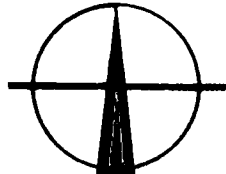


# BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH*



January 1971

***The Earth —  
The Lord's***  
SUE TERPSTRA

***Formalist and  
Hypocrisy***  
REV. HARBACH



# BEACON LIGHTS

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## THE VIEW FROM HEAVEN

A man holds a prism up to the light and sees no more the light, but a splintering of colors against the wall. As he turns the prism, one angle will show more truly the colors of which light is made than another. One is the true view of light, the other the distorted.

All men look at the world around them as it were through a prism. To some, the elect children of God, the view is the true view, or ought to be. To others, the reprobate children of damnation, the view is incomplete, or distorted. The view of man over against the world around him then, depends on the angle at which he is looking.

There is one Being Who looks at the world with eyes not blurred by the dimensions of a prism. This is, of course, God. Earthly man can never see the earth with the eyes of eternity, or with the eyes of complete knowledge. When God looks up on things temporal, He sees things in the light of His eternal counsel. He sees, not the beginnings only, but the endings as well. He sees the depths of every action and event, even the most minute, and rules every event for the ultimate glorification of Himself.

God sees all things with the eye of Truth. There is no manner of distortion through the prism of the temporal, no confusion through the faceting of sin. God sees in the light of Truth. His is the view from heaven.

The opposite end of the spectrum world be then the view from hell as seen through the eyes of hell's servants: reprobate man. Here the distortion of the prism is at its greatest, for it is totally out of whack in the depths of iniquity. Man, that is to say, natural reprobate man, sees the world from a totally natural point of view. He sees through the prism of sin.

He sees, too, in the sure knowledge of damnation. Man's difficulty is not that he does not know, but rather that he knows, and is so much a slave of the devil that he does not care. His view can be only temporal, for him (he hopes) there can be nothing beyond the here and now.

Still, on earth there is an antithesis to the reprobate. This is the Christian, "the Covenant child of God. While he must look still through the dark glass of the prism of sin, he yet looks from the angle truest to the light. While it must yet be a temporal view, it still is the eternal, for the child of God views the world in the light of eternity.

We live in faith. Our faith is not of the things of this life, but of the promise of eternal glory. We live in hope. Our hope is not of the things of the earth, but of the things which the earthly cannot touch.

We live in knowledge. Through faith and hope God has given us the eyes of truth into eternity. In the working of His Holy Spirit we see the world from the angle of truth. We see things from the view of the covenant line, as an unfolding of the Church unto eternity.

Yet, this does not make the Christian less temporal in his view. He, with the reprobate, must still look through a prism at life around him. As long as we are temporal beings we must look at things from a temporal point of view, and that view can never be perfect. Nevertheless, the angle from which this view is perceived must and ought to be different from that of the world. And this is very difficult.

It is in our natures to see the world around us from a very human point of view. It seems logical to give to the poor of the world so they can live a better life. It seems logical to go belligerently before the leaders of the world and force them to change the world for the better. These are things the world does, and viewed from the angle of the world, they look very noble and good indeed.

But the view from heaven, in the light of the knowledge of eternity, is a view from an entirely different angle. It is an easy trap for the Child of God to fall into, this trap of the world's goodness. We must be ever alert in our comprehension of the world to look at things from the angle of truth. In future editorials, the Lord willing, we hope to present the view of the truth

on some of the issues of our time, bearing in mind the antithetical position of the Church over against the world.

For each man stands as it were with a

prism in his hand. Through this prism he must view the world around him. Are you looking through the true angle? Is yours the view from heaven?  
C.R.



## **The Earth – The Lord's**

SUE TERPSTRA\*

Ecology is a much discussed topic in our time. This branch of science, which deals with the relationship of a creature to his environment, has now become primarily concerned with the relationship of man to his environment. It is obvious to almost anyone that more and more people in this world are becoming involved with the subject of ecology every day. Almost everything from lapel buttons to bumper stickers reveals a growing concern of many who have begun to realize at last that their earth is beginning to show signs of much misuse by man. Americans are particularly concerned with the condition of their surroundings. Living in so affluent a society has now produced for them many problems which they had never before dreamed of having. Among these ecological problems are land, air, and water pollution. Once beautiful lakes, rivers, and streams are now being poisoned daily by wastes flowing from the same factories which once symbolized the wealth and prosperity. The sapphire blue of the sky is gradually taking on the sickly grey hue of smog, and the land itself is being ruined by chemical overdoses.

God's people in this land are also affected by this pollution problem. They drink water from the same resources, eat of the

crops produced by the same land, and breathe of the same filthy air as do their worldly neighbors. But the Child of God has and must have a different attitude when he sees this rapid destruction of earth's beauty. Pollution then takes on a new meaning for him as he reads the Word of God.

The first comfort for the Christian can be found in Isaiah 24:1, where he reads, "Behold the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it a waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth the inhabitants thereof." In this verse, as well as in many other verses of the Bible, we find that it is God alone who controls what happens to the earth which he himself has formed. Going on to verse five of the same chapter, we find the cause for the defilement of this earth, "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Man, in all his attempts to make nature submit to his authority, only succeeds in upsetting the balance of nature so perfectly worked out by the Father. Thus we see that sin itself is the cause for this pollution, and we, the conscious partakers in it, serve only to corrupt what God has made beautiful.

A man of the world, Albert Schweitzer, once said, "Man has lost the capacity to foresee and to forestall. He will end by

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\*We wish to welcome Sue as a new department editor. She is presently a Junior at Covenant Christian High in Grand Rapids.

destroying the earth." These words speak better than any I found about how the World and the Church differ on the ecology problem in this world today. Schweitzer's words certainly speak of little hope in this man's heart, and they reflect, to be sure, the same feeling of pessimism in the hearts of many people today. But going even deeper into their significance, we find that although man realizes his helplessness, he still refuses to admit or submit to a God. It is when he reads of such despair, that the Christian finds he has much for which to be thankful. He realizes that he has a heavenly Father, who upholds all by His Providence, and Who has already in His sovereign will determined what will happen to this earth.

God has also told us of the things to come. He has done this so that we might recognize the coming of the latter days, and thus be ready and watching for the second coming of our Lord. We, then, who have these signs before us, certainly need not worry about our "capacity to foresee and to forestall," for this is in the hands of our Sovereign and Omnipotent God. His promise to us is that "all things work together for good to those that fear Him, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). Knowing of this assurance of God, the Child of God never needs to let the World's calls of warning cause fear in his heart.

But then, seeing that God will accomplish His purpose in spite of man's efforts to solve the pollution problem, must we then neglect to do our share in preventing further pollution, and forget about the World's admonitions. The answer is definitely in the negative. Although God has not commanded us to march in protest of corruption of Creation, we nevertheless still have the command before us to be faithful stewards. God has given to us this beauty of Creation, and we have no right to abuse it. And even though we are far outnumbered by those who continue this abuse, and even when we see our efforts toward good stewardship having little effect upon the earth, we must keep in mind that our reward is greater than the sight of newly cleared skies or water that man hopes to achieve. Our reward is of Christ, for He has himself promised in Luke 12:42-43 that he will be blessed, who, when his Lord returns, has been found at the work of a good steward.

With this hope and comfort in our hearts, we can easily look at the words of Schweitzer, and at the effects of pollution, still saying, "The heavens declare the glory of God . . ." (Psalm 19:1). For we look beyond clouds of smog and waste-filled oceans to clouds of glory and to the seas which will someday reflect the splendor of the returning Christ.

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## CURRENT EVENTS AND COMMENTS

### Will You Be Next?

KATHY BYLSMA\*

In this past week thousands of people, including small children, have died in Pakistan because of a cyclone which struck there. Forty-three people have died in a tragic airplane crash. Many more have just died recently from car accidents. Will you be next?

Has it ever crossed your mind that tomorrow you may not be living anymore?

God may call you home at any time, whether you are prepared or not. This idea may not seem pleasant to you. Maybe you have finally saved up enough money for that beautiful car you've been longing to have. Or maybe you have gotten that special girl or guy to finally notice you. Would you be willing to leave all that you have, all that you love here on this earth, for death? Some may say, "Oh, I won't die now. I'm too young and busy and can't be bothered by it. Wait until I become old and gray and then I will think

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\*We wish to welcome Kathy as an editor of this department. She is a senior at Covenant Christian High.

about death." But death can not be put off like that.

Instead, we must be eager to leave this wicked world. We should not love life here on this earth and all earthly material things. As Paul says in I Corinthians 6:19, "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" We are not here for our own per-

sonal glory and pleasures, but only to fulfill God's purpose in us — to praise and glorify His Name. If we keep this in mind, death is beautiful and not something to be feared. For it is only through death that we shall come to live with our Savior, Jesus Christ, and praise and glorify God forever.

Will you be next to die? Are you ready?

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## FEATURE

### SEX EDUCATION IN THE SCHOOLS

MRS. A. KARSEMEYER

One of the controversies raging in the country today is the controversy concerning the teaching of sex in the schools. Many public schools have already introduced courses in sex education and others are planning to do so. Organizations are being formed, some in support of the thing, some violently opposed to it. Those that support such programs argue that parents and churches have failed to provide the needed education and that schools must do what they have failed to do.

What shall determine our attitude toward this subject when it is taught in the public school system? We should see immediately the danger present when sex education is offered apart from God's Word and will. Disregard for God's instructions always brings tragic consequences. How can they teach any kind of wholesome and holy attitude towards sex which is according to the principle of God's law when they have already banned any mention of religion from the classroom? Do we want the world's standards and attitudes to be the guides in the lives of our children in this matter? Romans 12:2 says, "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is the good, and acceptable and perfect will of God." The purpose is that we "may present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God."

Some will probably say that this is no concern for us since our children go to our Christian schools. What about sex education in OUR Christian schools? What about sex education when the *Bible* is used to

determine standards and attitudes? It is conceivable that in some not too distant future, we may have to face the question. This may come through some kind of requirement which the government makes mandatory for our schools to retain their accreditation.

Now then, is this the business of the schools? Of OUR schools? I think not. Primarily it suggests that parents are very neglectful in teaching their children about these things. Parents often find it difficult to provide the kind of information which is needed and look to the schools for assistance. But this does not alter the fact that the responsibility belongs to the parents and to them alone. That the instruction of the child is the responsibility and obligation of its parents is a precept which every Christian should immediately know. This is plain from the fact that parents have built and maintained their own schools to teach their children according to their convictions. We erect schools and hire teachers in order to provide instruction for our children which we cannot give them. But, we may not hand over to our teachers the work of instruction which we are able to do ourselves. We must assume this responsibility willingly and cheerfully and not push off on teachers tasks which we ought to be doing ourselves. Proverbs states, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." In Israel the fathers were to make known to their children the works of God. Deut. 4:9 and 6:7. The Lord visited the house of Eli with judgments "because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them

not." Certainly, when parents are duty bound to instruct their children in the laws of the Lord, does it not follow that they shall instruct their children concerning sex relations also?

I believe that sex education is a private and not a public matter. I do not believe that sex education can be put on the same level as, for example, arithmetic. Arithmetic is public, and can be used by and with anybody. Sex is not in that category. There are proper places and ways for discussions of matters pertaining to sex, but I do not believe that the proper way and place for detailed presentations of such private matters is in the school. This does not mean that we cannot instruct them in Biblical principles when occasions arise, especially in religion, science, and physiology classes. The teachers will then, for example, have opportunity to call attention to God's wonderful arrangement for the reproduction of man. Obviously, good Christian judgment, wisdom and tact, based on God's Word must be used at all times. The Word of God will be the one standard to guide the children in the way that they should go.

Then there is the danger of presenting certain matters too early when children are not yet ready for them. Would we want to teach our children things about sex for which they are not yet ready? Might this not just arouse their curiosity and lead to experimentation? The home is the proper place for such instruction because the parents best know when a child is ready to be taught certain things and can gear this instruction in this area of life to the mental, emotional, physical and social development of the child.

Another danger of sex education in the schools concerns the determination of course content. Who will determine the content of the courses of the various classes? The faculty? The school board? The community? Lack of control could be dangerous when teaching sex in our schools.

Then who will teach the courses? Are the teachers willing and able to teach the various aspects of this difficult subject in the proper manner and in the light of Scripture? Will parents have any real control over when, how much, and what is taught their children?

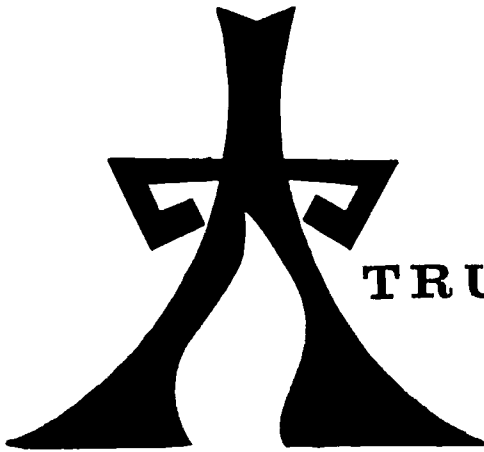
Christian parents should be reminded that the best sex education they can give their children is the example of Christian faithfulness and love on the part of the husband and wife. The love and respect which children note between their father and mother will foster similar attitudes in the children. Homes where sex is honored as a gift of God which has an accepted place in our lives, will generate attitudes in the children which will help them to distinguish its proper use from its depraved deviations.

Parents can teach their children within the context of the home where the family is all together, where babies are born and enter the life of the family, where brothers and sisters date, where family love prevails, where the Scriptures are read and studied, where such instruction in such holy matters can be given naturally and "matter-of-factly" and where it need not be a forced education in the abnormal circumstances of the classroom. This "forced" sex education is can easily leave the impression with the child that sex is of towering importance and more important than anything else. In our present day culture, sex has been so idolized and emphasized that it appears to be the most important thing in our lives and in the lives of our children. The result is that we and our children are constantly being bombarded with the perversions of the world. The devil forces us into a position where we have to deal openly and forcibly with such sacred and holy things. So we must tell our children what God's Word says about all this evil. We must tell them what is holy and righteous in the sight of God. We must teach them that sex is but a small part of life; significant, but small nonetheless. Children must be instructed in these things and not be left to grope about, picking up half-truths and distorted facts or be left to gather venomous ideas from corrupted playmates, vile literature, obscene pictures, TV, and vulgar novels. It is by all means important for our lives that in the days of our youth we do not remain ignorant of the wonderful "mechanics" of our own bodies, with which we were endowed by our Creator. He has made men and women. He has thus made the sexual organs, and the organs must be used aright to the glory of God

and not to fulfill our lust and carnal desires. I Cor. 6:19, "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God and ye are not your own?" For this cause shall man leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh. The marriage-relationship is perhaps the greatest relationship upon earth, amongst men. For through the family, life comes to existence, and family life is the heart of society. The rearing and training of children is the highest and most responsible calling ever given and therefore not only highly desirable but highly necessary. While it is a fact well known to all that the majority of parents find it difficult to talk to their children about sexual matters, yet that in no way lessens their responsibility. The question of sex is not unclean, shameful, or sinful. The sexual instincts

are divine commands of God but are made sinful when turned into lusts, that is, unlawful desires. Paul made this plain in his letter to Titus, "Unto the pure all things are pure; but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their minds and conscience is defiled." Titus 1:15.

We may conclude then, that children get their basic ideas of love and marriage from living with their parents and observing the way of life their family represents. Ideally then, our homes where God's love and respect are taught and practiced between mother, father, and children will help mold proper attitudes based on scriptural principles of Godliness and morality. It is a God-given duty of the parents to admonish and instruct their children in the truths of God's Word in the way of life.



## TRUTH vs. ERROR

REV. ROBT. C. HARBACH

### ***Formalist and Hypocrisy***

Look! there, on the left side of the road, two shadowy figures tumbling over the wall into the narrow way! Not skulking, either—their maneuver is not furtive, but open and public. They readily identify themselves: Formalist and Hypocrisy, close relatives from the independent nation of Vainglory. Where headed? Naturally, to Mount Zion; and they are quick to say why—for praise! You know whose. They are never caught without a sophisticated answer to anything, not even to the warning: He that cometh not in by the Door, but climbeth up some

other way, the same is a thief and a robber. They're doing the talking; let's listen. We of our nation know all about short-cuts. Modern men do not take the long way around. Repentance, conversion and a life of faith? Man, you lost me! That stuff went out with the demand for a pound of flesh! Besides, it destroys the very principle by which we live—vainglory. Man, we live in new times! Used to be, climbing up some other way made you a thief and a robber. Today it makes you a hero. Get with it, man, we have new values today,



new customs. The custom, the circumstance vindicate an action taken. The situation provides its moral defensibility. If it's custom, and the situation warrants it, as is often the case in this age of new-found freedom, then it's socially acceptable. Why, to the view of all normal-minded people, custom ought to have the protection of law and the sanction of every accredited institution.

The world is going places with the new breed. Our big trouble, off hand, is that we came from a generation painfully puritanical. Nearer to hand, our trouble is that we were brought up by our parents. Being brought up by your parents creates a "generation gap." Each generation ought to be free to evolve out of its own cocoon, establish its own solidarity, choose its own religion and its own destiny. If you are not satisfied with us the way we are, don't blame us; it's our parents' fault. They made us memorize catechism, scripture and psalms. They taught us by rod and rote, rarely making effort to help us understand our forced, prescribed answers, so laboriously extracted from us. Family worship — perish the thought — was invariably the same, rigid, stereotyped boredom. Father took up his usual, plain, unmarked Bible, read at the usual place where he had left off previously, droned through the usual chapter, no matter how lengthy, and closed with his usual pious incantation. Never did he reveal that he understood or felt a word he read. This, too, was all the Bible reading that ever occurred in our home. With that ritual performed, the family circle disbanded without an idea in their heads or a warm glow in their hearts. It was no better in church. It's the minister's fault that we are what we are. He always spoke his usual time. The people sat dully, as usual, in their usual places. The usual number of psalms were sung, with the usual number of stanzas. So it went, until the order of the day was over. If the preacher pounded on a pulpit one thump louder than usual, that stood out in the memory of the people, and became the topic of their after-sermon conversation, oblivious to the real subject and thread of his discourse. Indeed, those conversations revealed that their minds never really made

the take-off from earth. Heavenly heights made them dizzy. They liked both feet on the ground; and, yes, like the mole, also their belly, chin and nose.

Look, here, at my friend, Formalist. I used to be like him — a nice kid like him! a little starchy, but cool, a slide rule in a top hat and tuxedo. Yeah, that's me ten years ago, just a sweet, dumb kid like Formalist. What did he ever know about that dynamite (Rom. 1:16, Gk. — RCH) he always played with? A cute guy, with his hobby of collecting all his nutty, naive formalisms. Always room for one more in his book! What a peaceful, unruffled dreamer! Look at me, now. Some time back, I was one minute an innocent, unaroused formalist; the next minute, a conscious, working-at-it hypocrite.

Christian had a hard, sharp discerning eye on the two since they came into sight. He sizes them up as follows. A common hypocrite will not take up the two-handed Goliath-type sword of the Spirit, and actually go through the heavy drill prescribed in the King's manual. The armor that goes with it is too hard to put on, and the blade too painfully heavy to handle. The vulgar hypocrite makes no such attempt. He would never so weary himself. A balsa wood dress-sword, gilded with glitter-paint, suits him fine. Or an exact replica, an undetectable (from a distance) *papier mache* counterfeit, he expertly wields with impressive feints. His portrait, from a distance, appears to portray a monk with pious hands raised in prayer over an open Bible, but closer scrutiny reveals a bar-tender squeezing a lemon into a bowl of punch (Titus 1:16).

So, when Christian, Formalist and Hypocrisy, all walking the same path, meet an identical crisis, each reveals his true mettle, or lack of it. The three come to the hill Difficulty. Christian wisely drank first of the spring at the foot of the hill before attempting his climb. Around the bottom of the hill to the left was a crooked path, called *Danger Gulch*; to the right was a broad path called *Destruction Boulevard*. Formalist took the one low road and Hypocrisy the other. The narrow way led straight up the hill. Christian recalled *Goodwill's method of discerning the way*.

Many ways butt down on this, crooked and wide, the right only being straight and narrow. Christian, taking it, went on singing,  
*The hill, though high, I covet to ascend;  
 The difficulty will not me offend,  
 For I perceive the way to life lies here.  
 Come, pluck up, heart, let's neither faint  
 nor fear.*

*Better, though difficult, the right way to go,  
 Than wrong, though easy, where the end  
 is woe.*

The stage, movie, TV and novel best-seller people are but crude, not finished and polished hypocrites (Acts 19:13-15; Jer. 23:14). The worst hypocrite is the one who so cleverly masks and whitens himself that he deceives himself. Many people have persuaded themselves that they are good, genuine Christians, when they actually have no part nor lot in the matter. Is it not possible to be a hypocrite and hate hypocrisy? Thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou rob temples? Cannot one be a hypocrite and not know it? Lord! Lord! have we not in Thy name done many wonderful works? My God, we know Thee! Lord! Lord! open to us! Would they have bothered to go out to buy if they were but crude hypocrites, deceiving only others? No, they would have made pretence of doing even that. The man who is small and petty is not aware of his smallness and pettiness. The man with a pharisaical mind does not know he has a pharisaical mind; if he did, he would not have a pharisaical mind. The coarse hypocrite, never practicing what he preaches, is a profligate in professorial gown, deceiving others, but not at all self-deceived (Matt. 6:2-5). Gradually, the

deceiver comes to believe his own deceptions, especially when he develops a more refined, elegant and cultivated self-righteousness. The perfected, thorough-bred hypocrite not only trusts in himself that he is righteous and despises all others, but does not know that he is worse than all others. The space-age hypocrite imagines that the church ought to be a combination U.N.I.C.E.F., H.E.W. and episcopal cathedral. What the real purpose of the church is on the earth, he has no more idea than the man in the moon.

We, Protestant Reformed people, believe we have the truth in the purest manifestation of truth. This we must believe and hold; we cannot deny the truth divinely entrusted to us. But claiming and testifying this calls for deep humility and mature faith. It requires not only knowledge of and love for the truth, but love for the church and all that know and have known the truth, and to love them in the truth for the truth's sake. It means, then, that we will not love the truth for personal reasons, nor for the sake of self or clique, only to hate and despise our brother, believe and spread all evil report and disbelieve all good concerning our brother.

Formalist and Hypocrisy took those by-paths, the short-cuts. They fell into the depths of the dark mountains, and were seen no more. But Christian kept on his way, singing,

*Shall they who wrong begin yet rightly end?  
 Shall they at all have safety for a friend?  
 No, no! in headstrong manner they set out,  
 And headlong they will fall at last, no doubt.*

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# FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY

REV. G. LUBBERS

*"The wise shall inherit glory; but shame shall be the promotion of fools."* – Proverbs 3:35

Jim was a reflective young man; he was in his senior year at high school. He had been thinking about the right and the wrong of many "practical problems." Above all he had been considering of late the profound and far-reaching implications of the covenant reality that he had been baptized "without his knowledge." This weighed rather heavily upon his mind. Gradually this truth had dawned upon him as a wonderful reality of the Mystery of God. Yes, he saw it clearly now, that there are two pillars of truth. In the first place, he was "without his knowledge" partaker of the condemnation in Adam. And, secondly, he was now baptized "without his knowledge" as one who had been "received into the grace of Christ" before he had been able to answer a baptismal vow.

Holy vows had been spoken for him by his dear father and mother, when he was still at his mother's breast. And vows are sacred!! They must be paid unto the Lord. And this his parents had done for him "to the utmost of their power." He had been committed to the Lord, as an heir in Christ, and was, therefore, to be wise and not a fool!

Judy too was a God-fearing young lady. No, she was no mere moralist, old or new morality; she was a Christian! And of late in the Catechism class it had been made very clear to her, and she had pondered this deep in her heart, that to be a Christian meant far more than merely to attend church, to be an active member of the Society, or of being enrolled as an honor student in the high school. She had memorized Question 32 of the Heidelberg Catechism, exactly like Ursinus wrote it in 1563. She had found this question and answer to be a spiritual gem; it had strangely warmed her heart. Why, she was not merely reciting it. It came from her lips as the fruit of faith in her heart. She was confessing before the entire catechism Class (a couple of the girls were snickering). "Because I am a member of Christ by faith and am thus partaker of His anointing, that I may confess his name, and present myself a living sacrifice of thanksgiving to him, and also with a free and good conscience, I may fight against sin and Satan in this life, and afterwards reign with him over all creatures"!

Catechism had been different that night for Judy! Here Judy found the pearl of

great price. Here was the very essence and marrow of being a Christian. What is more, it is also such a clear, exact and Biblical statement of what really *constitutes* a Christian. Yea, she was a member by faith, Christ's anointing of the Father was *her* anointing in Him! Here was the mystery: I in them, and Thou in Me, that we be perfect in one! It was all a gift of God, sovereign grace alone in all of its efficacious power which had come into her life. She had been made alive! Oh, the lines had fallen in pleasant places in her life. A goodly heritage was hers. She would inherit glory!

But life was not without its problems for both Jim and Judy. And they were a bit perplexed. Yes, Satan was tempting them with his methodical assaults, his hellish, diabolical wiles. It was the same strategy of Satan, as that old Serpent did in Paradise with Eve. Satan likes to have his preachers imitate the real preaching; these are pseudo-preachers preaching a pseudo-christ, saying here is the Christ and there is the Christ, coming with his panacea for the world's ills from which she bleeds from a thousand wounds. All the ills of the world can and may be alleviated if only Christ and efficacious grace is not preached. There must be no real Christians, who partake of Christ's anointing.

Yes, the drunkard, the jail-bird, the switch-blade throwing gangs of Harlem's ghetto — all must be helped, but they must not be converted to God in true faith. They don't need salvation, they need help to become rehabilitated, and Christ must be hitched to this wagon of humanism and self-improvement. Fools these preachers are, for they are very self-confident. Their trust is not in the Lord. Yet, shame is the promotion of fools. Yes, they will "help" the men in the ghetto from cutting each other up in their gang fights. And, really, such a preacher makes a hit. No, they would not think of insisting that the definition of a true Christian is the one which Judy learned to love from the Catechism. Nor are these preachers concerned about the "two parts" of the Covenant (Baptism Form). They do not teach that now our "part" is "to cleave to this one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost; that we trust in Him and love Him with all our hearts, with all

our souls, with all our mind, with all our strength, that we forsake the world, crucify our old nature, and walk in a new and holy life."

No, what they do is *material* for a book, a real thriller!

In this book the preacher is not the servant, he becomes the "hero." It becomes something when a switch-blade thrower is so much more sinner than the decent man on the street. Yes, he is a little more pugnacious and dangerous, and he catches the head-lines. The hero-preacher has sold a best-seller, and the movie industry cashes in on it, and the gullible public flocks its doors. And Satan has a "Christian" movie, at least by the standards of those who have Common Grace righteousness.

Small wonder that Jim and Judy are perplexed! For John, who is an A-student in school, has a great influence. He is a bit fond of debating (even with his teachers in class) and often engages in a bit of sophistry. He does not yet really know formally what a syllogism is, but since he has a rather logical bent of mind he does, in effect, use the syllogistic form of reasoning. And, he in turn, becomes the "hero" of the gullible at school. And, of course, a little learning is a dangerous thing.

Hear John expostulate. He says to his teacher that "since it is not wrong to read the book it is not wrong to attend the movie of the same book." He really has made a syllogism:

1. It is not wrong to read the *book*.
2. The book and its message is displayed *in the movie*.
3. We may, therefore, *see* what we *may read*.

Now John never "read" the book. He is not really seriously thinking of going to the theatre to see the movie. He is just trying to argue a point. Thus youth will do. He is trying to convince himself that, if he were to attend the movie, it would be permissible. But he is not serious. That is his trouble. He forgets that the entire matter is far more serious when he would walk consciously in his "part" of the Covenant. To this he too has been committed while a child in arms!

Both Jim and Judy have made this a matter of prayer! They prayed "Father, lead us, lead us not into temptation, but

deliver us from the Evil One." And it became clear to them from Scripture that the matter was not so difficult after all. It was a matter of ideals, values, of walking in their "part" of the Covenant. Yes, they could read the "book" but if they once went through the agonizing trauma of finding the "book" wanting when weighed in the balances, they would have no more a problem about viewing it. They would not need to see "the depths of Satan." That they would leave for Jezebel and for her spiritual children.

Rather they would follow the rule:

"Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think (give them all consideration and approval) on these things."

Think on them and practice them as a way of life.

And the God of peace shall be with you to give you the glory which awaiteth the wise.

But shame shall be the promotion of fools.

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# NEWS

## from, for, and about our churches

KAREN LUBBERS

Already we are several weeks into this new year, 1971. The challenges and tasks ahead are many but we are thankful for life and youth to avail ourselves of these opportunities in service and worship to our God. The following prayer is appropriate for us all as we go together into this year.

*"Teach us, good Lord, to serve Thee as Thou deservest; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to ask for rest; to labour and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do Thy will. Through Jesus Christ our Lord."*

### From Hudsonville, Michigan:

The following young people have made confession of their faith: John Bouma, Mrs. Sue Haveman, George Postma, Linda Holstege, Al Holstege, Bonnie Holstege, Jerry Lubbers, Terry Kamminga, Rachel Lubbers, Doug Miedema, Gary Bykerk, and Vern Haveman. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God."

Miss Mary Lynn Bodbyl and Mr. George Postma were united in marriage.

### From Hope in Walker, Michigan:

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Kamps rejoice in the birth of a son.

### From Hull, Iowa:

Mr. and Mrs. Henry J. Hoksbergen rejoice in the birth of a daughter.

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Because of the extreme shortage of news this month there is room here for a few quotations from which we all might profit.

"The more you try to keep of yourself, the less there is to keep. The more you give yourself away, the more there is to give. To live the abundant life you must die to yourself, be alive to Christ, and share with others. If we live in this way we are born to eternal life."

"God is love; he who dwells in love is dwelling in God, and God in him. . . . There is no room for fear in love; perfect love banishes fear. For fear brings with it the pains of judgment, and anyone who is afraid has not attained to love in its perfection. We love because he loved us first."

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