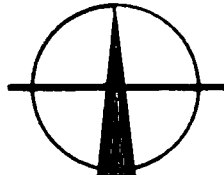


# BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH*



January, 1975

**Sowing Wild Oats**

**Go. Get My Son  
a Godfearing Wife**



# BEACON LIGHTS

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## Editorial

# Sowing Wild Oats

by Harry Langerak

Liberty is on the lips of many in our day. Everyone wants to be at liberty to do what he wants. The use of the term is commonly associated with freedom. Man wants to be free to do his own thing. In his mad pursuit of freedom man wants to be free from any restrictions or restraints. Freedom and liberty are often interpreted to be license. Any restraint at all is looked on as enslavement and must be done away with. For man to be free is looked on as the ultimate good on earth.

What must the child of God think of all this freedom mania? He must understand the world's liberty to be false liberty. Man is in bondage to sin from which he cannot extricate himself. This liberty of man, the child of God may have nothing to do with. The liberty we must seek is the christian liberty of the Scriptures. The one acknowledges God as the author of all liberty; while the other originates in the wicked heart of man. We must be aware when speaking of liberty to carefully distinguish between these two diametrically opposed forms of liberty. They must not be confused in our own minds. You and I have a tendency to forget about this very important distinction and make the world's liberty our watchword. When we do, we make liberty an occasion to the flesh which Paul warns us against in Galatians 5:13.

In order to understand true liberty, which is the only liberty, we must know that it is intimately related to God. He is the creator of all things, including, man. God made man the way He so willed and determined his relationship to God, man, and the rest of creation. Man as a result of this creator-creature relationship is bound by God and the laws God has established for him to live under. Liberty for man is moving freely within the

sphere of the laws God created for him. God's law for man is love the Lord his God with all his heart, mind, soul and strength. God created man in true knowledge, righteousness and holiness after His own image. As the image-bearer of God, man willingly does what God commands him. This is the only liberty man knows and all else is bondage.

By nature we do not want this liberty. Natural man says, and we with him, we would rather have the bondage of sin than the liberty of God. Christ is the only way we are liberated. His atoning blood freed us from the bondage of sin. The spirit of Christ dwelling in us makes us free from sin. By nature we were under the dominion of sin. We did the will of our father the devil. Christ has set us free from this bondage. Because of His regenerating spirit God is now our Father. "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage," Gal. 5:1.

We are truly free to live unto God. Does this mean there is no standard we must follow for our lives? Not at all. Our standard is now scripture. It will show us how we must live unto God. The scriptures are the only standard. Natural man will have none of it. He would rather set his own selfish lustful standard. The child of God, regenerated as he is, willingly submits to God's Word. The scriptures show us how to live as liberated children of God.

There is a warning to be given those who would use their christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. Paul gives us this warning in Galatians 5:13. Paul says it is easy for us to fall into the temptation of using our christian liberty for our own selfish ends. The problem you and I face

is that while we are free from the bondage of sin and its curse, our sinful flesh is still with us. Because of this condition, we must fight against our own flesh as it rebels against the desire of our heart to be free in Christ. Our heart tells us to follow the path of true freedom of a sanctified life in Christ, while our flesh wants us to follow the false liberty of the world which is the pathway of sin. This struggle we fight all our lifelong. We must be careful when using our liberty we do not mistake it for the licentiousness of the world's liberty thereby making our liberty an occasion to our flesh.

I would like to call your attention to ways in which we misuse our christian liberty as an occasion to the flesh. I detect this misuse in the "I want to do my own thing" attitude we have toward life. We do not care what our parents say or think. Worse yet, we do not care what Scripture has to say to us. We are free are we not? And we often ask "what's wrong with it?" or "why can't we?". When we ask these questions, we must determine whether they arise from a renewed heart which is genuinely interested in living a sanctified life or are we using them as an excuse to sin.

In close relation to doing our own thing we take sin lightly. We show this with remarks such as "what's so bad about that" and "he must sow his wild oats". We know what we are doing is sinful but we act as if we don't care. The

name for this attitude is antinomianism. Yes, I know we are not antinomians in the sense of actively pursuing their ideas. Yet this whole attitude of taking sin lightly is practical antinomianism whether we want to admit it or not. The antinomian would have us believe we are free from the law and therefore free to transgress it. Scripture mentions this attitude toward sin in Romans 6:1 "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" The answer is "God forbid." We have no right to take sin lightly, especially since we are free in Christ. The antinomian wants to use his liberty as an occasion to the flesh. He wants to sin as he pleases. This is nothing more than the liberty of the world which is licentiousness. We do this same thing by excusing our sin. We may never adopt this flippant attitude toward sin. Do not forget we must do the will of our heavenly Father. Christ has made us heirs with Him of the glory of God. We are adopted to be his sons and daughters and as such we hate sin as He hates it. And when we do sin we are sorry for it. We do not laugh at it or excuse it.

In closing, we must walk in the liberty of Jesus Christ. He has set us free from the curse of the law and has merited righteousness for us. As thankful sanctified Christians we must walk in the way of righteousness. We must do this consciously and diligently. Be free, yes, be at liberty in Christ then we will not walk after the flesh but after the spirit.

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## Feature

# Christian Psychology

by Rich Peterson

The following is the introduction to a series of articles on the dangers in psychology by Rich Peterson. Rich is a member of our Hope Church and is in the pre-seminary department of our Protestant Reformed Theological School. Ed.

Just recently a new field of discipline has appeared on the scene which has captivated the interest of many religious groups and churches: Psychology. It has always been a subject of man's interest ever since his creation, but even more so

now. It has been called by such names as Philosophy, Theology (either religious or pagan), Metaphysics, and others. However, with the combining of these previously mentioned disciplines and the recent addition of the principles of scientific investigation to them, a new field of study has been born: Psychology.

But now if you were to ask me what is the importance of gaining a greater knowledge and understanding of psychology, I must give you two answers. First, those doctrines which concern themselves with man's relationship to God, Who is the Fountain of all good and the Bestower of salvation in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit, that were branded as heresies by our church fathers are reappearing today in the form of psychology and are being accepted as truth in many churches today. And second, the study of psychology is required of each of our young people if they plan on continuing their education. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is not to develop a Christian Psychology, but to point out the dangers in it as it presents itself as a christian discipline.

Before I start to explain anything concerning psychology, a few basic truths must be stated. Unlike the belief of the world and many churches today: Philosophy (the use of man's reason to come to a knowledge of the Truth) is the queen of the sciences, we believe Theology (the study of the revelation of God as given to the Church in His Word) is the queen of the sciences. That is, every field of study undertaken by man is subservient to and must be studied in accordance to the Word of God. All knowledge comes from God. Without His revelation man can not know anything. God's Word can never be subservient to anything.

Does this mean then that knowledge is impossible for the ungodly? In the broad sense, no. God does not leave Himself without witness. There is a manifestation of God to the ungodly, that of wrath. The ungodly know the truth but hold it

down in unrighteousness and change it to a lie (Romans 1:18-22). The result is, man rejects God as the source of all knowledge and claims himself to be the source of knowledge (Philosophy) thus becoming by his own willful act a spiritual fool. Therefore, in the narrow sense, the answer must be yes. Mere formal knowledge, that of facts and figures, has its foundation in spiritual knowledge. If the person is a spiritual fool, then he is also an academic fool; the two are inseparable. The only true knowledge is from God which is given to His people through grace on the merits of Christ alone. Only from this true knowledge does all other knowledge proceed.

Perhaps the best known example of the challenge of the truth that Theology, not Philosophy, is the queen of the sciences is depicted in the Inquisition of 1616 involving Galileo Galilei. Galileo was called before the Inquisition because he attempted to prove that the Scriptures supported his view that the earth revolved around the sun and not the sun around the earth as the church believed in those days. The church called his teachings heresy because they were contrary to the "sacred and divine Scripture" (Joshua 10:13).

However, what Galileo actually believed was that if an interpretation of God's Word conflicted with a conclusion of science, then that interpretation was in error and must be changed. Science was the final authority.

The church was also guilty of this sin. The church's stand on science was determined by three factors: First, the position of Aristotle, a pagan philosopher, who according to friar Frederick Copleston, in his book entitled *A History of Philosophy*: volume I part II page 57, believes the following: "Apparently God is conceived as moving directly the first heaven, causing the daily rotation of the stars around the earth."; second, a relevant interpretation of Scripture; and third, the decree of the authorized agent of ecclesiastical power, the pope.

Both Galileo and the church based their beliefs on the reason of man; the first science, and the second philosophy. The result was the advancement of the church's apostasy. Fifty years after the death of Galileo the church adopted the stand of the scientific interpretation of Scripture. This stand has been carried

thru the apostate churches to the present. Philosophy has become for them the queen of the sciences. Science is their theology.

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(Next month, the Lord willing, how psychology became a science and the subtle enemy of the church)

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## Feature

# Resolutions

by Neal Hanko\*

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\*Neal is a member of our Hope Church

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Another year has begun. With the beginning of the new year it is the custom of many people to make dozens of New Year resolutions. The human race wants to begin the new year on the right foot. Individuals may resolve to quit smoking, or something of that sort.

Nations of the world look forward to more advancement in the cause of world peace, solving racial problems, or relieving the hunger of those starving in various parts of the world. All these are attempts and resolutions to make the world a better place for them to live in.

However, I am not concerned with this.

We, as the Protestant Reformed Churches, are standing on the threshold of a new year, a year in which we will celebrate, the Lord willing, our 50th anniversary as a denomination.

As we look back on the past 50 years we can see that the Lord has blessed us as a denomination. The Lord has given us the precious Reformed Truths to defend and preserve in the midst of a wicked world.

Many once-reformed churches have forsaken the truth and are following the hellish heresy of the Arminians. Others have gone Pentacostal or Modernistic in belief. Many leaders deny the most fundamental truths for which our fore-fathers

have fought and died. In such a state is the church world today.

Yet, in the midst of all this, our God has given us a great heritage. He has preserved us, yea, more than preserved us. Through us He has spread the truth.

Our publications and radio broadcasts have spread to the four corners of the earth. New fields have been opening for missionary work. This is proof that the Lord has also given us the task of gathering the lost sheep of the house of Israel. God has given us a seminary, high school, grade schools, and much more. All we can do is bow our heads in gratitude.

As we look ahead to this 50th year of existence, and the years that remain til the Lord comes again, we must rededicate ourselves to work diligently and zealously in the faith that the Lord has entrusted to us.

Materially we are living in the lap of luxury. We have all that our hearts could desire. The world around us shows no open hostility toward us. In fact, the world is inviting us to join them. In times like this, when the Lord choseth to tarry, and we live a life of ease, it is easy for us to become lax and indifferent.

We must not let this happen. We must remember that the life of the church is a constant battle with the powers of darkness.

As we look forward to this anniversary celebration, let us resolve to stand firm in

the truth that God has given to us. We must not become as the church of Sardis. (Rev. 3:1-5) And so, let us make this our New Year resolution, and also the resolution of every day of our lives.

I will close with the exhortation of the Apostle Paul to the church of Ephesus and to us. "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of

God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand in the evil day, and having done all to stand." (Ephesians 6:10-13)

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## *Truth vs. Error*

**REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH**

## **Valiant - for - Truth**

*They are not Valiant-for-the-truth upon the earth.*

(Jer. 9:3)

A superficial glance at the man would write him off as a flashy swashbuckler. He does wear well the dashing swordsman's hat of the times, is covered with a steel breastplate, topped with a tough, hard leather jacket, and stands with a naked sword in his hand. However, there is a patch in his left trouser leg, his right sleeve has been, by an opponent, slit from shoulder to wrist, and a long gash appears on the right side of his face just over the eye, extending down to the corner of the mouth. The man is no novice, but a veteran, with battle scars covering him from head to foot. The facial expression is kindly, loving, yet somewhat sad, with regular, utterly masculine features illu-

minated with bright, uncompromising eyes. The weapon carried is no parade or dress sword, but a beautiful, deadly double-edged instrument of destruction. The other hand, gesturing, calls attention to the Book, the Word of God, thus graphically indicating what sword it really is he carries, and what cause he is ready to fight for to the death. This is no diplomat, no politician, no neutral waving a flag of truce. As he indicates from His Book, his orders are to grip his sword, then go out and fight.

This is Mr. Valiant-for-truth. He is a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, coming out of Darkland, the peninsula where the chief port is the City of

Destruction. His recent wounds were received when attacked in Dead Man's Lane by three enemies of the truth, Wildhead, Inconsiderate and Pragmatic. Others tried approaching these enemies with "negotiation" and "dialog," but they are dead now. Such tactics do not work in Darkland or any where else against the implacable rage of the ubiquitous Amalakites. He is a picture of a man going to heaven, sword in hand all the way. For one must fight to get there, fight his way over the dead bodies of the world, the flesh and the devil.

When Mr. Great-heart examined the sword of Valiant-for-truth, he called it "a right Jerusalem blade." In former days, Toledo and Damascus blades were famous. Warriors found that if they did not have one of these they were in grave danger in battle. A bamboo sword can pierce like an arrow to cut through flesh and bone, but may be cut down to a tooth-pick by a steel blade. Rigid steel may shatter on contact with armor, leaving little more than sword handle and hilt in the hand. The Arab felt he must have a sword both flexible and able to withstand shock of impact, to continue in its stroke to cleave steel helmet and head beneath. Valiant's sword was forged in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is the sword of the Spirit, for it is of His own making. He uses no weapon of human workmanship, lest the sword boast against the hand that wields it. So the Holy Spirit made this Book we use. Every page bears His initial. The weapon is divinely made.

In that dark lane in Darkland, Valiant-for-truth was first attacked by Wildhead. He had his head full of proud lies and heresies. Heresies are but the natural man's thoughts expressed in bold opinions sparked with wit and gotten up in attractive philosophical form. We all have a heretic in our hearts, and by nature are prepared to drink in and spout out all kinds of lies and errors, as we are said to speak lies from birth (Ps. 58:3) because that is our nature. There is a pope in every man's heart, said Luther.

So we are born Pelagians, Libertines, Papists and Atheists. As to the latter, Wildhead was full of it. "The fool hath said in his heart, 'There is no god!'" (Ps. 14:1). Nevertheless, he was loaded with Gentilism, the doctrine of many gods. "There be gods many," he concluded. For whatever we fear or love that we worship. The natural man is a pagan and an idolater. Being Pelagian, it is natural he would deny original sin and the imputation of Adam's sin to all men. Pelagius, naturally, thought the natural man was basically good. The man on the street Pelagianizes. "All these things have I kept from my youth up!" The doctrine of works and merit as exclusively the only real grace is in every man's heart. Chance, fortune and free will in opposition to God's decrees are man's natural opinions. The Jew who naturally abhors idols (Rem. 2:22) in one breath says, "Shalom leka, ve-mazel tov!" Peace to you, and, oh yeah, good luck!

A cohort of Wildhead's was Inconsiderate, kin to "green-headed Ignorance." He loved to come up with conjectural theologizings, a euphemism for the thoughts of the ignorant. He preached Free Will with a vengeance in his favorite texts, "Cast away their cords" and "who is lord over us?" (Ps. 2:3; 12:4). Inconsiderate would not be zealous lest he be accounted bitter. He led people to lose doctrine in wranglings about discipline, and vice versa. He could talk very piously, sing as beautifully as a Mormon, and with such clever shuffles cheat his hearers of the gospel. Go along with Inconsiderate, and you degenerate to ridiculous superstitions, you get tangled up in a little bundle of silly, pompous ceremonies, and you slide along with the long stream of generations ignorant of what the gospel is all about.

The third in the treacherous trio against Valiant-for-truth was Pragmatic. He did not see any objective truth. To him, "truth" is only the worth of an idea. That is "true" which at the moment is the best our thinking can produce, and



that is "good and right" which at the moment is the most advantageous behavior. Advantage is whatever is the style, the fashion, the facility. "Truth" is not concerned with precise thought, but with practical results. "Truth" is not concerned with eternal principles, but with present facts and future consequences. Mr. Pragmatic would not ask, as Mr. Scholastic, What *is* the thing? to lose it in quibbles. He would not as Darwin ask, What is its origin? to get lost in nebulas. Mr. Pragmatic asks, What are its consequences? He deems thought valuable only as it proves useful, facing the future with action. Valiant-for-truth was hard put to it, fighting off these enemies. "This kind goeth not out but with prayer and fasting."

Some people are valiant for anything or everything but the truth. But Valiant-for-truth was concerned not for trivial matters, but for the one great thing: The Truth! Pride may lead a man to strive and contend for just a different mode of expression, which may result in stirring up a great noise over a mistake. Foolishness may cause some to wrangle over small matters, endangering the communion of saints. People are never so furious as when they have least ground and reason for what they assert. Where there is fundamental agreement, private differences in smaller matters should not make us break off from one another. We could say, Mr. Itch-for-disputing and Mr. Zeal-for-an-opinion, rather than the essentials of Reformed Truth, are bad characters. What a character he is who, though in the right, thinks all religion and piety is

within the compass of his opinions! He succeeds to the extreme of being "righteous overmuch."

But Valiant-for-truth did earnestly contend for the fundamentals and the essentials of the faith. He was concerned with keeping them in their entirety and without any corruption of them. He acted on the principle that ignorance of the truth is damnable, and its denial heretical. The one great fundamental principle of Reformed truth is the absolute sovereignty of God. That leads us to the fundamental truth of the doctrine of creation (in six days out of nothing), and the correlative of that, God's providence, then the other fundamentals, the fall of man, his misery because of sin, deliverance by Christ, the necessity of regeneration, the infallibility of Holy Scripture, the mystery and union of the two natures in the divine person of the Son, the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the final judgment and the life everlasting. These are matters of the greatest moment, to mention but a few of them. For these we are to be valiant.

It was Greatheart who, commenting on Valiant-for-truth's cuts and wounds received in the battle for truth, said, "Thou *hast* resisted unto blood, striving against sin." He not only earnestly contended for the faith, but was ready to die for the faith. When we come across one like this character we are brought to pray not only for laborers, but for champions, for not only such as can handle the trowel, but the sword in the church's battles.

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# “Some Thoughts on Using “You” and “Your”

by Ken Kuiper

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\*Ken is a member of our Southwest Church.

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In the last few years, there has been quite a bit of controversy over the use of “You” and “Your” in prayer. I would like to share some thoughts on this subject. In the preface to the New International Version of the Bible, you read this: “As for the omission of the pronouns “thou”, “thee”, and “thine” in reference to the Deity, the translators remind the reader that to retain these archaisms . . . would have violated their aim of faithful translation. The Greek text uses no special pronouns to express reverence for God and Christ.” Now, I am not here trying to promote this new version of the Bible. But I do think a good point is made in this preface, and that is that the language that the Word was originally written in does not use special pronouns to refer to God.

Many of us, however, have learned to use the special pronouns. “thee” and “thou” in our devotions. This having come about, of course, by the fact that for many years we have used the King James Version of the Bible which uses these forms. The KJV was written in the common, accepted English of the time. As this accepted English changed, we discarded the forms “thee” and “thou” from both our conversational and written language, retaining them when it came to Scripture reading or prayer. But the fact is that these forms are used in the KJV not only when referring to God, but also when speaking to *any* person. So we see that the pronouns in both the Greek original and in the KJV were simply the

common pronouns in use at the time. (It is interesting to note that the pronouns used in the KJV to indicate God or Christ are not even capitalized.)

Because of the fact that the common pronouns were used previously, it strikes me that some Christians today should become upset when other Christians use the common pronouns “You” and “Your” in their devotions. This especially strikes me when you realize that in order to use the archaic forms, a person must also change the accompanying verb form. The only time we would ever use the forms “wast”, “wert”, “shalt” and so on, is when we use “thee” and “thou”. To me this sometimes has the tendency to make our prayers seem rather forced and unnatural.

When we as Christians look at the question of whether or not we should use the modern pronouns, we must be concerned with the respect due to God’s Name. And I know that many say that “Thee” and “Thou” show more respect and that tradition has hallowed their use. But we must remember that tradition doesn’t make holy. Isn’t that the truth that we must learn from Christ when the Pharisees condemn the disciples for eating with unwashed hands, thus breaking the tradition of the elders? We must see that just because we have always done something a certain way, that doesn’t make that the only way to do it.

Some will say that there are people who use the forms, “You” and “Your” to bring God down to man’s level. This may be true of some, although such people go much further than merely using the

modern pronouns in their prayers. But the fact that such people exist has no bearing on the rightness of using the modern forms, just as the obvious fact that there are hypocrites in the Church doesn't prove that no true Church exists. I am not talking about such people. I am talking about born-again believers.

Christians from other cultures must think it rather strange that we would use archaic forms when praying. And Christians from our own background may well use the modern forms because they feel their prayers to be more natural by doing so. Is it, after all, really necessary to use the archaic forms to show respect? I don't think so. I respect my parents, but I have never said "Thee" or "Thou" to them. I respect my minister, but I don't talk to him that way either. I would never think to address him as "Thou", would you? Of course not. It is unnatural, and I think unnecessary. I think the fundamental thing to remember is this: it is the *attitude* of the speaker that counts. If the speaker has respect for God, then whether he uses "Thee" or "You", he will do so in reverence of God. If the

speaker does not feel respect for the Almighty, then regardless of which pronoun he uses, his prayer is disrespectful.

So what am I really saying? Do I think that it is wrong to use "Thee" and "Thou"? No. But I *am* saying that we may never condemn the man who with good conscience uses "You" and "Your". Personally, I don't think this issue to be vitally important. But it bothers me when so many people in our churches seem to think that the *only* way to address God is with the archaic forms "Thee" and "Thou". The sincere Christian who uses the modern form respects his God as much as those who use the older forms.

Sometimes I think that we must beware that we are not "teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." (Mark 7:7) Let's be careful. You use "Thee" and "Thou"? Fine. But don't condemn the brother who uses "You" and "Your" in his devotions. Let's not be guilty of straining at gnats, like the Scribes and Pharisees, but rather let us be concerned about the "weightier matters of the law, judgement, mercy and faith." (Matt. 23:23)

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## Convention Progress Report

The 35th annual convention of our Protestant Reformed Churches will be held August 4-8 on the Calvin College campus in Grand Rapids. This convention promises to be one of the best ever! Some of the facilities available for our use at Calvin will be indoor and outdoor tennis courts, and several baseball and softball diamonds. Also available will be a gym located in the fieldhouse, and *two* swimming pools! One has a high dive platform and was mainly built for diving, while the other was built mainly for racing. There are fields available for football, soccer, or

speedball. We have the use of the Gezon Auditorium with several classrooms, and perhaps the Fine Arts Center for our mass meetings, which seats 1000. We will also be taking a field trip or two which we will tell you about in a later report.

All in all, this promises to be a great convention. We are encouraging all our young people to come and stay in the dorms! We also have facilities for entire families to come and stay in the dorms. Please come to Calvin to celebrate the 50th anniversary of our churches. We need everyone's co-operation!



# **FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY**

**BY REV. M. KAMPS**

## **Go, Get My Son A Godfearing Wife**

Abraham was speaking to his servant when he said: "And I will make thee swear by the Lord, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac." Abraham was dead serious. He made Eliezer call God to witness that what he was to promise that it would be made in truth and as before God's face.

Strange way for a man to get a wife? After all who allows his father to send a servant to search of a wife for one's self. And was not the "son" able to go get his own wife? Would he have to take as his wife any woman no matter how unattractive? What right did Abraham have to send a servant in search of a wife for his son? Why not take a daughter of the

Canaanites to wife? Strange to our modern ways of doing things, it was indeed. But rich with meaning and instruction for through it God speaks to us concerning our calling to seek a godfearing life's mate. And the passage is significant for both parents and young people who are looking for a wife or husband. In Abraham, parents have a God given example to follow. And in Isaac young people have a God given example of a man who sought his wife in faith.

The older one gets and the longer he is married the more thankful he is that God hath provided a believing wife for him. Marriage is for life. Abraham was an old man of approximately 140 years. Sarah was dead! Abraham, undoubtedly, had reflected upon the "good thing" that his wife had been to him for many years. Sarah had been a godfearing helpmeet, a woman of faith. Through life's struggles,

fears, temptations, sins and evils, Sarah had been a rich source of strength and consolation, to the pilgrim and stranger in the earth who journeyed with her along the way of sin and grace to glory. She had been an indispensable and precious blessing to him.—Undoubtedly these were the thoughts of Abraham when he said to his servant, Eliezer: “thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell.” A daughter of the Canaanites was spiritually unfit to be Isaac’s wife, no matter how beautiful she might have been.

Let us try to note some of the major elements of this passage in Genesis 24 and then apply them to our own activity of courting or dating. Abraham and Isaac were in the land of Canaan, the type of heaven as the dwelling place of God with His covenant people. Abraham and his seed were the people of God, the Church of God in the world. In and through Isaac God would gather His people and He would bless them as the people of God. All this in a large measure explains why Isaac could not leave the land of Canaan, the land of God’s blessing, and go look for a wife. We must not think that Isaac was not concerned who his wife would be. Nor must we think that he was psychologically immature and that Abraham was acting tyrannically in this matter, or that Isaac was too young to choose his own wife. No, Isaac was a mentally sound, mature, forty year old man. Why then does he appear to be so passive in the account that is recorded for us?

We must look for the answer to that question along the following lines. Isaac, undoubtedly, completely concurred with the instructions of Abraham to Eliezer. From his youth Isaac has been instructed by his godfearing parents concerning his calling to seek and his need of a godfearing mate. Isaac, who was a man of faith, had taken to his own heart the wise counsel and covenantal instruction of his father. Isaac’s age of 40 years, only serves

to accentuate the fact of his agreement with his father’s insistence upon a believing mate for him. We must not look at Isaac and conclude that he was passive, a weakling over whom his father ruled as one would an immature boy. But we must see in Isaac the man of faith like unto his father. Isaac was old enough and wise enough to understand fully what a tremendous blessing Sarah had been to Abraham and to conclude that he too would be in desperate need of a godfearing wife to help him in his calling as believer, a pilgrim and stranger in a godless world.

Well, Isaac received from God Rebekah; but who will be your wife or husband? Isaac concurring with his father, Abraham, searched for a wife among his own people and more importantly among the people of God! Where do you look for your wife?

Do you look for your wife among the Canaanites. A Canaanitish woman is a wicked, unbelieving woman. Spiritually she is one who loves the way of sin, rebellion, the lie, the lust of the flesh and of the eyes. She is an enemy of the Church of Christ and the cause of God in the world. She hates the truth of God’s word, despises the blood of the cross, and lives a vain, empty self-seeking life. She is completely unfit to be a mother of covenant children, to aid, love and assist a struggling, stumbling believer who seeks by faith the things above, invisible and eternal. Where will you find such a Canaanitish woman? Anywhere! If you are looking for a Canaanitish woman, some of the best places to “check out” would be the theater, the beer hall, the local Grotto, the latest night spot; but don’t look in your own church. Too often young men and women look in the wrong places for their mates and the result is . . . they get something with which they find it almost impossible to live, much less live as a couple that are one in Christ.

Search for your husband or your wife among God’s people, the church! Upon

you are falling the responsibilities of the people of God in the future, as they once fell to Isaac. You will be called upon by God to preach the Word, fight the battle of faith as individuals not only but as the Church, maintain (after having established) a covenant home, educate your children in the fear of God's name, support financially the church and the school, walking as God's covenant friends in the world. A tremendous calling and privilege; but a Canaanitish woman will be of no help to you, she would only be an unbearable burden and endless source of grief. You need the help of one who is "one in the Lord" with you. (II Cor. 6:14)

Date the young man or woman from your own church first! And as you search for a wife pray that God will give to you your life's partner. We believe according to the form for marriage that God "doth yet as with his hand bring unto every man his wife." (p. 77 in the Psalter) Abraham and Isaac trusted in the wisdom and goodness of God that He would provide the woman of His choosing to be Isaac's

wife, that God would lead Eliezer to her and move her heart so that she would return with him to Isaac. "... he shall send His angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." (24:7, Cf. 24:40) And believer note this. what was true then is true today. The man who turns to God for a believing wife, his prayer will also be granted.

In answering our prayers, both as parents and a young people. God uses means to bring to one a believing wife or husband. One of the chief means is the wise counsel and warning of godfearing parents, who seek the "best" for their children. And the second means God uses is the community of believers wherein we are placed and in which community we will find young men and women who are of the same faith and confession. We must search for a wife within that communion or Church wherein God has placed us. Which means that we look first within our own local church and, if you are unsuccessful, search within the denomination of Churches in which God in his wisdom has placed you.

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## *Current Events & Comments*

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# Christian Living and Giving

Gwen Van Eenenaam

There is a general attitude among our young people which is becoming more and more prevalent as the times in which we live worsen. This attitude is one of not caring anymore, of just being content to sit back and watch the world go by. This could even be described as selfishness on our part. This is an attitude which should never be found in the true church! The true child of God should be unselfish; always willing to donate whatever he can to sustain the church.

There are three areas in which I have noticed we fall far short. These areas in

general could be described as a selfishness in giving of our time, our money, and our talents.

How many times do we skip an event that is sponsored by the Federation Board or by our Young People's Society and make the excuse that we have no time for things like that? Many times we can't or won't go because the event interferes with our job. We may also use the excuse of distance. We tell ourselves that events on the other side of town are not worth the drive and the gas that it takes to get there. Who wants to spend a half-

hour driving to an event that will only last an hour? Then we wonder why more activities aren't scheduled for young people. The reason many times is the lack of interest on our part.

Do we really support the church as much as we are able? That is, how do we as young people support the church monetarily? The old guide for giving was that 10 percent of what we earned went to the church. Many young people seem to think this guide is only applicable to their parents. I think that we should follow this guide also. Many times, I know we may skimp on giving to the church, promising to make up for it next week. Taxes and inflation just took too much out of my paycheck this week! The real underlying reason may be that the new dress, car, or stereo we bought means more to us than the cause of God's kingdom. Instead of giving the church whatever money we have left over at the end of the week, we should take our gifts out at the *beginning* of the week, and set aside this amount for Sunday. And when we *do* give, we should always give cheer-

fully and not begrudge this money well spent.

Do we as young people use our God-given talents to the best possible advantage when supporting the church? Many of us seem to take the "I can't" attitude when we are asked to do something. This simple little refusal really implies that we don't really care what happens to the church. Many of us, when asked to do a job or serve on a committee, are content to do a half-job and let someone else do most of the work, or not work at all. This is a sin! God gave all of us talents to differing degrees, and we must not be ashamed to use these talents to His glory.

Many times our lack of interest and participation comes from a combination of those three things. Maybe as Protestant Reformed Young People our New Year's resolution should be a re-evaluation of our existence here below. In these three things, we must remember that God has given us these benefits to glorify Him, not ourselves. Let's use our benefits to His glory and cause!

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## **NEWS** From, For, and About Our Churches

by Karla Kalsbeek

### **FROM OUR HOPE, WALKER, CHURCH**

Mr. and Mrs. John Cleveland rejoice in the birth of a boy, Aaron John, born Nov. 15.

On Dec. 1 the last singspiration of the year was held at our Hope Church.

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Bult and two baptized children, Julia Joyce and John have been received from our Kalamazoo Church.

Hope Choral Society presented their Christmas concert on Dec. 15.

The membership papers of Mr. Peter Schipper have been received from our Holland Church.

### **FROM OUR FIRST CHURCH**

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Rutgers Jr. give thanks to God for the birth of their son, Jonathan Lee.

Public confessions of faith were made Dec. 15 by Richard Dykstra, Ed Ophoff Jr., James Pastoor, Gwen Van Eenenaam, Ralph Vander Veen, and Mary Veltman.

### **FROM OUR SOUTH HOLLAND CHURCH**

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Haak were transferred to our Randolph Church.

The membership papers of Mrs. Joyce Fischer were received from Randolph.

At his request, a certificate of dismissal was sent to William Regnerus.

On Dec. 19 South Holland Prot. Ref. School gave its annual Christmas program.

The membership papers of Miss Alice Van Baren were received from our Southeast Church.

#### FROM OUR HULL CHURCH

The membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. John P. Hoekstra and three children, Gracia, Diane, and Kenneth have been received from the Christian Reformed Church of Sheldon.

The membership papers of Mrs. Eugene De Boer, nee Ruthann Maring, have been received from our Hudsonville Church.

Mr. and Mrs. Loran Te Grotenhuis were blessed with a son, David Wade.

#### FROM OUR HOLLAND CHURCH

On October 17 Miss Sandy Cammenga and Mr. Larry Hildore were united in marriage.

Membership papers of Mr. and Mrs. Jack Arens were received from the Christian Reformed Church.

The baptismal papers of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Windemuller were received from

the Christian Reformed Church.

The public confessions of faith of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Windemuller and of Mr. Steve Berends were made Dec. 8.

#### FROM OUR SOUTHEAST CHURCH

Steve Ophoff and Karen Flikkema made public confessions of faith on Nov. 17.

Public confessions of faith were made on Dec. 8 by Clarence Rietsma, Brent Dykstra, and Dave Offringa.

Membership papers of the families of G. Moelker and F. Ondersma were transferred to Southwest Church.

The J. Velthouse family requested a certificate of dismissal.

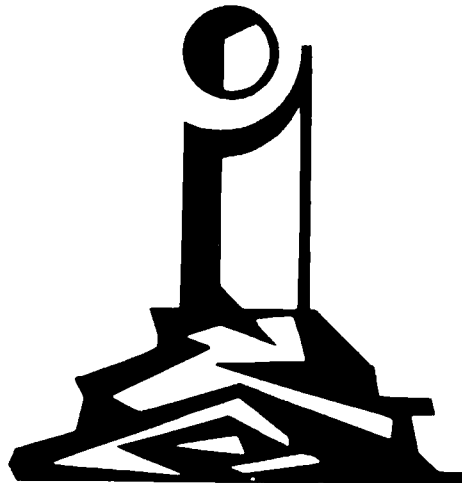
Upon her request, the membership of Mrs. E. Boeze was transferred to First Church.

The Christmas Mass Meeting of the Young Peoples' Societies was held Dec. 22 in Southeast Church.

#### FROM OUR FAITH CHURCH

On Thanksgiving Day Mr. and Mrs. Jake Kuiper Jr. rejoiced in the birth of a daughter, Nicole Marie.

Mr. and Mrs. James Van Overloop were blessed with a son, Jonathan Mark, on Dec. 28.



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