"? There is no note to that effect. At Mark 4:19, RSV, we read, "but the cares of the world, and the delight in riches..." The KJV has, "deceitfulness of riches." We are told in the preface (p. iv) that the copyright is meant "to protect from unauthorized changes." Yet, this is far from a legitimate authorized change or "precise rendering" of the original text. This, remember, is the Bible which states that "the KJV has grave defects...and... these defects are so many and so serious as to call for revision..." The RSV should clean up its own house.

It is not only an unauthorized change, but highly dangerous to add even one word to the divine revelation of infallibly inspired Scripture. But this is what we have in, "The Son of man also came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk. 10:45, RSV). The word **as** is not in the original. The meaning is not that his life and the giving of it were **like** a ransom, or given merely in the **manner** of a ransom, but **actually** were a ransom! The RSV rendering destroys the efficacious, saving gospel. "What majesty there is in it! So much majesty, that to seek to mend the Bible is a proof of a blasphemous heart, that to seek to alter one word of Scripture is a proof of alienation from the God of Israel." (C.H. Spurgeon on Psm. 29:4).

There is another point at which perhaps the RSV should not be so specially criticized, since just about every modern version reads mainly as the RSV does on I Timothy 3:16, "Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of our religion:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated in the spirit,
seen by angels,
preached among the nations,

believed on in the world,
taken up in glory."

There is a note on the pronoun **He**: "Gk. **who**; other authorities read **God**; others, **which**." On the retaining of the word **God**, Calvin said all the Greek copies agree to the reading **God**. So "I do not hesitate to adopt the Greek reading." Of course, it is true that even if the reading is **He, who** or **which**, and not **God**, still the entire confession here refers exclusively and only to God; otherwise the declaration would make absolutely no sense. The ASV note at this point reads, "The word **God** in place of **He who** rests on no sufficient ancient evidence. Some ancient authorities read **which**." As to some of this so called insufficient evidence, consider: (1) Codex A, of the British Museum, according to all testimony of 300 years, makes it **theos** (God). (2) Dr. Scrivener, foremost English critic, says it is **theos** (God). (3) Codex C makes it **theos** in contracted form. (4) F and G make it **theos** in the contracted form. (5) All the cursives of Paul's epistles, 254 MSS, with the exception of two, have **theos**. These copies were produced in every part of ancient Christendom, and their testimony is significant. (6) Thirty out of thirty-two lexicons make it **theos**. (7) More than 20 of the Greek fathers testify to **theos**. Note: One MSS, 5 VSS and 2 late father read **ho**, "that which," i.e., 8 read **ho**. Six MSS, only 1 VS and not one Greek father read **hos**; i.e., 7 read **hos** (who). Then 289 MSS, 3 VSS and more than 20 Greek fathers read **theos** with the Received Text (basis of KJV), i.e., 312 read, **theos**.

A Reformed minister, a Rev. George S. Bishop, in the 1880's, studied this passage in the great uncials, C and A. He had Codex C for one week, studied the membraneous MS under sunlight and lenses, compared the **theos** in dispute with every other **theos** on the page, and, out of the five, finds it the plainest one there! "All five are written with two letters (in

the contracted form—RCH)...Two of the five, only, have the mark of contraction above. One of the two, the plainest, is the one they **deny**. Three of the five, only, have the hair mark in the **theta**. One of these three is the one they **deny**!...Is it OC, **who**, or is it \overline{OC} with a line over the two letters, and a mark in the O, **God**? It is beyond question the latter." To this also agree Hoskier, Ignatius, Barnabas, Hippolytus, Didymus, Gregory (Nyssa) and Chrysostum. So do the Dutch and German Bibles.

A good, honest translation of the Bible must not depart from the original text of Scripture (an unpardonable offence), but must faithfully and competently render the text in harmony with all of Scripture. That is a harmful book which actually frequently departs from the original text, doing so without notice, either in the margin or in a footnote to indicate the change. To be on the safe side, we ought to ask, with respect to any committee of modern translation scholars, what text did they use? For it is getting to the place where modern scholarship no longer uses (in the NT) the text of Westcott and Hort, nor that of Nestle, nor of Van Soden, but eclectically produces one of its own to suit its own bias. For you, who are not trained to check the Hebrew and Greek originals at every point, and even if so trained, would lack time to do it, it would be better to be like those wise enough to secure a KJ Bible with Hebrew and Greek marginal renderings, and so arm yourself with a fortified KJV!

How encouraging, when covenant children of our Protestant Reformed catechism classes express a love for the KJV and who protest any replacement of it, since they certainly do understand it, are learning to understand it more, and, therefore, for study, devotions and worship need no other Bible!

(Concluded)

THE FOUR HORSEMEN

[Revelation 6:1-8]

by Nancy Van Meiteren

Nancy is a member of the Young People's Society of our Redlands Protestant Reformed Church. This article is the result of her society's discussions on the book of Revelation.

The four horsemen of the Book of Revelation help us to understand the world in which we live. We read of these horses in Revelation 6:1-8. They are pictured to us in different colors and described to us in detail.

If we consider the significance of colors in the Bible, we can learn that each of these horses represent a great power in the world. The white horse represents purity and cleansing, the red horse represents passion and war, the black horse represents poverty, and the pale horse represents death.

Why is the white horse, in the cause of Christ by the preaching of the gospel, first? Why do the last three horsemen follow the first, or, in other words: what is the relation between the cause of Christ on the one hand, and war, social and economic strife, and death on the other hand?

War versus the cause of Christ in the world!

The second horseman represents war as sent by God into the world. It follows the white horse and its rider, suggesting that somehow it must serve the latter.

What relation is there according to Scripture between the cause of Christ and war? Scripture teaches that the wars in the world are all more or less directly related to the one great war between Christ and the Antichrist (Dan. 7,8). Man was created to have dominion over the whole earthly world. After the fall, when man became a rebel against God and a

servant of the devil, this urge naturally remained in him. Man naturally strives for the realization of a world empire. Earlier in the Old Testament the people attempted the same thing at Babel, but God separated the human race into nations and scattered them over the earth. The result is that now each nation seeks for itself world-dominion or world peace. God, however, anointed His King over all things, the Christ. He is heir of all things and is destined to have dominion over all things.

The striving of the world to establish a world-empire assumes an antichristian character. The idea is to establish an empire from which Christ is excluded. The wars of this world are presented in Scripture as always culminating in Antichrist. This antichristian world-power will, according to Scripture, ultimately be realized for a short time. During the reign of Antichrist there will be no room for the Church on earth (Rev. 13:15,17). Hence, he may be revealed only "in his time" (II Thes. 2:6).

War is one of the chief means whereby God prevents the beginning of the realization of the antichristian world dominion. As long as the world is still divided against itself the "man of sin" cannot be revealed. This is why the red horse follows the white.

The social conflict and the cause of Christ.

The third horseman, which is on the black horse, represents the contrast between the wealthy and those that live by the day. He follows the red horse and the white.

Now we must find out the relation between the third horseman and the second, and between the third horseman and the first.

It is proven from actual conditions in the world, that the third horseman always pursues his course through the earth. Always the wealth of the earth is in the hands of just a few men, while many live by the day and consume their wages as they earn them. This is so true that as soon as the latter are unemployed they need "relief." This situation develops no matter what form of society prevails. That is slavery, the feudal system, and capitalism.

This social contrast is wrought by God, but He works this through a mediator. He does this by giving men different talents, gifts, powers and means. He also works this through the sin of covetousness in man's heart.

The results of this work of God in men are internal strife, strikes, boycotts, revolutions and often war. While war, that is the red horse, is often the forerunner of depression; the economic strife, the black

horse, is often the forerunner of war. The third horseman prevents the beginning of the antichristian setup that leaves no room in the society for the Church.

The Death and Cause of Christ

The fourth horseman is Death, physical death, directed by Christ, always bringing the normal number of dead to the grave at the proper time and place. It prevents the beginning of the realization of the "man of sin," that he may be revealed in his own time, because it gives each generation a short time to work. It shortens the time that earth shall be filled.

Lastly, death also directly affects the Church. It makes apostacy easier and it gathers the elect into the Church triumphant (Judges 2:8-10).

This portion of Scripture shows us that all things are put here for a purpose. It proves to us that God has a purpose, even for wars.

MAKING CONFESSION OF FAITH

by Paul Harbach

Paul is a new member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Walker, Michigan.

Making confession of faith is a joyful act of obedience to our covenant God. The angels in heaven joyfully sing hallelujahs to Almighty God. But part of the Church of Jesus Christ is here on earth now, and this congregation of saints experiences this same joy and partakes of it with those making confession. This is one of those many benefits that we have and partake of in our Savior Jesus. Again, there are many rich blessings that we have in our Savior.

There is a special, outstanding God-given blessing that the Protestant Reformed Churches in America have and experience; that is, a rich heritage. It is a

rich heritage because it is a gift given by parents that were prepared by the grace of God to give the gift through a way of life that God had chosen them unto. So, the inheritors, too, are the chosen ones to pass this heritage on down to their children. This rich heritage that is yours right here and now, and not in some other time or some other place, is your present possession. It has always been your present possession and it is one of your most valued possessions. Therefore, it also is your possession to most jealously guard.

Do you know what this rich heritage is that is your present possession? How it relates to you personally? How importantly it relates to your decisions for your life? How **your** present possession relates

to our decision to leave our loved ones and friends, a secure employment, pulling up sixty years of roots and come here to Grand Rapids, Michigan to live among you and make confession of faith, joining your congregations?

You may consider it to be—let's say—the Five Points of Calvin. Well now, that is most certainly true, but not my point. Or, perhaps those beautifully rich confessions of the church fathers at Heidelberg, Dort, and the Belgic. True, they are rich blessings, inherited and passed down generation after generation, but let us look around more carefully.

Oftentimes we fail to see in particular because of our perspective. For instance, can you see your forehead? Of course not, unless you take a different perspective such as looking into a mirror.

At one time the Jewish men wore a band about their head and at their forehead was attached a little leather box which contained parchments on which were inscribed scriptural quotations. Wearing this "frontlet" was symbolical of obedience to God's commands. This little box tapped away against their foreheads reminding them of their covenant God. Today the children of God no longer wear "frontlets," for our covenant God has written His Law in our hearts. But, our covenant God still provides a sounding, a thumping, a pounding of God's messages against ourselves. It no longer can be a gentle tapping, for Satan goes about roaring like a lion seeking whom he may devour.

I wonder, now do you see my point?

Try to imagine going to your church and hearing a Sunday message preached by a preacher who only preaches a half truth or preaches around unpopular, though true, doctrines of grace such as those mentioned above. Preaching in a

way that would encourage those enemies of the true Gospel of Jesus Christ as set forth in the Heidelberg, Canons of Dort, and Belgic Confession, to come into your church, sit beside you and get great joy from the messages spoken. The history of the Protestant Reformed Churches reveals that this has been attempted in the past.

Have you ever experienced this? Did you not feel extremely disgusted and let down? Being a child of God in particular, you recoil at the very thought.

I think that now you see my point. Yes, it is the pure preaching of the whole Word of God and its doctrines. That hearty, vigorous, strong, healthy pounding upon our covenant foreheads and hearts.

Our rich heritage and present possession is that our Heavenly Father in His mercy has by His grace blessed our churches by raising up many able, zealous, stalwart men of faith, that jealously watch over and guard the doctrines of the church, unto the pure preaching of the whole Word of God. Nothing less is acceptable.

Ponder this in your heart. Is it not true that your whole life revolves around this pure preaching of God's Word to you, and its doctrines? Revealing those blessings, the benefits that are ours in Jesus Christ, from your Heavenly Father, that are yours in particular? What a sure and loving comfort this ministry provides for us! They are the thumping, pounding words of life—our very life! We dare not leave it! Fear the thought!

We could not stand being apart from it; that is why we came here. Now it is our present possession, too. Together let us love it and guard it with great care. "For the Lord is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations" (Ps. 100:5).

God gave the husband authority in the marriage bond, and God put the wife under that authority. Yes, God did!

p. 49 **Marriage** by Rev. David Engelsma

George M. Ophoff (15)

by Prof. H. Hanko

In our last article we were discussing the actions of Classis Grand Rapids West in their dealings with Rev. Ophoff's opposition to the three points of common grace. We ended last time by quoting a letter which the Classis sent to the Consistory of Hope. To this letter, an answer was returned which was read on the floor of Classis by Rev. Ophoff. The answer was (along with a similar answer and various other documents) submitted to a committee to advise Classis.

The committee to which these documents were submitted, brought its report. We shall not quote the entire report, but there were several interesting features about it. In the first place, the committee characterizes the letter of Hope in a very ungracious way:

The letter from the consistory of Hope is a very lengthy document. Your committee feels assured that the classis does not expect of it a detailed analysis of all the arguments presented, nor a careful search into all the nooks and corners and all the byways of its cogitations. Without fear of contradiction, we opine that much of the material presented has little or no direct connection with the contents and purpose of our letter of the 16th of January.

The report goes on to say:

However, before considering the final conclusions of the letter from the consistory of Hope and to give some measure of courteous consideration to its copious argumentation, your committee briefly

remarks the following:

1. All discussion of the question whether the three points are really in agreement with Scripture and Confession is out of order in this connection. If the consistory of Hope has objections against the three points it must present them to the classis by way of gravamina and meanwhile submit to Synodical decisions and require this of its pastor.

2. The difference between the pastor and the consistory of Hope on the one hand, and of the classis on the other hand, is not one of interpretation of three points as if we are forcing our particular interpretation upon the aforesaid pastor and consistory. The classis merely insists on submission to the Synodical decision embodied in the three points as this decision lies before us without insisting on any particular interpretation. Rev. Ophoff, according to the **Standard Bearer**, disagrees with the three points.... And the consistory evidently supports him in his stand.

The conclusion of the letter of Hope's consistory to the classis is then quoted:

1. Be it resolved that consistory of Hope Christian Reformed Church do not request its pastor to answer questions of Classis Grand Rapids West.

2. To appeal to Synod for the interpretation of its decisions.

3. To request Classis Grand Rapids West to defer any and all action said classis might contem-

plate against the consistory of said Hope Christian Reformed Church until such time as Synod shall have acted upon said appeal of said consistory of Hope Christian Reformed Church and rendered final decision of the matter.

With respect to these decisions of Hope's Consistory, the committee advised classis:

1. The classis recognizes the right of appeal....
2. Classis can not defer any and all action on this matter till the next Synod without itself becoming insubordinate to Synodical authority.
3. The classis will take note of the fact that the consistory of Hope unequivocally refuses to submit to classical authority in this matter. It has officially resolved not to require of its pastor what the classis has required of it.

In consideration of the refusal of the consistory of Hope to require of its pastor submission to the doctrinal decision of the Synod of 1924 in regard to the three points, your committee submits the following advice to the Classis.

We advise the classis to require of Rev. G.M. Ophoff (a) That he declare himself unequivocally whether he is in full agreement yes or no with the three points of the Synod of Kalamazoo.... (b) An unconditional promise that in the matter of the three points he will submit (with the right of appeal) to the Confessional Standards of the Church, as interpreted by the Synod of 1924, i.e., neither publicly nor privately propose, teach or defend either by preaching or writing any sentiment contrary to the Confessional Standards of the Church, as interpreted by the Synod of 1924

and in case of an appeal, that he in the interim will acquiesce in the judgment already passed by the Synod of 1924....

Your committee advises that these questions be put to the Rev. Ophoff by the president at once on the floor of classis.

All this advice was adopted. The question of whether Rev. Ophoff would submit to these decisions of common grace was put to him. He answered emphatically, "No." All this took place on Thursday morning. On Thursday afternoon the committee continued its advice in the light of Rev. Ophoff's answer.

In consideration of the absolute refusal of Rev. G.M. Ophoff to submit to the requirements of classis in re submission to the doctrinal decisions of the Synod of Kalamazoo and secondly in consideration of his defiant stand and of the strong language used by the brother, and thirdly in consideration of his own statement that he needs no more time to consider and fourthly in consideration of the serious situation that has arisen in our church demanding positive and immediate action over against ceaselessly active propaganda, your committee herewith submits to your honorable body advice that shall lead, if accepted, to final action in the case of Rev. G.M. Ophoff.

There then appears in the committee's report a rather lengthy argument which supports the immediate deposition of Rev. Ophoff instead of the suspension of the brother as the Church Order requires. The actual advice on deposition reads:

Your committee hereby advises classis to take the following action

after preceding prayers.

The Classis Grand Rapids West in session on the 22nd of January, 1925, hereby desposes Rev. G.M. Ophoff from the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments in the Christian Reformed Church of America on the following grounds:

(a) Insubordination to ecclesiastical authority. See Formula of Subscription.

(b) Public Schism. Art. 80 of the Church Order.

Through his association with the **Standard Bearer**, Rev. G. M. Ophoff participates in organized propaganda against the officially accepted doctrines of our Church, propaganda which is making inroads upon our denominational solidarity.

Article 95 records the vote on this advice: 30 Yes, 12 No's, 2 blanks.

But Classis still had to deal with Hope's consistory. Classis had received a communication from two deacons of Hope's Consistory that put these deacons on the side of Classis and against their pastor. But the elders had supported their pastor throughout, and had to be dealt with. Friday afternoon the committee was prepared with its advice. After a long discussion in which the committee argued in favor of the right of Classis to depose (something forbidden by the Church Order), the committee advised the following resolution:

Classis Grand Rapids West, in session the 24th of January, 1925, hereby deposes the Consistory of the Christian Reformed Church of Hope, except the two deacons who have declared their loyalty to our

denomination.

Classis Grand Rapids West, hereby deprives the aforesaid consistory of all the rights and privileges of a legal consistory in the Christian Reformed Church of America.

Classis Grand Rapids West deposes the aforesaid Consistory by virtue of its jurisdiction over this Consistory as expressed in Art. 36 of our Church Order.

This also was advised on the two grounds of insubordination to Synodical and Classical authority and the sin of Public Schism.

Before action was taken on this advice, Classis decided that a committee would meet that evening with the elders of Hope "in an effort to dissuade them from their intended course."

This meeting was held. The minutes of Saturday morning reveal the outcome:

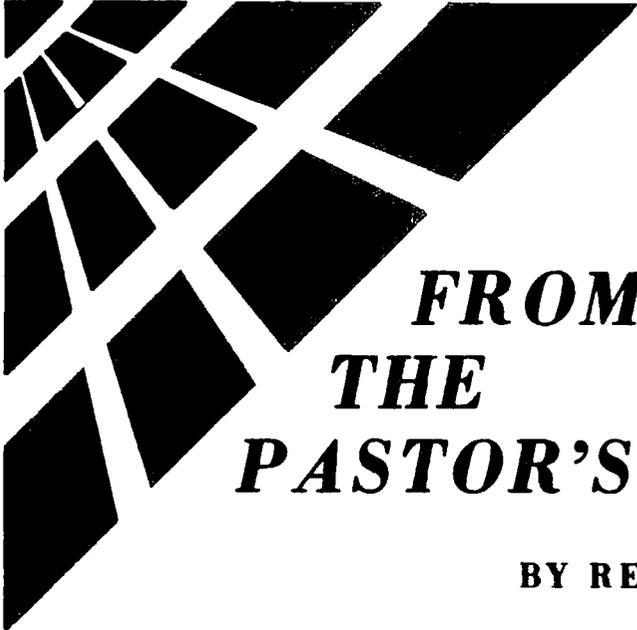
Art. 107. Elder Richard Newhouse announces in the name of the three elders of the Hope Consistory that they abide by their former decision even after the conference held with the committee of overtures.

Art. 108. The recommendation of the committee is re the deposition of the consistory of the Hope Christian Reformed Church is adopted by a vote of 33 yea and 6 no's after preaching prayer by Rev.

And so the matter was done. Classis had attained its goal. All opposition to the three points was effectively squelched.

"As a tree must drive its roots deep down, in order to grow up tall, the man who does not have his soul rooted in humility will find height to be his downfall."

Augustine



FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

BY REV. G. LUBBERS

THE BLESSED GIVER

Young People - "think on these things." Ed.

"... and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly"

Matthew 6:4b

These words from the mouth of our Lord Jesus were spoken when He was on a mountain in Galilee. We have here some basic instruction for the heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. These words are precepts of the Gospel of the Kingdom of Heaven; they instruct us how to be thankful to God for having delivered us from the power and kingdom of Satan and of the darkness of this present world, and the sinfulness of our own flesh.

The latter is rather pronounced here in these words!

There is nothing that so causes the redeemed saints to walk circumspectly and carefully as the knowledge that "our Father seeth in secret." "He knows all our hearts and the secrets within." You recognize the refrain of these last words. Jesus spells this out for us here in these

first four verses of Matthew 6.

That God sees "in secret," means that He looks at the secret motive of our hearts. He **tries** our hearts. There is nothing hid from His gaze, and His searching eye penetrates into our very hearts. He does not merely look at the external deeds.

God does not "need" our gifts. All is His; even the cattle upon a thousand hills belongs to Him. Our gifts must be rooted in righteousness. It must be a different kind of righteousness than that of the Scribes and Pharisees. It must not be simply a gift "to be seen of men." God does not desire a mere **theatrical display** in which we would have men praise us. We must not seek the glory of men, but the approval of God. To be sure, if we would give all our money to the poor, and

have our body to be burned, and if we do not have love, we are nothing!

Love must show itself before God in our gifts on the altar!

This love is called by Jesus "your righteousness." Righteousness is the keeping of the commandments of the Lord, free from all sin and evil self-interest. It is not seeking self, but the glory of God and His honor. This righteousness reveals itself in our "alms." Such alms are revelations and expressions of tender mercies toward the needy. They are the heart of the merciful who shall receive mercy.

Now this showing of mercy is a very selfless act. It means that we are wholly absorbed in the giving for God's sake. We are not interested in what man sees in us, but what God sees in us, in our giving. He must smell the sacrifice, and it must be a sweet savor in His holy nostrils. It must be the thank-offering which is a whole burnt offering. We must here engage in the priestly act and work of not merely giving our money, but above all our very selves (II Cor. 8:5). And that sacrifice of the thankful heart is seen of our heavenly Father. He seeth in secret. He knows our works; the deepest thought and intent of our hearts in our giving. Such giving is walking in the straight gate and narrow way, which leads to life.

We need to be warned! We have flesh, young people. Not always do we give alms! We do not always (seldomly?) work that we may have to give to those who have need. We do not always do as Israel was enjoined to do when they were commanded to leave the corners of their fields stand for the poor to glean. But sometimes we do give "alms"; we do feel that we should help our neighbor, and that if we see our neighbor have want, and we have this world's goods, we should help him and give him from our abundance. We sometimes come to that height where we have bowels of affection for our neighbor. However, our heart is subtle,

more than anything else! Well may we pray: Search me, O God, and know my heart. And we may well cry to the Lord: Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from secret faults! May the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer!

Yea, Father, thou dost see in secret! And Thou dost behold and scrutinize my heart better than I can do it. And Thou dost know how sin cleaves to my best works of showing mercy; cleanse Thou me from secret faults in my giving of alms. May I not do a little secret trumpeting of my giving before men! Lord, I have some of that self-righteous Pharisee in me, and then I have my reward. And the secret joy of giving, and special blessedness of giving, I do not taste. I then lose the sense of the words of the Lord Jesus that it is more blessed to give than to receive. And I would not forfeit that great and blessed reward of helping the poor with a pure heart. For I would see Thee, O God, in my giving!

Yes, the hypocrites did this in the streets of Jerusalem and other cities in Israel on their way to the gathering of the saints in the synagogues. They literally had someone trumpet that a great man and a liberal giver was on his way to the synagogue and the temple to cast his gift into the temple treasury. He would give his Corban before the eyes of men, in the footlights of the theater of men. Jesus must have observed this hypocrisy of men. Did He not know what was in them? In us? Indeed, He did!

Yes, such hypocrites have their reward!

The left hand must not and may not know that the right hand gives. Now that sounds like an impossibility. It points up the truth that it is hard for a rich man to give properly. Sometimes this saying is quoted rather glibly and applied to the envelope-system of giving whereby at least one of the deacons knows what is

contributed to the maintainance of the ministry of the Word. However, do not forget that Jesus does not say merely that you must show theatrically what you give to others, but not even to **yourself**. Now that means that it is pretty hard to give even without an envelope with an assigned number. It really makes no difference from the point of view of the giver. As little as we ought to display of giving, so little ought we to try to hide the paucity of our giving behind the saying: Let not your left hand know what your right hand doeth! The Lord also knows our hearts, without an envelope as well as with an envelope. It must be in either case pure love and gratitude!

We look for the reward of God who sees in secret!

It is indeed a reward. It is not, of course, a reward of merit. It is all of

grace. It gives the reward of inner joy and peace. It gives the joy of brotherhood, of helping the needy. The matter is not so much the degree of the need of the brother and neighbor, but rather the great desire of love for the brother.

At the altar of consecration, the law and the prophets will have its own. It is "do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

The day will come when we will openly hear: Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world. I was in prison and ye visited me, naked and ye clothed me, hungry and ye fed me. For as much as ye have done this to the least of mine, ye have done it unto me.

Have you?

NEWS From, For, and About Our Churches

by Cindi Dykstra

BIRTHS:

Rev. & Mrs. Slopsema (Edgerton) were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Sara Lynn, on December 6.

Mr. & Mrs. Joe E. Brummel of Edgerton were blessed with the birth of a son, Joel Lee, on January 29.

Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Bleyenbergh of Edgerton were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Shanda Joy, on February 6.

Mr. & Mrs. Roger Buys of Hull were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Emily Ann, on February 16.

Mr. & Mrs. Russ Dykstra of Hull were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Heidi, on February 25.

Mr. & Mrs. Jon Engelsma of Hope were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Leah Elizabeth, on March 2.

Mr. & Mrs. Larry Bertsch of Hope were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Rachel Marie, on March 14.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NEWS:

First Church has received the membership papers of Mrs. Jon Bol (nee Barb Vander Lende) from Roger Heights Christian Reformed Church.

Kalamazoo has sent the membership papers of William Clason, Jr. to South Holland Church.

The membership papers of Miss Orta Den Hartog have been transferred from First Church in Grand Rapids to Lynden, Washington.

Kalamazoo has received the membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. Henry Kiel and three baptized children from the Prairie

Edge Christian Reformed Church.

Southwest has received Mr. & Mrs. Wilbur Postma's membership papers from First Church.

CONFESSIONS OF FAITH:

Sandy Vander Woude, Nancy Hafer, and Tim Hafer made public confession of their faith in Southwest Church on January 16.

MARRIAGES:

Randall Boone of Southwest Church and Shelly Colston were united in marriage on February 11.

Jonathon Bol and Barbara Vander Lende were united in marriage on February 18 in First Church.

William R. Clason of Kalamazoo Church and Julie Pols were united in marriage on February 25.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES:

The February **Beacon Lights** Sing-
spiration was held at Hudsonville Church
on February 20.

Hope Church's Senior Young People's Society sponsored an ice skating party for all area young people at Jolly Rogers Ice Arena on March 11. Proceeds went for the 1977 convention.

A singspiration sponsored by **Beacon Lights** was held at Southwest Church on March 20.

OTHER ACTIVITIES:

From Faith's February 20 bulletin: This week is rather special for us because Tuesday marks our 4th anniversary as a congregation. What can we say or do except to resound our doxology, "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow."

From the February 27 bulletin of Houston Protestant Reformed Church: "This afternoon we celebrate the sacrament of baptism with Sara Catherine, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Coleman Simpkins, with Monica Bess, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Joel Sugg, and with Lisa Lynn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Russell E. Wimberley."

PLAN AHEAD FOR COMING EVENTS:

The Young People's Annual Spring Banquet will be held on April 15.

The Federation Basketball Game will be held on April 22.

Hope Church's Choral Society will give their Spring Concert on April 24.

There will be a "Make Your Own Chef's Salad Luncheon" at Hope School on May 4.

"Love binds up and soothes the wounds of life. Love helps until it is no longer within one's power to help. Love forgets all about oneself, and thinks only of the other."

Mysteries of the Kingdom by Herman C. Hanko,
"Loving as Neighbor," chapter 8, p. 78

CONVENTION NOTE

Greetings from the publicity committee for the 1977 P.R.Y.P. Convention. This note is to inform you of the change in the usual convention format. The convention will start, D.V., on August 22, 1977. Registration will be held Monday morning. Conventioneers will leave for Camp Geneva after registration on Monday afternoon. Specific details will be forthcoming in later issues of the *Beacon Lights* and in letters to your society secretary.

Yours in Christ,
Greg Van Overloop
Chairman of Publicity Committee

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