

# BEACON LIGHTS

*FOR PROTESTANT  
REFORMED YOUTH*



FEBRUARY, 1977

LOVE ONE

ANOTHER



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## Editorial

# THE SECOND JAMAICAN-Y PISTLE TO MY GRANDCHILDREN

by John M. Faber

January 19, 1977

Dear Jack and Jill:

Yes, this is the second time I am writing from this sunny clime. I see by our daily paper that it is still below zero in Chicago. That ice and snow would not last very long here. We are surely glad that there is no ice on these roads, for it would be impossible for us then; the roads are very steep and twisty in the mountains. As soon as one leaves the coastal roads one is in the mountains. No, icy pavements are not one of the hazards we encounter; the ordinary ones are plenty. Hazards which we never encounter in the States; such as cows which graze at the roadsides when roadsides are a scant four inches wide, leaving some thirty inches of cow in the road. Goats outnumber the cows, so that, hopefully, we miss some thirty to forty billys, nannys and kids in any given mile of country roads. The city streets are not free of them either, besides pigs. I'm sure you have heard your father speak of road hogs; here they are really that—grown pigs. Oh, we also have the two-legged variety, the truck drivers who thoughtfully blow the horn when coming around the blind curves. And that horn blast tells us to get over the very edge of the road, either the rocky wall or the cliff edge. And if one is driving a little Toyota, as we do, one better hug the edge or learn what it means when we say, "That's the way the cookie crumbles."

Jamaica is a very poor country. The unemployment rate must be outstanding. We see hundreds of men every day who are outstanding—by the wayside, on the sidewalks and everywhere else. The road gangs of ten to twelve men usually have

some eight to ten who are outstanding—watching the other two do the work.

The country recently survived a national election. The prime minister is favoring the socialistic form of government. We read in the paper that gangs of men, and even families, "capture" a house or group of houses for their own. When approached by the police for a reason for such action, they say, "Man, that is real socialism." Even houses belonging to foreign owners, who are in England or America, are so "captured." We often hear of kidnapping, but in Jamaica the thing is house-napping.

We had come to Jamaica without having a house spoken for, but the man from whom we rented the car had found one for us. It was situated on a high hill, overlooking the whole of Montego Bay. We agreed to the price and carried our luggage in. But we never unpacked, for we learned that the kitchen was equipped with a maid! She was of the opinion that the small, dark kitchen was her domain; there was no room for anyone with her. And she intended to cook all our meals. That was not according to our schedule, so we decided to find another place the next day. We looked at five more and finally agreed on one apartment which was somewhat P.R. You see, it was the apartment that Seminarian and Mrs. Mark Hoeksema lived in while he was helping Rev. Lubbers teach the students in our "Jamaican Seminary." So now we have a kitchen in which we can cook our meals. But more frustrations must be suffered. The man who was to install the gas cylinder did not do so until Sunday while

we were in church! Four days of restaurant dining instead of home-cooked meals. We have learned the hard way that when a Jamaican promises he will do something for you, you must believe him—it will get done some time, but don't figure on a certain time!

Our Sundays are very tiring. The first one we traveled 168 miles, very hard miles, and visited two churches. The people are very friendly and appreciate our visits. We had to pack a lunch and supper for our Sunday meals—peanut butter and jelly, tuna fish, and vienna sausage sandwiches. Thermos bottles held the tea and coffee. We found a schoolhouse which a neighbor opened for us so we could sit at the children's desks to eat. We got back home after ten and were

grateful for the safe journey, and tired enough to welcome our beds.

Monday we drove some 100 miles to visit one of the ministers (Phoning is out of the question; only telegrams will reach one on the island). This minister has a large grapefruit tree next to his house on which were some fifty to sixty fruits. Six of the ripe ones he gave us, reaching them with a long pole with a wire hook to dislodge them from the branch so they can be caught by hand as they drop.

If I would tell you of all our experiences it would take a book. But we are taking pictures which you may see when you and your folks come over to visit your grandparents. Will be looking for you.

Love, Gramps

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## Current Events & Comments

# LOVE ONE ANOTHER

by Jessica Poortinga

The Bible in many places speaks of how we must treat the other members in the church. One of the most frequently used phrases is "love one another." The Bible also speaks of "brotherly love." In John 15:12, Jesus says, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."

Yet, a visitor to one of our churches can often see separate little groups of people, cliques. A clique is defined as a small set of persons who cling closely together. Often in a clique, a person from another group is not accepted, and there is an attitude of "I'm better than you are." I Corinthians 4:7 states: "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" In other words, all our talents, money,

personalities, all that we have and are comes from God. Therefore, even if we have more talents, more gifts, than another person, we should not think we are better or puff ourselves up with pride because it is all a gift. Because it is a gift, and because the Bible commands that we love one another and let brotherly love continue, cliques are wrong. It isn't that we can't be choosy in picking our closest friends, but we shouldn't act like someone who isn't one of our friends isn't welcome.

Also, when someone comes to visit one of our churches, we should talk to them and make them feel welcome. Often, I hear students talking about different churches they visited and that they were impressed with the friendliness of one church or another. This should be the response after someone visits one of our Protestant Reformed churches. In John

13:35, Jesus says, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." We, as the youth of the church, should help to make this true

of our churches. After someone visits a Protestant Reformed church, they should leave being impressed with the friendly, caring attitude of the church.

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## *Truth vs. Error*

**REV. ROBERT C. HARBACH**

### **Modern Speech Versions of the Bible AMERICAN STANDARD VERSION**

Although this Bible is not one in modern speech, following, as it does, so very closely with the King James Version and the preceding versions; it may be classified under the above heading in that it is one of the twentieth century English versions of the Bible. In that sense it is "modern." In the wording of its changes, it intentionally remains as close as possible to the language of the King James Version. Its language, therefore, is more that of a polished King James Version than that of a modern speech version. It has more grammatical accuracy and consistency than the King James Version. You find "who" and "that" for "which," "are" for "be," and "its" for "his," as well as other grammatical improvements.

The marginal references are highly valuable, and practically indispensable to the serious Bible student. But these references are also found in most "study"

Bibles on the market, including the King James Version Bibles. The paragraph division of the text is another indispensable feature, which, nevertheless appears also in many of the later versions. The text should be arranged in this way, according to the run of thought, and not in the older choppy way of making a paragraph of each single verse. A very desirable feature is the printing of poetry in its own unique format. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Deuteronomy 32-33, and II Samuel 22 are so printed. Other sections of Scripture which ought to be printed in the format of poetry are parts of Ecclesiastes, most of Isaiah, many parts of Jeremiah, at least most of the minor prophets, certain parts of the New Testament, and places in the Book of The Revelation.

Another commendable feature, as in the King James Version, is that the names of God may readily be spotted. They are

not lost in the format, as in some of the more modern versions. Hence, Lord (in small capitals) is rendered Jehovah. Lord (in lower case letters) is the word for Adonai. Then Lord Jehovah (Genesis 15:1) is Adonai Jehovah. God is usually the word for Elohim, more rarely for El. God (in small capitals) is also rendered Jehovah. Other names either have the Hebrew equivalent in the margin, as El Shaddai, at Genesis 17:1; or the Hebrew is in the text and the English equivalent is in the margin, as Jehovah-is-my-banner (Exodus 17:15).

But there is another sense in which the American Standard Version is "modern," and that is not only that it represents the beginning of the stream of modern versions now prevalent, but that it bears trends and concessions to modernism. It is criticized as being "too stiff, pedantic and unidiomatic," and not enough in the direction of modern textual criticism, making it "too conservative" and out of date as to the best textual scholarship. But suppose you are still something of a "babe in the woods" as to finding your way around in the King James Version: you don't have to worry, for to be lost in the King James Version is, nevertheless, to be safe. But it is extremely difficult to say just how lost a "King James Version babe in the woods" would be amidst the multitudinous, and not all too apparent, changes in the American Standard Version. It takes some doing, in this version, to keep an eye on and be oriented to all the changes and omissions beleaguering this Bible. It includes an exposure to a range of 200 omissions in the New Testament alone.

There are quite helpful marginal notes in the original Hebrew or Greek which interpret or explain. Genesis 1:20 has, "in the open firmament of heaven" where the margin reads, "Heb., on the face of the expanse of heaven." In Genesis 3:20, "Eve" is explained in the margin, "Heb., Havvah, i.e., Living, or

Life." In Genesis 12:9, "South" has the note, "Heb., Negeb, the southern tract of Judah." So "behemoth" is explained, "i.e., the hippotamus," and "leviathan" as "the crocodile." But there are other marginal notations, which, to say the least, may raise some eyebrows, or cause a scratching of the head.

In the Old Testament part of the American Standard Version, variations are placed or suggested in the margin, or it names specifically the ancient version(s) supporting the reading offered. But in the New Testament its sources are concealed under such vague phrases as "Some ancient authorities," or "Many ancient authorities." For an Old Testament example, a variant reading to Genesis 6:3 is suggested from the Sept(uagint), Vulg(ate) and Syr(iac). For a New Testament example, see Matthew 6:13, where the doxology of the Lord's Prayer is placed off in the margin. (See remarks in support of this doxology in the **Beacon Lights** article on the Weymouth New Testament.) For an example of a completely unexplained deletion, see Mark 6:11. Here there is an omission without any notation, in the words: "Verily I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city."

Therefore, though it may seem like a small thing, we do not like it that Psalm 2:7 has, "Thou art my son" (small "s"), as also in verse 12, while Acts 13:33 has, "Thou art my Son" (capital "S"). This version is rather hesitant to acknowledge the deity of Christ, and seems to look for ways to escape doing so. Compare Psalm 45:6, American Standard Version, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever..." where the margin suggests, "Or, Thy throne is the throne of God, etc." with Hebrews 1:8, "but of the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever," where a feeble and miserable note reads, "Or, Thy throne is God for, etc." Here, then, there is suggested a way of dropping

the deity of Christ! This is not worthy of any Bible, for it simply is not the Bible. It is this: worldly, natural, demonic (James 3:15).

Where the King James Version (Job 15:16) has, "how much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?" the American Standard Version has, "How much less one that is abominable and corrupt, a man that drinketh iniquity like water!" Here, the King James Version teaches the total depravity of the race of mankind. The American Standard Version, at this point, teaches something that is true only of a man, one man, any man who happens to be caught up in the behavior described. Another case of undermining the doctrine of total depravity appears at Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (King James Version). The American Standard Version changes it to, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt." The King James Version is saying that man's heart is incurably sick, fatally ill, malignantly diseased. The same word, **incurable**, is found in the American Standard Version at 15:18, and **desperate** is found in Isaiah 17:11.

A marginal note on Mark 16:9ff says, "The two oldest Greek mss., and some other authorities, omit from v. 9 to the end. Some other authorities have a different ending to the Gospel." On the say-so of these "authorities" some of the modern versions relegate this section to a place separate from the body of the Gospel. But surely Mark would not have had it his purpose to end his Gospel on a note of fear, for the whole purpose of the Gospel is that men should not be afraid. Mark himself was well aware of that main purpose of the Gospel: see Mark 5:36. But there is much material available in support of the genuineness of this disputed passage.

At Matthew 2:2, 8, "are come to

worship him" and "that I also may come and worship him," the margin states on "worship," "The Greek word denotes an act of reverence whether paid to a creature (see chapter 4:9; 18:26), or to the Creator (see Chapter 4:10)." At 2:11, where "they fell down and worshipped him," cleverly, there is no note. For the margin already has implied that the wise men merely paid reverence to a fellow creature, and not that they worshiped their Creator. In Matthew 13:51 Jesus asked, "Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord." The American Standard Version has, "They say unto him, Yea." But there is plenty of textual authority for "Yea, O Lord!" Not only is Matthew 17:21 unnecessarily omitted from the text and put in the margin, but so is Matthew 18:11, "For the Son of man came to save that which was lost." With the support that there is for this, it is too important a text to omit. Modernism looks for any excuse to omit such truth! There is much, much more in the way of omissions and changes, but the reader may discover this for himself.

After years of study in the American Standard Version, one's wide-margin study Bible becomes literarily peppered with remarks like, "weighty enough support to retain this reading!" (referring, e.g., to the omission of Mark 7:16), sprinkled with textuary symbols, dotted and jotted with insertions of verses or parts of verses omitted without notice, spattered with critical notes and comments, and dashed with corrections where obviously needed (as at Matthew 27:54, margin: "Or, a son of God.>"). It does not take long to see, however, that this Bible has suffered the Jehoiakim method (Jeremiah 36:20-26) of handling Scripture.

One further observation: take note of the omission at Luke 4:18, the words "to heal the brokenhearted and to." These words are not only in the Received Text, but also in the Caesarian Text, in the majority of remaining witnesses, in

Irenaeus, are supported by Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, Alford and Godet. They are NOT in the Montgomery New Testament, not in Beck's New Testament in the Language of Today, nor in NEB, TEV, RSV, MLB,\* Moffatt Bible. They ARE in the Dutch and German Bibles, the Douay and, lastly, in the Septuagint.

With the American Standard Version you will need compass, sextant, maps, charts, expert guides, first aid kit

(including smelling-salts), spiritual scuba equipment, with special instructions in survival use of tools and equipment needed to find the way in and out this Big Thicket marginalia. With the King James Version, take it up, read, mark, learn, inwardly digest and — enjoy!

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**\*New English Bible, Today's English Version, Revised Standard Version, Modern Language Bible.**

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## Feature

# APPROVING THE DISOBEDIENT?

by Phil Dykstra

**Phil is a member of our Hudsonville Church.**

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Impossible you say! It is and should be impossible among men. The child of God is called to live antithetically in the midst of this world. We are to oppose all that which is of sin in our own life and in the life of the world of wicked men.

On the other hand, it certainly is a fact with the Sovereign God, who is Holy and Righteous in Himself, and we His people who by nature are dead in sin, that He approves us who are disobedient. No, God does not approve our disobedience; the thought of that is blasphemous. But He approved us in Christ before the foundation of the world. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

The purpose of this article will be focused on the idea of our opening remarks; the relationship of the child of God to the disobedient and ungodly. And we want to narrow this down further: "Is it our duty as a child of God to choose or approve an ungodly or disobedient man into office of government in the land, whether this be local or national government?"

Let's just use the example of voting

for President of the United States. The two or three or maybe more men who are running for this office reveal themselves as ungodly men, men who are not obedient to the Word of God, men who take the name of God in vain, men who desecrate the Lord's Day, men who have fellowship (friendly) with the Communists, and we could name many more items which they openly practice.

These men are certainly disobedient to God in that they do not carry out the duties of their office as we find it spelled out for us in Romans 13:3, 4: "For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is a minister of God, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil." Our government openly disobeys and disregards this reason for their office, given by God Himself.

Now we must discuss the question of our calling or responsibility in voting. May the child of God vote for a man who reveals himself as an unbeliever, and who



has no regard for the laws of God? Remember, voting for something or someone is approving of the same. We may not do this, may we? You say, "We have this freedom in our country, and it is our duty before God to exercise this freedom of voting." In the light of what we have previously talked about, is it really our duty before God? We also have the freedom in this country to not vote. You say, "We should vote for the lesser of the two evils." No, evil is evil, and we may not approve any kind or degree of evil. You say, "Our silence is giving the O.K. to the wrong man." If there are two wrong or evil men running for office, silence is better, as far as voting is concerned. By keeping silent, we would

show our disapproval for these wicked men. Is not this letting our light shine before men, and before God?

Would it not then be much better to abstain from voting, than to cast our vote for an unbeliever? My answer to this would be "yes." We must always, in all our walk of life, approve of that which is good and reject that which is of evil.

Some of our young people have expressed an interest in the topic discussed in this article. They would like to see more articles on this topic, as would also our older people. I am not convinced that the position I have taken in this article is a correct one; therefore, feel free to respond.

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## George M. Ophoff (13)

by Prof. H. Hanko

Not too many years went by of Rev. Ophoff's work as pastor of the congregation of Hope before he became actively embroiled in the common grace controversy. As we noticed already in another connection, the controversy over common grace had long agitated the church before it became an ecclesiastical issue at the Synod of 1924. And Rev. Ophoff had come to an independent conclusion on the issue while he was still a student in the Seminary. It is not our intention in this series of articles to go over the whole controversy as it led up to and was "settled" by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church when it adopted the three points in 1924. This material can be found in many other writings, particularly: "The History of the Protestant Reformed Churches" and "Therefore Have I Spoken." Furthermore, Rev. Ophoff himself played no active role in the history of the Synod. His views at the time of the Synod had not been publicly expressed and were not an issue at the Synod. The

Synod did not deal with him and his views when it formulated the three points, and Rev. Ophoff himself was not a delegate to that Synod. Rev. Ophoff enters the picture after the Synod was held.

He enters the picture with the Publication of **The Standard Bearer**. For those who are interested in the history of **The Standard Bearer**, the anniversary volume of this periodical can be consulted. A short history appears in the second issue of Volume 50, pages 32-34. Rev. Ophoff was not among those who formed the original publication committee. According to the minutes of that committee, Rev. Ophoff joined the organization on October 27, 1924, and was immediately appointed to a position on the editorial staff. Nevertheless, his name appears on the masthead of the very first issue. He had, therefore, committed himself to the cause of the truth at the very outset of the movement.

Rev. Ophoff's first article appeared in the second issue, dated November, 1924.

A few quotes from it will give some idea of his own personal sentiments concerning the whole common grace question. It will, at the same time, show some of the characteristic spiritedness and total lack of fear which were to be such significant features of Rev. Ophoff's writings throughout the years.

In an article entitled "A Declaration", Rev. Ophoff writes as follows:

And thus it happens that I, the undersigned, am of the group editing this periodical. The fact that I agree to serve upon the editorial staff of the "Standard Bearer" amounts to an admission on my part that I too reject the views and conception of things which the term common grace stands for. For me it is quite impossible to adhere to the principles embedded in the term common grace and remain on friendly terms with Scripture.

I am aware of it that he who has the audacity to deny common grace is regarded as disgustingly dense, inconceivably conceited and destructive. In the October issue of "Religion and Culture", page 69, Prof. Van Andel writes: "And that now some young American ministers of Dutch descent contend that this doctrine of common grace is not traditionally reformed. How little hold has the reformed truth had on some of us that they do not feel that they are undermining the very foundations of Christian that is Calvinistic Theology, ethics and philosophy." You see, the huge mental and spiritual denseness and the inconceivable conceit of the deniers of common grace staggers the brother. We are ramming in pieces the very foundations of Calvinistic theology, ethics and philosophy.

No doubt we should have trembled in our boots when this monstrous accusation was hurled our way, I suppose for the purpose of terrifying our souls. And I suppose we ought to have blushed when our friend let us see how

blunted our receptive and assimilative faculties are. Yet we did not blush, neither did we tremble. And why not? Because we are too hardened and insensible to blush? No. Because our nerves are of steel so that nothing shocks us? No. We were not disturbed because we had no guarantee whether or not the professor was simply seeing things again. This happened before with him. History proves that the professor is subject to hallucinations. According to Pillsbury (a writer in Psychology, H.H.), a hallucination does not arise from objective phenomenon.

After describing what this "hallucination" was, Rev. Ophoff goes on to give his reasons for rejecting common grace.

Well do we realize that among the adherents of the views which we reject is found the master mind. The chief exponent of the doctrine of Common Grace, the late Dr. A. Kuyper, was a recognized genius. This man devoted time and energy to the development of the doctrine of Common Grace. A work of three volumes was the result. Yet a careful study of Scripture and our standards on the one hand and the doctrine of common grace on the other hand convinced me that the views and the conception of things which the term "common grace" stands for, clash with Scripture. Therefore, I could not do otherwise than break with the doctrine.

However, it was not without considerable hesitancy that I did so. It is a difficult matter to part company with a great Christian thinker like Kuyper. One is constantly haunted by the thought that it is one self who errs. What is more, the existence of common grace is a settled thing. We have come to believe in it as a matter of course. So be it. I cannot see it otherwise but that the doctrine of common grace clashes with Scripture.

Rev. Ophoff goes on then to show how the writings of those who defend

common grace deny in fact the truth of total depravity. He concludes this with the remark:

I, as a reformed preacher, cannot and will not preach total depravity and in the next breath assure my hearers that the depraved sinner, in his depraved state, performs noble deeds, has pure emotions, and thinks good thoughts. God's Word unclothes the sinner, strips him of every virtue and sends him naked to Christ. God forbid that I stop that sinner on the way to cloth him in the beautiful garments of common grace. I should fear lest that sinner would no longer feel the need of Christ....

Such and similar thoughts finding their way in this (article) did its share in opening my eyes to the dangers and fallacies of common grace.

There are other things which caused me to break with common grace....

By this, Rev. Ophoff referred particularly to many inconsistencies and problems which the defenders of common grace themselves brought up, which led him to the conviction that such views were contrary to the clear and unambiguous teachings of Scripture. He concludes this section with the words:

These methods of **some** of the exponents and defenders of common

grace, their faulty thoughts, illogical reasonings, their blunders, their noise, widened the breach between me and common grace. I thought, it can not be there is so very much to say in defense of common grace after all.

Then too, it seems to me that the exponents of common grace are bent on misunderstanding, misrepresenting and misinterpreting the opponents of common grace....

All these different things taken together disengaged me from the doctrine of common grace. I regard the doctrine dangerous, as well as the views and conception of things which the term stands for. I shall use my talents to help expose, in the light of God's Word, the dangers and fallacies of common grace.

The Synod of 1924 declared itself for common grace. Yet the Synod evaded the real issues. The Synod failed to furnish proof. The existence of common grace has never been proven. The objections raised against it have never been removed.

Well, that was a sharply, unequivocal stand. And from that resolve, Rev. Ophoff never wavered all his life. But such a firm commitment to the cause of the truth led to trouble within a matter of weeks.

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“But the Word of God gives the young women of the Church the whole truth, so that they may have a sound mind. In marriage, they can expect children, the bearing and rearing of which will mean pain and sorrow. They must expect to be ‘Keepers at home,’ or as a better translation has it, ‘workers at home.’ Theirs is not the glamour of the ‘career women,’ but the patient, unsung, and often wearisome labor of the home and family.”

p. 52,53 *Marriage* by Rev. David Engelsma



# **FROM THE PASTOR'S STUDY**

**BY REV. G. LUBBERS**

## **THREE THINGS TO KNOW**

**“Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”**

**Romans 7:24,25**

Good Bible students, who believe the Sacred Scriptures to be the Word of God, have all pointed out that the entire book of Romans can be divided into three great sections: **man's total corruption**, both Jew and Gentile after the Fall (Romans 1:18-3:20); the **free redemption in Christ Jesus** by God's marvelous **grace** (Romans 3:21-5:21); and **our walk of thankfulness** in Christ (Romans 6:1-8:39; 12:1-15:33). Hence, there are three things which we must know to enjoy the only comfort in life and in death. The Heidelberg Catechism stands on solid Biblical ground in Question 2!

We call your attention in this regard to the prelude of the Decalogue which you hear read each Sunday morning in your worship service. Remember to listen very carefully when your minister reads the Ten Commandments. He is reading more than **Ten** Commandments. He is reading the words of the **Covenant** of God. Listen

to what God spoke from Mount Sinai in the ears of all the congregation. That congregation consisted of old and young; it also had teenagers in it, hundreds and hundreds of young people. Does not God even have a special word that morning for the children and young people in the fifth commandment? And God says really “three things” in this law! He speaks of:

1. The house of bondage (Sin's misery).
2. Deliverance (It was under blood-sprinkling on the door-posts).
3. Thankfulness (Walk by faith in the two tables of the law).

Three things!

Paul speaks of these three things here in Romans 7:24, 25.

A Christian can be very wretched because of his sins. This is the utter wretchedness which the natural, unregenerated, and unconverted man does not understand or fathom. Paul is speaking here of you and I as we have been

redeemed from legal bondage to the law of sin. He employs the figure of marriage of a woman to a man. A woman is bound by the law of her husband as long as he lives; but when he dies, she is free from that law so that she is not an adulteress if she marries another man. Thus it is with the Christian. He has been redeemed from sin that he might belong to God in Christ. The Christian is not **under law** but he is **under grace**. However, the Christian is not perfect in this life. He now is indeed dead to sin legally, but in his members there is a mighty working of sin, which takes him captive. The **power** of sin is broken, but not the working of sin. That makes for a life long battle in the Christian. This battle intensifies as we grow in grace. We hate sin more and more.

In this raging battle between the old man and the new man we complain that the good what we would do, we do not do; but the evil which we would not do, we do constantly. We are sold under sin. In this battle we measure ourselves by the law of God, even though we are not under the condemnation of the law. And because we would perfectly keep the law of God, which is just, holy and good, but we cannot, we are most wretched. We find that we are poor, wretched, naked and blind. We are in a body which has evil eyes, ears, hands and feet. It is now that we are in a body of death. In this body we sin as long as we are in this life. Yes, in this body, too, we work out our salvation with fear and trembling. But this is a small principle; we **begin** to live according to all of God's commandments. It is the battle between the powers of darkness and the new life in Christ in which you engage as covenant young people. You battle this as young people of God. In this battle you must be strong in the Lord in the power of His might.

But then you will learn more and more extensively the **three things** in this battle!

You will not merely learn that you are

most miserable and wretched; you will also learn to cry, "Who shall **deliver** me from the body of this death?" This is a heart-rendering cry, but it is not from the depths of despair. It is not the Christian who sinks down into utter despair and hopelessness. Not at all. It is really an outcry which waits for the triumphant answer. No, not any human mortal will be able to help and assist us in this utter wretchedness of sin, of trying to overcome sin. All the "counseling" of men will fail to give us the victory which we so earnestly desire to have. We desire total victory over all the hosts of sin and hell. A partial victory will not do. We must be **plucked out** forcibly by the power which is greater than man's. It is the **power** of God which he wrought in Christ in his death and resurrection.

Finally, you must also learn to know right well that He who delivers is Jesus Christ our Lord. Yes, He is our Lord at the right hand of God. He is our Lord because He has redeemed us and claimed us in His cross and resurrection as His own. He is the Lord at the right hand of God's majesty in glory. His is all power in heaven and on earth. He will surely raise us up in the last day. Then we shall be free from all sin and death and all wrath. The battle will be over when we come in glory; for our death is not a payment for sin, but it is a perfectly dying unto sin, and an ascension to glory.

When we profoundly understand that we are saved thus by the **grace** and power of our Lord Jesus Christ, then we shall also be thankful. We shall ascribe all thanks and praise to God alone. We shall cast our crowns before him in reverent and holy adoration.

"Thanks be to God"!

That is the joyful outcry of the apostle and of all God's saints, whether they be young or old.

He is the God who **gives** the victory. He gives us this **victory**, over all sin and death through Christ Jesus our Lord,

complete and final. He gives this out of mere grace. He gives this by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.

Three things we must know more and more! Yes, we must know **misery, redemption, and thankfulness** — all three, progressively more and more. Paul condenses them all in this beautiful text from Romans 7.



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

by Cindi Dykstra

### **BIRTHS:**

Mr. & Mrs. Gary Moelker of Southwest Church were blessed with the birth of a son, Todd Allen.

Mr. & Mrs. James Lenting of South Holland Church were blessed with the birth of a daughter.

Mr. & Mrs. Irv Velthouse of Faith Church were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Sara Jean, on January 10.

Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Boer of South Holland Church were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Kimberly Ann.

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth De Jong of South Holland Church were blessed with the birth of a son, Stephen Jay.

Mr. & Mrs. Ted Pipe of Southeast Church were blessed with the birth of a daughter on January 21.

Rev. & Mrs. Van Overloop were blessed with the birth of a daughter, Suzanne Marie, on January 22.

### **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP NEWS:**

Hull Church has received the membership papers of Rev. & Mrs. M. Hoeksema and two baptized children from Forbes Church.

Hudsonville Church has sent Claire Hoving's papers to her home at her request.

Hull Church has received the membership papers of Miss Ruth Postma from First Christian Reformed Church of Sioux Center.

The membership papers of Mr. & Mrs. H. Schipper and two children have been transferred from Hudsonville to Holland Church.

### **CONFESSIONS OF FAITH:**

Mr. & Mrs. Paul Harbach, Barb Meulenberg, and Jeff Slager of Hope Church in Grand Rapids made public confession of their faith on January 16.

Lori Dykstra, Linda Kuiper, and Lorraine Reitsma of Hope Church in Grand Rapids made public confession of their faith on January 30.

### **MARRIAGES:**

Jeff Slager and Barb Meulenberg were united in marriage at Hope Church on January 29.

### **YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES:**

The first Singspiration of the New Year was held at Hope Church on January 23.

The South Holland Young People's Society sponsored a roller-skating party on February 7.

## **OTHER ACTIVITIES AND ITEMS OF INTEREST:**

Kalamazoo has made a change in their order of worship. Rev. Woudenberg gives the closing benediction before they sing the doxology. This is done to give him the opportunity to greet the congregation as they leave the church.

An Open House and short program for the new addition to the school in South Holland took place on January 28.

The South Holland Ladies Auxiliary sponsored a Pancake Breakfast on January 29.

The dedication of Hudsonville's new church building was held on January 20.

Southeast Church had planned a program on January 28 to celebrate Rev. Schipper's 40th anniversary in the ministry. (With all the snow we've been having, who knows, maybe it was cancelled!!)

## **PLAN AHEAD FOR COMING EVENTS:**

The Young People are planning to have a Singspiration each month. Be sure to mark your calendar for the following dates: February 20, March 20, April 17, May 15, and June 12.

Reserve February 24 for a soup supper at First Church sponsored by Adams School's Mother's Club.

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True, there's been a lot of snow,  
But the mailmen are working yet, I know.  
Each day the mailtrucks make it through,  
Let's keep the bulletins coming too!

(I only received bulletins from about one-third of our churches this month. I'd like to hear from **all** of you!)

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# ***FUTURE*** **PROTESTANT REFORMED** **TEACHERS AND MINISTERS**

The Scholarship Fund Committee is again offering scholarships this year. An essay of 300 words written on the topic "Should religion be taught in the Christian School?" is required along with a record of high school and/or college grades, and a recommendation from your consistory. The scholarships are applicable to tuition only. If you are interested in an application contact:

Deb Miedema  
2850 36th Steet S.W.  
Wyoming, Michigan 49509  
Phone: 538-4835

Applications must be in by May 1, 1977.

**ANNOUNCING**  
**37th ANNUAL P.R.Y.P.C.**

**Sponsoring Society: Hudsonville**

**Location: Camp Geneva**

**Date: August 23 - 26, 1977**

At the end of November, the Hudsonville Societies voted to hold the 37th annual convention. The Steering Committee is busily at work catching up on lost time. We need your financial support.

More information will be forwarded in the next issue.  
More information is being sent to your society secretary.

The Publicity Committee,  
Greg Van Overloop

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