
Beacon

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Lights



Convention Challenge: Deepen Your Friendship With God



By John Huizenga

Last year I challenged the conventioners to find three new friends at the convention. Did you give it a try? No matter where you meet a good friend, you quickly find out that meeting a new friend and maintaining a sound and lasting friendship takes some work. Friendships just don't happen. You must be willing to give of your time and help in time of need. You can not talk about yourself all the time, you must be willing to listen. You must care about the needs of your friend. You enjoy learning about your friend.

This year the theme of the convention is about your friendship with God: the deepest and most profound relationship that exists between God and His creature. Your theme is "knowing God." It is not "knowing about God," but rather, it is the kind of knowing that goes on between you and your best friend. It is the kind of knowing that Enoch had as he walked with God. It is the knowing that is at the heart of the covenant which God establishes with His people. A knowing that is covenant friendship with God.

The young believer who is drawn to the convention by its theme and the opportunities for spiritual growth and Christian fellowship already knows God. The challenge, then, for this year's convention is for you to develop a new dimension in your friendship with God. Think for a moment about being at the convention. Block out from your mind now the people you hope to see, the fun things there will be to do, and the hopes you may have for finding that special someone. Think about your relationship with God. Are you satisfied with the relationship you have with God or do you desire more? What would you like to happen? Do you hope for a dramatic spiritual awakening? The challenge I set forth for you is that you take a piece of paper and pencil wherever you go at the convention and write down a way in which you develop in your friendship with God. It may be something that strikes you as you talk with someone, listen to a speech, or when you observe a fellow young person who is walking in rebellion. In everything that you do, think about knowing God. Look for things that cause your knowledge of God to grow. Whether you perceive growth while in discussion, at a speech, during devotions, or swimming in a pool, write it down and explain a little how your knowledge of God was deepened.

Let us look a bit more at what you should expect as you try to find and articulate your growth in the knowledge of God. Every child of God yearns to know God and experience fellowship with Him. We feel so often that we do not attain to the wonderful knowledge of

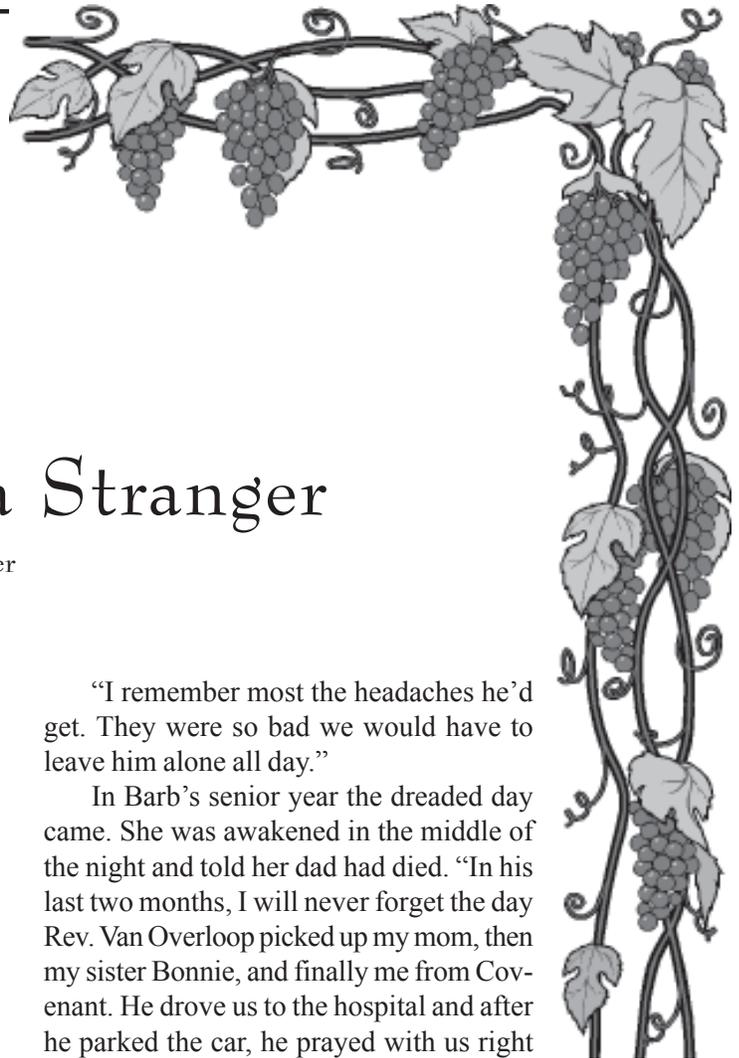
God that Enoch had. Perhaps we are inclined to give up on putting forth effort to seek after God, but friendship demands that we work hard at knowing our God. So don't put this goal which I have set before you on the back burner and imagine that something will just happen in the course of your fun and activities at the convention. Put a note in your Bible. Make it the subject of your prayers.

Every child of God knows that he is powerless to develop that knowledge of himself. We understand that God turns the heart, opens our eyes and ears, and speaks to us. By nature we are spiritually dead and have no desire at all to enter into covenant friendship with God. The gospel is repulsive and stirs up angry rebellion against God. But God begins His work in His people by giving a powerful and irresistible change of heart. Out of that new heart springs forth desire to know God, and the bond of friendship is established.

God establishes His covenant bond with you by free grace, but He does not take us by the hand, whisk us into a flowery meadow, and shield us from all the troubles of life. Developing this friendship toward the goal of walking with God in perfect bliss is a long difficult process. God is pleased to reveal His friendship in the way of showing us our sin. The more we see our sin, the more we know God because our new heart realizes more and more the wonder of salvation. The friendship which we have with God is in Christ alone. In all our seeking of God, we must turn to Christ; and we turn to Christ when we see our sin and feel guilt and shame. In Christ we discover friendship with our God that is deep and profound.

We grow in our knowledge of God all the time, but a convention is unique opportunity for growth. At the convention you will be busily interacting with other young people who are also at the convention to develop in their knowledge of God. There will be those who, driven by their own lust for the glory of men, will display rebellion against authority and seek only what they can get for themselves. These miss the whole point of the convention. Spend the convention week looking for the treasure of friendship with God. Look into the hearts of your friends, search through the words of the speeches, think upon the ideas set forth in discussion, and above all, spend a good portion of your time searching Scripture. In all these things come to God in prayer. Only then will God bless your time at the convention.

May God prosper your week at the convention. May you come home with peace and contentment in God's covenant friendship. Every reader of these words ought to pray that the young people grow in their knowledge of God at the convention and be better prepared to seek God throughout their lives. Whatever the way may be, you will know that your knowledge of God grows when you are given new zeal for giving praise and glory to God. ❖



The Death of a Stranger

by Missi Slager

We will be publishing some interviews that were done by students at Covenant Christian High School. These are interviews that serve well as examples of those whom God has preserved through times of trial. The following is an interview by Missi Slager of her mother, Barb. Missi is a sophomore at Covenant Christian High School.

“Barb, Barb wake up we need to go to the hospital.” “But why, what’s wrong, is he okay?” “No Barb dad didn’t make it . . . he died.” Can you imagine what it would be like to wake up and find out you didn’t have a dad to share your life with anymore? Well Barb Meulenburg (now Slager) knows what it is like to wake up and realize something this dramatic.

At age 15, Barb Meulenburg was an energetic blonde who was enjoying her first year of high school at Covenant Christian. When she was in 9th grade her Uncle Pete¹ was diagnosed with Hodgkin’s cancer, he was told he would not live. But never did she expect her 45-year-old father to be diagnosed with the same cancer as her Uncle Pete. But that day came in her sophomore year at Covenant Christian High School, only her dad was told he would live.

“When he had to go to the hospital for radiation and chemotherapy, I had to drive him because my mom couldn’t drive. So here I was in downtown Grand Rapids in this big old car just months after I got my license.”

For quite awhile Barb’s dad would have to undergo radiation and chemotherapy. The radiation and chemotherapy would make him physically weak, cause him to lose weight and also cause him to get sick frequently.

“I remember most the headaches he’d get. They were so bad we would have to leave him alone all day.”

In Barb’s senior year the dreaded day came. She was awakened in the middle of the night and told her dad had died. “In his last two months, I will never forget the day Rev. Van Overloop picked up my mom, then my sister Bonnie, and finally me from Covenant. He drove us to the hospital and after he parked the car, he prayed with us right then and there in the car.”

Barb’s dad was not one to open up and express his feelings, so Barb found her comfort in the Lord and her best friend, Phyllis “Pickle”. “Not only did I grow closer to God and Pickle but also to mom.”

“The death of my dad was hard especially at age 16. I can’t imagine how my brother Jon got through it, he was only 11 when my dad died, he was just getting to know dad.” The death not only affected the 5 children of David Meulenburg, but also his loving wife, Helene, who was forced to learn how to drive, get a job, and become more independent.

“I will never forget the night I was told he died but I realize now how strong my faith became through his death. I now realize how everything works together for good to those who love the Lord.”

¹Her Uncle Pete was able to be cured of this cancer. Meulenburgs still wonder how the doctors could say he would die and Barb’s dad would live and it ended up being the other way around. ❖

Peter Sympathized

by J.P. de Klerk

Peter van Toorn was known at school as a sensitive boy. This year he came back from his holidays at his uncle's place, a fisherman. Peter was bronzed by the sun. He had daily made himself useful, casting and drawing in the nets, cleaning the fishes as well as the deck. The first day he had been seasick; after that it was fine and he had enjoyed the shifting play of light and color of the calm sea.

Back at school he had expected that everybody would have asked him where he had been, but his classmates tried to impress him with richly colored stories about their expensive trips abroad, and even the nicest girl did not pay attention to him.

Peter was very disappointed and felt miserable. During the Bible-class he had truant thoughts. Suddenly he heard that his name was mentioned and he saw that Mr. Everts looked at him with a twinkling in his eyes.

"O, sorry. Did you ask something, sir?"

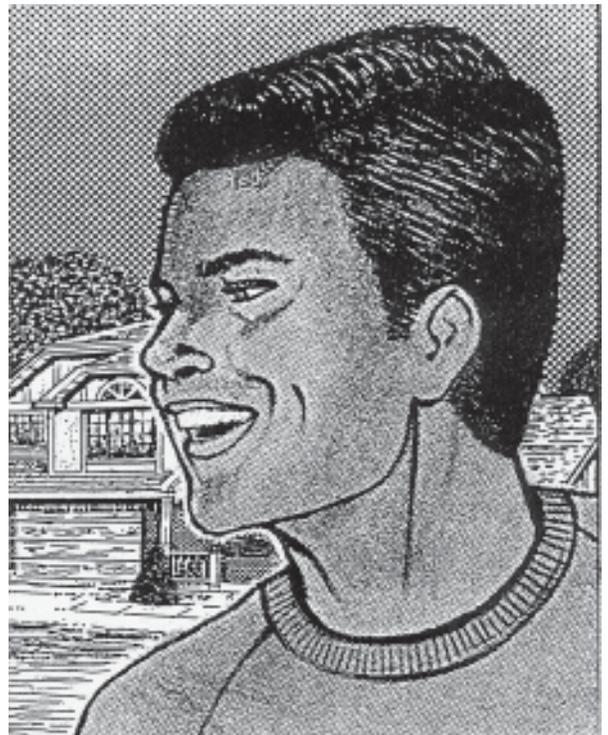
"Yes, Peter, I asked you to read the next verse."

"Yes, of course, sir, but which one is it?"

"Peter, we are reading John 13, the next verse is thirty-four."

"Oh, thank you, sir, I had not noticed..." He quickly found the verse and read: "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another."

"Yes, thank you, Peter. Let us think about this verse. Keep it in mind, young people. I guess, that you think sometimes, that because you are young and you have so many things to do, like your homework, sports, pen-pal correspondence, friendships, that there is no time left to do something that God wants us to do, as to show that we are Christians. God's Word speaks to all of us, including you and me. Others may be indifferent. We have to care for others, wherever they are. Don't say in a particular situation that someone else will be more able



to do this or that. See God's hand in what happens. He can put someone next to you in the bus or trying to get to the other side of the street. Perhaps you meet a cripple, or someone who is crying. Then we must show that we care, yes, because God has loved us and sent His Son to pay for our sins. Well, you know that. Let us be thankful, also in this first week after the holidays."

Peter realized, that up till now he had never seen a person in need of help, or had he not looked around well enough? He seldom travelled. However, Peter presumed it would be possible that he could do something more for his mother, who was always busy. He could take groceries with him on his way back from school. He did it only when she had the flu and asked for it. He should offer a

helping hand more often. There were also some elderly people in the neighborhood. But did God's Word not mean *more* than that?

When he left the classroom he said some friendly words to a couple of classmates, but they were talking and did barely see him.

In the corridor Mr. Everts saw him and said: "Hello Peter, you have a healthy tan. Did you have a good time?"

Mildly surprised Peter said: "Yes sir. I was fishing at sea with my uncle. It was very interesting." Then he ran to the flight of stairs to the bicycle shed.

It was beautiful sunny weather and everybody else had gone already. The school porter however was busy sweeping sand away near the gates, because a piece of the sewerage had been repaired that day.

"Hello Mr. Koksma, you like to keep the place clean, don't you?" said Peter gently.

"Yes, young man, I don't want the boss thinking that I neglect looking after the school. You know, I have not much else to do since my wife died and the children were grown-up, left the house, married; I seldom see them anymore. I had a family life too good to be true perhaps."

Peter noticed that the school-porter had pain in his back. "What is the matter, Mr. Koksma. Have you hurt yourself?"

"Yes, young man, but that happened already several years ago. Sometimes on Sunday I have to leave the Church because I get so much pain in my back, nowadays. Well, it only means that I have become older."

Peter put his bicycle against the wall and said: "Please, Mr. Koksma let me finish the sweeping for you."

"If you want to do that, yes, you make my day."

"Of course," said Peter. "My back is okay."

The school porter kept his hands pressed against his back. "I have been involved in a serious accident after choir rehearsal. I had some unruly students in my car, it was near exam time, I had suddenly to stop for a drunkard, they rolled over me, and I lost control over the wheel. Smash, bang, disaster, chaos.... Well, we all survived, thank God, but I have trouble with my back ever since."

He closed some doors and windows while Peter was sweeping. Then he invited Peter to have a cup of tea with him. They walked to a green door in the brick wall that surrounded the school building and the squares. Behind the door was the house of Mr. Koksma and a small garden with many dahlias in a variety of colors. Peter admired them and Mr. Koksma told him how he looked after them.

In the kitchen Peter found a disorganized lot of used pots, pans, saucers and plates, heaped up on the bench, so he asked straight away: "Allow me to clean this up for you."

"I honestly admit that I highly appreciate that," Mr. Koksma said with a sigh and took a seat on a white wooden chair.

The washing up was easy enough. Peter noticed that it gave him much satisfaction to do something for someone else; it was a new experience. He dried everything and gave it a place on a shelf. Then he made two cups of tea, from tea-bags and boiling water. Mr. Koksma looked very happy.

"You are a good boy. There are not many left like you. My children seldom lent a helping hand and I did not want to force them to do something for their mother. I should have been wiser. One day, when you marry, don't spare your children, let them also show in the kitchen that they belong to the family."

They went to the living room and Peter saw that it was there a mess. He said: "I come tomorrow with the vacuum cleaner. All right?"

Mr. Koksma became shy with him. "If you really want to, yes. What is your name?"

"I am Peter van Toorn. My father is a general practitioner."

"Ah! Wait a minute. You must be the son of my doctor! What is the world small... Do you have brothers or sisters?"

"I do have one sister. Her name is Clara. She is exactly two years younger than I am."

"Well, well, you are a good son of your father. So helpful."

"I don't know about that; I am not sure. It was something that struck me today when I was reading in the Bible."

"I see. Yes, these things do happen."

They drank tea and Mr. Koksma showed Peter some family photos. "They all work hard and go to Church," he said. They forgot the time and Peter noticed that he should be home already.

"Sorry, Mr. Koksma, I have to go now. Do you have enough to eat in the house for tonight?"

"Yes, Peter, don't you worry about that. Your visit was worth more to me than a sandwich with herring. I needed to see someone who cared...."

They gave each other a hand.

"See you tomorrow, Mr. Koksma."

Peter felt something had changed in him. He had no words for it. He felt happy all the way while he drove home.

That evening he wondered, what he had done, simply helping an elderly man, was that what God meant with treating each other well? Is this “love”? It was something effortless. What was it worth?

* * *

It was some days later. Peter walked at home through the corridor when suddenly his father called him.

“Yes, Dad, coming.” He went to the consulting-room. His father looked at him with a smile and said: “Peter, kindest regards from a patient of mine. That man was very depressed for quite a while and he says you have been very kind to him. He feels heartened. I noticed that

his blood pressure has not been so good as it is now since years. Do you know about whom I am talking?”

“Mr. Koksma I presume.”

“Yes. I am surprised and thankful, Peter. Each of God’s children is precious to Him and now I see, that you also *care*. Boy, I am sorry I have not always time for you, or less than I should and want to, but it is obvious we have been cast in the same mould.”

Peter looked meditative and said: “Perhaps God wants me to do more things like this.”

“I am sure *He* will show you the way, Peter.” ❖

J.P. de Klerk is an author and journalist from the Protestant Reformed Church of New Zealand.

Writing Contest

Keepers At Home

by Annette Woodfield (Pen Name)

“That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.” Titus 2:4, 5.

“But what should I do?” Hannah sighed.

“Why not consider studying medicine?”

It was not just an academic challenge, but a constructive suggestion by Hannah’s student counsellor. She was a good scholar, particularly in the areas of mathematics and science. In year nine, her future course of study was something she often wondered about. The thought of being a doctor appealed to her. She could help people. She would have unique opportunities to speak to people about her Lord Jesus. She may be able to do missionary work in a foreign country. It seemed the ideal option.

Hannah had grown up in a Christian home. Her parents were dairy farmers, and she enjoyed riding her horse doing stock work. She learned to do the housework, but her sister was more of a help to her mother. With only two girls in the family, they naturally drifted towards the different roles of house and farm work. Her father en-

couraged her to be involved in the care of the animals. She fed them; helped with milking; vaccinated calves; taught them to drink milk from a bucket, when they were weaned young; and even assisted when cows were having trouble calving. She also did rural science at the local school. All these activities had made her extremely interested in animals and their husbandry. It was a natural step to an interest in caring for people. If individual circumstances are any guide to career choice, medicine, if not veterinary science, was a natural one for Hannah.

People enjoyed seeing Hannah, tall and dark, with her cheerful smile, riding her pony around. She had done so well at the local school that most assumed that she would go on to university. Now that she had set her sights on becoming a doctor, at her teacher’s suggestion, few had any doubts about her attaining her goal. She never really considered not studying further.

Hannah’s mother was a little doubtful about medicine as a career. “Aren’t there a lot of moral problems for a Christian doctor, dear?” Hannah thought that meant that more Christians should study medicine. “Surely, Mother, if more Christians become doctors, then the situation will improve. Patients will feel that they will be prop-

erly informed about ethical problems. A Christian doctor would help them make better choices where moral issues are involved.” So, she kept studying.

The years passed, and Hannah was accepted into medical school. She continued to be successful, and finally qualified as a doctor. As a Christian, there were problems for her to deal with. She prayed about them, and talked to others. She was not always happy that other Christians were seeking to glorify God in their actions. She also sometimes felt compromised in her work, where she was not the one to make decisions alone. There was the situation where her seniors decided not to give antibiotics to an elderly patient who had suffered a stroke, and now had pneumonia, without even consulting his family; or when they didn’t want a patient told details of his illness, as if he had no right to know. She knew of things being done in other departments that sickened her. Ladies who had babies were sent home with “contraceptives,” that prevented pregnancies in some instances, by causing any babies conceived to abort. They were not told this. The tablets were simply called “breast feeding pills.”

In the emergency department, doctors were required to give out the “morning after pill,” which is also abortive. Hannah had to work in this area for a time. The nursing and medical staff were very antagonistic when she would not see a patient who had come in for the morning after pill. She felt threatened when she was told that someone else had lost their job for taking this stand. A Christian she had respected for some time, fell in her estimation, when she told Hannah that she took the opportunity to “counsel” a girl before giving her the medication. This doctor would tell the patient about other options, like adopting out the baby if she had one. This never seemed to change the outcome. The doctor always dispensed the drug. Hannah finished her work there without any feedback from administrative staff on her stand, and was glad to leave.

On the whole, Hannah did not enjoy working as she had thought she would. She was so busy that she had few opportunities to say anything of a spiritual nature to patients. She felt that any impact she had in that area was probably on staff, with whom she had disagreed.

Then everything in Hannah’s life changed. A Christian friend she had grown up knowing, named Phillip, moved to her town, and started coming to her church.

He was tall and fair. He worked as a civil engineer. Phillip and Hannah saw quite a bit of each other through church, enjoying their time together immensely. They

each admired the other’s Christian walk, and as time passed, they grew to love each other. Then one day, Phillip asked Hannah to marry him. It happened in the most perfect setting for Hannah. They were on her parents’ farm, by a river. It was a spot that was very special to her, being filled with childhood memories. When she said “Yes,” she felt perfectly happy.

Hannah had always enjoyed challenges, but now she was surprisingly confronted with a very trying one. As a Christian couple, she and Phillip searched the Scriptures for guidance in their marriage. It was clear to them that Phillip should be the spiritual head and physical provider. When they were married and expecting their first baby, Hannah automatically gave up her work, and gladly took on the role of full-time homemaker. It was then that she and Phillip received much criticism and opposition.

They were hurt and surprised that Christian family and friends were against Hannah leaving paid employment. Had she not always wanted to be a doctor? She had studied for many years to achieve her goal, and her career had only just begun! Couldn’t she earn more than Phillip? Wouldn’t they be better provided for if she worked too? Then they could give more to the support of their pastor in their small church. Phillip could surely look after their children just as well as she, especially if she only worked part-time. That way she could keep her hand in, too, for going back to work full-time when the children were at school! It dazzled them that so many people felt compelled to influence them in this way. It was hard work, initially, to continue on when they were evidently holding a minority opinion.

Nevertheless, Phillip and Hannah were comforted by the Bible passages they read about husbands providing for their families and wives being “keepers at home.” Hannah found a contentment she had never expected in doing the daily tasks of housekeeping. She realized how many ladies she knew, who worked, put themselves under more pressure than necessary, sacrificing their families in the process. By exercising moderation, they managed very well on one income. Phillip teased Hannah that, “A little house means less dusting.” She argued that his reasoning was actually that “A little yard meant less lawn to mow!” They were really very pleased that they could afford so much together.

Daily, Phillip and Hannah came to appreciate how the Lord blesses His people when they are walking in obedience to His commands. They thanked Him for His wisdom in providing a wife and mother in their house, to make it a home. ❖

Wisdom

*W*isdom is the skillful use
Of knowledge that one gleans;
It helps one gain the perfect end
By using best of means.

*I*t is a treasured gift so rare
That men could seek in vain;
It can't be found the world around
By great men seeking gain.

*T*he key to wisdom, scripture tells,
Is fearing God the Lord,
Obedience to His holy will
And trusting in His word.

*S*o ever follow righteousness;
Let sinners gain their gold—
Their end's destruction; but the just
God's kingdom shall behold.

Thelma Westra

Attending To Family Worship

by Aaron Cleveland

Family worship is indispensable. It cannot be done away with. It cannot be ignored without consequence. Attending to it regularly is important. We as young people must know this. We cannot avoid worship with our families and not suffer spiritually. The devil is hard at work, plotting to keep us from our homes. He knows very well that his work becomes harder if we are in the safe confines of our covenant home. It becomes even more difficult if we are found in the reading and study of God's Word and prayer. Family worship is a practice which God-fearing families have exercised since the beginning, as recorded in Scripture. In Deuteronomy 11:18-20 the Israelites were given the following instructions, "Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the door posts of thine house, and upon thy gates."

In Deuteronomy 31:12, 13, we read, "Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known anything, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it." As well as the corporate worship of God, families were also instructed to worship God and parents to instruct their children in the ways of God's law.

In Psalm 78, especially in verses 1-8, we have record of how fathers testified to their children of the wonderful works that God had done for generations before. Each generation declared to the next of "the praises of the

Lord, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done." Fathers instructed their children "that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (vs. 7). The same picture is drawn for us in Proverbs 4:1-4 of a father instructing his children in God's law. Verse 4 reads, "He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live."

From reading II Timothy 3:14, 15, Ephesians 6:4, and Acts 10:2 it is evident that family devotions were also an important part of family life in the New Testament church. The family of Genesis 18:19, the family in Paul's day, and the covenant family of today is characterized by the exercise of family worship.

Today, it seems that any substantial family life, much less family worship, is no longer practiced. Even those who come from Reformed backgrounds seem to have tossed aside the exercise of family worship which was preserved through the work of God in the Reformation. Family worship, for various reasons, is either practiced irregularly or not at all. The children and young people of these families go uninstructed in the wonderful works and laws of God. The children soon become forgetful of these works of God. A generation is being raised which knows not the Lord.

Family worship, which was preserved through the Reformation, is an activity, which we as young people ought not to look upon lightly. It is interesting to read what some men from the Reformed tradition had to write about family worship. What follows is a quote from a *The Christian Magazine of the South*, a publication of the Presbyterians during the 1840's.

Now, family worship is one of the singular actions of God's people. We do not look for this, we do not expect it, from those "who are the enemies of the cross of Christ." When, therefore, those who claim to be

followers of Christ, as distinct from the world, are asked: What do ye more than others? their daily practice in this matter should speak in the language of David: we find "It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord, and to sing praises unto the most High: to shew forth his lovingkindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night."

"The devil hath a great spite at the kingdom of Christ, and he knoweth no such compendious way to crush it in the egg, as by the perversion of youth, and supplanting of family-duties. Now the devil knoweth that this is a blow at the root, and a ready way to prevent the succession of Churches: if he can subvert families, other societies and communities will not long flourish," wrote Thomas Manton. "If youth be bred ill in the family, they prove ill in Church," he added.

Writes Rev. Barry Gritters in an article entitled "Family Worship," "God's Word is such that it speaks to our needs so wonderfully. During family worship, we see the struggles of God's people with their sins, witness their miraculous deliverance by God's grace, and observe their lives of gratitude. Everywhere, we find Christ. During the discussion of a particular passage, a Christian family grows together, spiritually. They learn how great their God really is, and together put their trust in Him."

Family worship ought to be highly valued by Reformed young people for many reasons. It was one of the means by which we were instructed in the ways of God as children. It is one of the ways in which we now grow spiritually as young people. Secondly, family worship is the very worship of God, which arises from a thankful heart; a heart that depends upon God for every need. Thirdly,

family worship is spiritually reviving. It is comparable to a cup of cold water which a marathon runner ravenously swallows down. After a long day of battling the devil, fighting temptation after temptation, suffering the scoffs of the ungodly, and struggling with the burdens of this life, family devotions are a welcomed glass of cold water for the thirsty warrior. The reading of God's Word and prayer heals the wounds, feeds the hungry soul, calms the fears, and points us in the right direction. Finally, during family devotions, the needs and problems of the family are brought before God. The needs and questions of us young people are brought before God. Prayer is offered to God asking for guidance. The Bible, when read, speaks sufficiently to these questions and needs.

The devil has contrived every temptation possible to keep us from family worship. He would have us think that many activities are more important than the very worship of God. He disguises these activities as legitimate, but when they are really examined, they turn out to be nothing more than unprofitable endeavors, unworthy of supplanting the worship of God with our family.

To this plotting of the devil, we Reformed young people must say, "NO!" It is the only response. It is the response that places the worship of God as the highest priority in our lives. It is the one activity that takes precedence over all others. It is the only activity with which we cannot do without. Then, we will be able to express with the Psalmist in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." ❖

Aaron is a member of Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



The Song of Zion

by Skip Hunter

A Psalter-Psalm Devotional of Praise to Our Sovereign Covenant God

August 1 Read Psalm 26

Psalm 26:1-3 David makes four requests of God in these three verses. He asks God to judge, examine, prove, and try him. He does this not in a boastful way but rather in a way in which he humbles himself completely to God. Are we able and willing to ask these things of God. Are we willing to put our lives under the scrutiny of God's laboratory. I use this term because it is as if God is a scientist testing a material or process to see its worth. Of course we know that of ourselves we would be found wanting. David knew that as well. But David had a certain confidence which allowed him to make that request. We will investigate that tomorrow. For now pray for the grace to make these requests of God. Sing Psalter 69:1.

August 2 Read Jeremiah 31:1-9

Psalm 26:1-3 Yesterday I spoke of the confidence which David has to make his bold requests of Jehovah. We find them in verse one and three. There are four of them. Because of their length I will not rewrite them, but you try to find them. Once again we must know that David's confidence is not found in himself. There are those who would conclude that from these verses. But rather David's and our confidence must be founded only on Jehovah's lovingkindness. That is the thrust of these truths. Because our trust is in the Lord we may have confidence that we will not slide into sin. Only because of the truth of salvation by grace alone will we and all believers have the confidence which David expresses in these verses. We must pray daily for the grace needed to give us this confidence and that we may live lives pleasing to Jehovah for all that he does for us. Sing Psalter 70:1-2.

August 3 Read II Peter 2:1-10

Psalm 26:4-5 Young people, can you make the statement that David makes in these verses, or are you found in the company with those who hate God? Parents, do you let your young people keep company with those who have no use for God and His church? Do you like Eli refuse to rebuke your children and give them over to Satan so that they become sons and daughters of Beliel? We definitely live in the world, but we must just as definitely not be of the world. You cannot go into the fire even a little bit and not get burned. We must walk an antithetical walk all the days of our lives. We must

teach our children and young people how to walk this life as well. Pray to God for grace in this matter. Sing Psalter 69:2.

August 4 Read Daniel 6:1-22

Psalm 26:6-7 In this familiar passage to all of God's saints, young and old, we see that Daniel was saved because of the innocence he possessed by the grace of God. With confidence he walked into the lion's den knowing that Jehovah was able to save him from death if it was His will. He did not fear death in any form because he knew the reward that awaited him. When he was delivered Daniel made a confession of faith to the king. David knew because of the righteousness granted him by God he, too, could make a confession of faith. Is this our experience? Young people, as you contemplate making confession of faith, are you doing it for the right reason? Are you convicted of your innocence even as David was? Those of us who have made a confession of faith, are we living it? Sing Psalter 69:3 and 70:3.

August 5 Read Micah 4:1-13

Psalm 26:8 Two days ago we went to God's house. Did you enjoy it? Did you love it? Were you content to spend a nice summer day listening to the word of God which may have pointed out our sins? Young people were you able to forego your pleasures willingly and participate in the pleasure of the church? Adults are you willing to tell your coworkers what you did on Sunday? David loved God's dwelling place because he knew of its importance to his life. He knew that here he found his salvation and was willing to forsake all earthly pleasure to frequent the house of God. Let this be our joy in this life and know that this is just a foretaste of the Sabbath rest that will be ours in the life to come. Sing Psalter 69:4.

August 6 Read Acts 13:4-12

Psalm 26:9-10 Once again David returns to life with the wicked. He once again wants not to be found with them. He does this in the knowledge of their end namely Hell. David knows what will happen to those who will not take the name of Jehovah on their lips in praise. David knows what happens to those whose whole life is consumed with doing evil. He knows that God sees every man in every sin, and he does not want to be found with evildoers. We, too, must have this desire. Our actions must not be driven for our

pleasure because then usually we will seek mischievous ways. Let us pray for grace to live lives pleasing to God and the desire to do so. Sing Psalter 69:5 and 70:4.

August 7 Read Psalm 26

Psalm 26:11-12 In the close of this Psalm David returns to making a request of God. He asked that he might be redeemed by God. He knows that of himself he is no better than the wicked of whom he spoke earlier. He knows that there is only one place for him. It is the place which has been made smooth by God's grace. His place and our place is among the congregation of God's people. There is no other place of refuge for the elect. His place and our place is doing the will of God in accordance to His Word and to His glory. Is this your desire, people of God? Sing Psalter 69:6-7 and 70:5.

August 8 Read Psalm 27

Psalm 27:1 This Psalm has long been a favorite of God's people of any age. I have heard many an elderly saint refer to its most comforting words. In the first verse already we read of the confidence that every child of God may have because Jehovah is his light, salvation, and strength. Like Paul in Romans 8 David confesses that the elect saint need not fear anything or anyone. Sometimes we fear what may happen to us in some earthly situation. We do not need to fear anything at all. God will care for us. More importantly we need not fear any spiritual situation because the same God will care for us here as well. Do not be afraid, people of God, Jehovah will guard in this life and bring you safely into the life to come. Sing Psalter 71:1 and & 73:1.

August 9 Read II Timothy 1:12-18

Psalm 27:2-3 David becomes more specific in his confidence in his Savior. David spent much time in the early part of his life fleeing from enemies. Some of those enemies could be found in Israel while others were from outside. No matter what the occasion David could trust in God. We, too, can have the same faith. We can have it because God is God. He has promised to care for His people, and His promises are sure. Throughout history saints have undergone persecution. That will be our lot as the time of the second coming draws closer. We have but one concern, that is to speak of the hope that lies within us. Everything else is in the sovereign hand of our King who reigns on high. He will keep us from one or one hundred enemies. Even if they kill our earthly body, our souls will sing with the church triumphant. Sing Psalter 71:2.

August 10 Read Isaiah 26:1-9

Psalm 27:4 This is a most appropriate verse to consider today. For today is the Lord's day. This is the day in which we ready ourselves to spend the eternal Sabbath in heaven. Is this your one desire, people of God? What about you, young people? Is this day precious for what it is rather than what you wish to do today? Did you behold the beauty of the Lord even as God's Word was proclaimed in church? Did you go to church with the purpose of inquiring about the will of God in His house? Are we seeking the things of Jehovah today rather than our earthly pleasures? Maybe another look at the Heidelberg Catechism's exposition of the Fourth Commandment would do us all good. We can only trust in our God when we seek the beauty of holiness in His house. Sing Psalter 71:3.

August 11 Read Zechariah 9:9-17

Psalm 27:5 David knows how he will be victorious over those who hate him. He knows that God will take him and hide him in His presence. David will not win a huge military victory over his spiritual enemies. Those victories were only pictures of the victory that will come at his King's hand. His victory and ours is found at the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Only there will the child of God win the victory that will last forever. It is only in the shadow of the cross that we can find any real refuge from our spiritual enemy Satan. We must never hope to win any earthly victory but must be content to rest in the arms of Jesus. Sing Psalter 71:4.

August 12 Read Revelation 5:1-14

Psalm 27:5-6 I have included verse five with today's verse so that we can see the cause for our rejoicing. After seeing the victory won by Christ, the child of God wishes to express his gratitude for his deliverance from Satan. David says that he will go to the house of God and sing the songs of joy given to him by God. Is this our reaction? Do we wish to sing? Do we wish to sing songs which only speak about God and his greatness? There are many songs in today's world which seem to be Christian. But do they speak of God's glory or man's glory? Do they give man some credit for a victory over sin? These are not the songs which will show true gratitude for salvation. Look for the songs inspired by the Holy Spirit and sing those songs in gratitude for deliverance from sin. This will be a true sacrifice of joy! Sing Psalter 71:5.

August 13 Read John 15:1-10

Psalm 27:7-8 After expressing his confidence in God, David breaks into prayer. He prays that God will hear him at all times. He does this not because he lacks the needed confidence, but because he knows that he must be continually praying for deliverance. Every day we must lift our hearts in prayer to God. He has commanded this as we see in verse eight, and we must seek His face in obedience. Prayer is the means by which we can take our needs to our heavenly Father. We can pray knowing that God has answered saints in the past and cared for them. Our prayers must be cries of need. They cannot be the boasting words of the Pharisee. They cannot be the disrespectful words of many today. Our prayers must arise from our hearts asking for only things that are acceptable to His will and prayed in the name of Christ. Sing Psalter 72:1, 73:2, and 74:1-2.

August 14 Read Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 27:9-10 Children and young people, the worst thing that maybe you can think of would be that your parents would abandon you. I do not mean that God takes them from you in death, but rather that they just leave your house and leave you to whatever happens. This is what David considers in today's verse. He does this so that he can teach us more about God and His love for the elect. There is nothing that we can do which would cause our heavenly Father to forsake us. We deserve that you know. We sin daily against Him. We do not deserve the least of the benefits that He gives us. But we have the confidence that He will never leave us; He will always be at our side guiding and comforting us. Sing Psalter 72:2, 73:3-4, and 74:3-4.

August 15 Read John 16:1-13

Psalm 27:11-12 David realizes that his only deliverance will be through the knowledge of his deliverer. Therefore he asks of God for

that knowledge. He knows that he can only receive it through God's teaching. David also knows that the knowledge will lead him in a plain path, that is a path with one goal. That goal is the glory of God. Young people, many of you will be gathering for our Protestant Reformed Young Peoples convention. What is your goal? Will you ask God to lead you in a plain path? School will be starting soon. What is our goal in the upcoming school year? Will we seek the knowledge of our God and not our glory or pleasure? It is only through such knowledge that we can overcome sin and Satan. Sing Psalter 72:3.

August 16 Read Psalm 27

Psalm 27:13-14 People of God, do you have the faith to wait upon Jehovah? In this world in which we want instant gratification of our desires, do we know how to wait with patience on God's way? David said he would never have made it except that he believed in God's goodness. He knew that his victory was not on this earth because this is not the land of the living, this is the valley of the shadow of death. David also knew that the courage he needed came not from his heart but from the hand of God. Waiting upon God. What a hard thing to do. Waiting upon God. What a blessed thought! Let us wait with patience upon Jehovah who cares for us throughout all our life. Sing Psalter 73:5-6.

August 17 Read Psalm 28

Psalm 28:1-2 David begins this Psalm with prayer. He opens by calling God his rock. If you have been exploring this summer, you may have come across some interesting rocks or rock formations. One fact about these wonders of creation is that your parents and grandparents could have seen them and your children and grandchildren could see them yet if they are not moved or destroyed by man. Rock stands for a long time. But yet because rock can erode, it is only an earthly picture of our heavenly God. We, like David can pray to Him with the assurance that He will not be silent toward us. David also confesses that God is a heavenly God. We must pray to Him as such. We may never bring Him down to our level because He is not earthly. Sing Psalter 75:1-2.

August 18 Read Ecclesiastes 8-14

Psalm 28:3-5 The wicked have a certain end. Of this David is sure. David also knows that his human nature would cause him to attain the wicked's end if it were not for the grace of God. He passed this knowledge unto his son who wrote the reading for today. Do we, like Solomon understand that God will have us give an account for every work that we do? David knew sin, and we know sin as well. Daily we must pray for the needed grace to deliver us from sin and Hell. Make that your prayer today. Sing Psalter 75:3.

August 19 Read Micah 7:1-7

Psalm 28:6 The word blessed means "to speak well of". It is hard to imagine that we can bless God. But we must because He is the blessed One Who blesses us. Our blessing God is an expression of gratitude for our salvation. David had experienced the answer to his prayer of verses 1-5. He now breaks out in joy for that answer. God's answer may not always be what we wish to hear, but God's answer will always be good for us, as we confess by saying Romans 8:28. ("And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God...") Sing Psalter 75:4.

August 20 Read I Timothy 4:1-11

Psalm 28:7 David continues his expression of joy for God's answer to prayer with a confession of faith. Young people who are contemplating making a public confession of faith before the church, can you make this confession of faith daily? Do you confess by your words and deeds that God is your strength and shield and that it is He that helps you throughout life? You must live your confession daily before men. You must know and be able to sing the songs of Zion in any situation. We read that "out of the heart are the issues of life". Does your heart rejoice because God makes it glad? If it does that, thank Him often and praise His name whose mercy endureth forever. Sing Psalter 75:5

August 21 Read Psalm 28

Psalm 28:8-9 David's confession of faith, which started out personal, now becomes a confession for the church. Not only does he confess that Jehovah is His strength, but he also confesses that He is the strength for all those who have been chosen from eternity to be the people of God. David now prays for the salvation of all of God's people. Is this your prayer, people of God? Is this your desire? Do you wish the communion of saints with all the saints in heaven? Do you show that by your actions on this earth? How about you, children and young people, what are your attitudes to those children and young people whom GOD has placed around you? Do you love every one of them? If you do, pray for them; if you do not, pray that God will give you the grace to love all the saints. Sing Psalter 75:6.

August 22 Read Psalm 29

Psalm 29:1-2 There are four commands in these two verses. Three of them are the same, and the fourth has the same idea. We are called to give unto the Lord. While this giving does not specifically mention offerings, the idea is there, I believe. First of all David makes it clear that the mighty are to give unto God. This does not exclude the lowly but it specifically includes the mighty. Who are these mighty? They are anyone God has endowed with gifts in this life. It may be riches, intellect, gifts in the church, or any other gift God has given us in an extra measure. What are we to give? We are to give to God the glory due to His name. This may be by singing, by offerings, by doing our work to his glory, or by doing anything else to His honor. The last command is more specific. We are to worship Jehovah. The word worship means "to bow the knee toward". We must bow in humble adoration toward God. Let us think about this as we look toward the Lord's Day. Sing Psalter 76:1.

August 23 Read Isaiah 35

Psalm 29:3-5 The next three verses tells us something of whom we worship. Each of these verses mentions the voice of Jehovah and its majesty. Who among us cannot remember someone whose voice has a nice timbre to it. When God speaks however, something happens! Something is moved or is broken. He speaks and a mighty rushing wind causes an effect on the earth. He speaks and war breaks out in the nations. It is to that voice that we must bow in worship to our heavenly Father. God speaks in many ways. Are we listening to His voice? Do we see what is happening in the world around us? Are we taking notice of what happens? God is speaking. Are we listening? Sing Psalter 76:2.

August 24 Read Revelation 8:1-13

Psalm 29:6-9 These four verses continue the thought of the previous three. It speaks of the effects caused by Jehovah's voice. These effects are far encompassing. Even the birth of the animals are controlled by his voice. His voice causes things to happen in the deepest forest. David is teaching us about the omnipresence of our God. Do we confess this attribute of His? Are we conscious that each action is caused by a God who can speak and it comes to pass? What is our reaction to the voice of Jehovah? The last part of verse nine tells us what it should be. We must speak of His glory concerning all that happens on this earth. This is hard to do sometimes. We do not want to give glory to God for a wild storm. We want to take credit for our accomplishments. We must not do that. We must give God the glory for all things are His and are under the control of His majestic voice! Sing Psalter 76:3.

August 25 Read Psalm 29

Psalm 29:10-11 In closing to this Psalm, David tells us that our mighty God is gracious to His people. Because He is our king, He rules us by His sovereign power. We need not worry about what may happen. He will care for us. He gives to us the strength which sustains us in any circumstance. Strength in time of our need is His gracious gift to His people. He also blesses us with peace. We can have peace on this earth even when it is shaking around us. Why? Because it is Jehovah's voice which causes it to shake. We will have peace in heaven when He takes us through death or the second coming of Christ. This is a blessed peace. Thanks be to God! Sing Psalter 76:4.

August 26 Read Psalm 30

Psalm 30:1-2 The title to this Psalm gives to us the information of David's devotion to God. Even though he was dedicating his own house, he gives to God glory. He realizes his ascent to being king of Israel was not his own doing but the Lord's. He knows that if it were not for Jehovah's help he would have been defeated by his enemies. Is this our reaction to success in this life? Do we give God all the credit, or are we like Nebuchadnezzar saying, "Is this not great Babylon that I have built...?" David also confesses his sin on such an occasion. This, too, must be our prayer in all that we do. Our sins rise up against us daily; only God can take them away. Give to us a humble heart O Lord in the midst of this world. Sing Psalter 77:1 and 78:1.

August 27 Read Luke 23:32-43

Psalm 30:3-4 Facing death the elect thief on the cross found forgiveness in Christ. He was assured that he would spend eternity in heaven. David had this confidence as well. He knew that death was not the end for him. He knew that there was a better life awaiting him. O, he could not know it as we do with our full revelation of Scripture. He reminds the church that the redeemed have a reason to sing. They can sing because they are the redeemed. Their song must be the thanksgiving for the holiness of God. The reprobate cannot sing with this assurance. Their singing just sends them further and further into Hell. We must sing often, and we must sing only songs which glorify God for our salvation. Sing Psalter 77:2 and 78:2.

August 28 Read Revelation 21:1-7

Psalm 30:5-6 The reason for our singing can be found in verse five. We sing because our God is full of lovingkindness. We sing because of his grace which is found in the word favor in verse five. We may have sorrows in this life. Over and over Scripture testifies of the afflictions of the righteous. But when the long night of life on this earth is past, joy comes with our entrance into heaven. God inspired David to write these words. David had a glimpse of the glory that would be his and ours. He realized that in all his riches he had nothing without God. Is this our confession? Do we live that confession? Or are we like the rich fool? Think about it. Pray about it. Live your confession. Sing Psalter 78:3.

August 29 Read Acts 10:1-8

Psalm 30:7-8 David continues in this prayer to address the greatness of God. Like Cornelius he knew that prayer was the way to address God with his concerns. David realized that at times because of his sins, God's favor was taken from him. David asked for deliverance and like Cornelius his prayers were answered. The word supplication means an asking. We must ask God for the things he has promised to give us. We ask them not because God wants to make us beg, but rather we ask because it is a means of thankfulness to enter into prayer. It is only unto God to whom we must and can go in time of trouble. Let us bow on our knees in prayer often asking Him for those blessings He is pleased to give us. Sing Psalter 77:3 and 79:1.

August 30 Read Luke 18:1-8

Psalm 30:9-10 By way of the parable which we read today, Christ taught his people to pray often. He taught them that God was more righteous than any earthly judge and would answer our prayers in His time. David knew that truth as well. David, like Moses, called upon God's promise of eternal life as he prayed for help. He knew that only in the way of salvation from sin would he find peace with God. He wanted that peace. Is this our desire? Do we want the peace that forgiveness from sin brings? Do we call on God often for such peace? Pray, people of God, and pray often for that peace. Sing Psalter 77:4 and 79:2

August 31 Read Psalm 30

Psalm 30:11-12 David's prayer is finished with words of joy. He has gone through God-ordained afflictions, and now he participates in God-provided joy. Through the way of sins' forgiveness, David has come to a time of gladness. But that gladness has one object. That object is, of course, to praise his redeemer's name. He can not be silent. He cannot attend the congregation of elect in the temple and just watch. No, David must break forth into singing in gratitude for salvation from his sins. Are you planning to sing with your whole being in church today, people of God? Young people, what are you doing during the songs? Are you lifting your voices in glad adoration of your Savior? If you have trouble opening your mouth in church, imagine what it would be like not to have the opportunity in Hell. Singing is the God-commanded way of thankfulness for the believer. Therefore let us sing and give praise to His Holy Name whose mercies endure forever! Sing Psalter 77:5 and 79:3.

Rock Music

By Nathan Lanning

One of the most important issues in every believer's life, one of the indicators that point to the final resting place of his soul, is the issue of what kind of music he listens to. Is he glorifying God or the devil by what he listens to? Rock music should not even be an option for any Christian because of the physically weakening and soul deadening effects it has on all of its listeners.

Rock music is a broad topic, and there are many types of rock music. But whether you listen to country, acid, punk, or heavy metal you are listening to music that is classified as rock.

Most, if not all, people who listen to rock music would say that you are crazy if you told them that rock had degrading effects on your actual physical body. However, there are some very serious effects that rock music has on the body that many people never consider. Some of these adverse effects on the body come from the noise of rock music. The limit for human ears is ninety decibels of sound, yet the average rock concert is 115 to 125 decibels (Elshout 268). You can imagine, that it has been reported that some people can not hear properly for three days after attending a rock concert. This loud noise at rock concerts is also known to cause hostility, fatigue, indigestion, high blood pressure, and hypertension (Elshout 267).

Another adverse effect of rock music on the body is caused by the bass tones and beat of the music. These bass tones and beat cause the adrenaline and the sex glands to over secrete. Consequently this is why people "head bang," mosh, and destroy concert arenas, and feelings of lust and sensuality overcome them (Godwin 11).

Futhermore, the body has to re-balance the hormones that have been acted upon. The body draws blood sugar from the brain to re-balance everything, because of this, the brain cannot feed itself and you can lose your self control (Godwin 11).

Dr. John Diamond, a well known Australian physician, has shown another undesirable effect of rock mu-

sic on its listener's bodies. Using hundreds of people, he would have them extend their arms and then he would push it down, usually using 40 to 45 pounds of pressure to push the arm down. He would then either tap out the basic rock beat or have the person listen to rock music, when they were listening to the music or beat only 10 to 15 pounds of pressure would be needed to push the arm down. When the music or beat stopped 40 to 45 pounds of pressure would again be needed to push the arm down. More than 90% of people that he tested showed these results (Elshout 267, 268 Godwin 12).

Yet another physical effect of rock music is that of violence. Many of the heavy metal rock groups shout out messages of violence in the lyrics of their songs and perform gruesome acts of violence on stage. Many rock videos are rated extremely violent, and in a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics it was found that 56% of all music videos contained violence (Holmberg 28).

One example of violence in a video being acted out in real life is that of one video produced by a rock group Twisted Sister. In their video, a boy rebels against his father and throws him out the window. A young man in New Mexico murdered his father in a similar way, the murder being reported to have been inspired by Twisted Sister (Bender 124).

Another example of listeners following their star's examples is when a teenager committed suicide while listening to Ozzy Osbourn's song, "Suicide Solution" (Lawhead 17).

Accordingly, Dr. David Guttman, a professor of Psychiatry at Northwestern University says, "Rock has so often been involved in these things (violence, teen suicides) many of us in Psychiatry have had to take it more seriously" (Bender 124).

Another obvious and harmful effect of rock music on the body is drugs. It is obvious to see that drugs are an important part in rock music and its followers' lives by all the songs that are written about drugs and by looking at how many rock stars and their fans are hooked on drugs.

Cris Willman of *Entertainment Weekly* reports that there has been a steady rise in drug related deaths and near deaths occurring in the rock world (6). When Steven Tyler of Aerosmith was asked if drugs were still a part of the music scene he replied that yes, there were, and eight out of ten rock musicians were using drugs and that “it goes with the territory” (Holmberg 32).

Just a short list of popular musicians recently dying from drug related deaths is: Kurt Cobain (Nirvana), Kristen Pfoff (Hole), Jerry Garcia (Greatful Dead), Shannon Hoon (Blind Mellon), Brad Nowell (Sublime) (William 7).

On another level, rock music also definitely influences the mind. Music has been called the language of man’s emotion: Plato saw this as he stated in three points that 1) Music could strengthen a person, 2) Cause him to lose his mental balance, 3) Cause him to lose his normal will power so that he cannot control his acts. Whether a person is affected positively or negatively depends on what types of music the person listens to (Elshout 266).

Kerry Livgen, a rock performer, admits that people do take what he and other musicians write seriously; many people worship rock bands and the music is the standards by how they live. He also admits that after a while not even the band can control their fans anymore (Bender 124).

One of the rotting effects of rock music on the mind is the lust that all rock music promotes. The way that many rock stars and their fans dress promotes sexual desires, there are also many acts performed on stage by rock musicians that resemble sexual activities. Messages of no remorse or guilt of sex before marriage and free sexual activities are brought forth in the lyrics of many rock songs (Holmberg Video).

Some examples and feelings of rock stars who wish to show sexual messages and feelings in their music are Tina Turner, whose image is that of heavy breathing and sexual lusts, and Madonna whose whole lifestyle is a gross violation of all sexual activities (Godwin 88, 99).

Another sinful effect of rock music on the mind is rebellion. Rebellion is the core of rock music, all the “great” rockers from Elvis to today’s popular rock bands have been a symbol of rebellion (Godwin 24-25).

The lyrics in almost all rock music is to tell listeners to rebel against authority. The spirit of these songs is to defy everyone else and listen and obey yourself alone (Holmberg Video).

Dr. Paul King, professor at University of Tennessee comments on this point. He says that the message of

heavy metal music is that there is a higher power in control of this world, and that power is Satan (Holmberg 29-30). This message is clear rebellion against God and his power over all.

Tying all of these things together, there is one thing in particular that we should be aware of, that is the effect of this music on children. Dr. L.D. Tashjan says that seven to eight-year-olds who listen to the lyrics of rock music condoning sex, bestiality, and bondage at their impressionable age can seriously warp their minds (Holmberg 28). Following this idea, Dr. Joseph Novella, psychiatrist and director of a drug treatment center in Washington D.C. reports that youngsters who are inclined to drug abuse mainly listen to heavy metal and Satanic music (Bender 124).

There is a whole different type of effect that rock music can have on people, and this is far more important and deadly. It is the spiritual effects of rock music. It is evident that music can have effects on your spiritual life. In the time of Jeremiah the prophet, the Jewish race offered their children alive to their gods while pounding on drums and playing wildly on all kinds of musical instruments (Godwin 9).

It is also clear that rock musicians want to have a spiritual effect on their listeners. In the words of Jimi Hendrix, “We’re making our music into electric church—a new kind of Bible... a Bible you carry in your hearts, one that will give you a physical feeling... We want them to realize that our music is just as spiritual as going to church” (Godwin 17).

This is obviously not a good kind of spiritual music that Hendrix is talking about, and all through Christians can see that Satan is working in his heart.

This Satan and his religion, Satanism, is at the root of rock ‘n roll in two ways: 1) Rebellion against God and worship of Satan himself. 2) Mock Jesus and the cross and desecrate all things that stand for Christianity (Holmberg video). I have shown before the rebellious spirit of rock ‘n roll and how it evidences itself in the lyrics and lifestyles of its fans. The heavy metal bands come out clearly in their utter hate for all Christianity, especially the cross. Thousands of CD covers, posters and lyrics for songs show the hatred of the cross as they turn it upside down, burn it, break it and mock it. (Holmberg Video).

They show their dedication to Satan and hatred to God in their songs, their performances, and their lifestyles, many things so bad that I don’t dare write them down. One Slayer fan stated, “I hate your God, Jesus

Christ; Satan is my Lord. I sacrifice animals to him. My God is Slayer, It's the words of their music I believe in" (Holmberg video). That in itself is evidence of Satanism in rock music. More proof is a popular musician, Ozzy Osbourn. Some of his songs are titled, "Satan is Lord" and "I love you Devil" (Bender 124). Ozzy says that these titles are just a marketing plan, but who could write songs like that without Satan in his heart?

Heavy metal bands are not the only one to show signs of Satanism in their music. For example Jane's Addiction has the cover of an album mocking the Trinity with a one man two women group sex situation. One of their songs tells of Jesus lying with his Marys (Holmberg 18).

Also in the realm of spirituality, the music itself comes from evil spiritual activities. The rhythms of rock do the same thing to you as the drumming of Sateria and voodoo, says David Byrne of *Rolling Stones* (Holmberg 43). We see this to be true in one stunning example. An American missionary took his family to Africa. While they were there his teenage kids played some of their rock music on the radio. Natives came running over to the missionary when they heard this and asked him why he allowed his kids to play voodoo music to call up demons during rituals (Godwin 17).

There is also a Greek god named Pan who has the horns, legs, and ears of a goat and the body of a human. An occultist describes Pan as a principality of Satan appearing at witch coven meetings (Godwin 2-3). Many bands—not always hard rock bands—have Pan as a main theme in their music showing the relationship between rock and the occult. One of the founding members of the Rolling Stones, Brian Jones, went to Morocco, Africa to attend an occult festival dedicated to Pan. Drugs and music were used to summon up demons being worshipped. When Jones came back he had the festival recorded and released on an album called "Brian Jones Presents the Pipes of Pan" (Godwin 3).

Looking at all the evil effects of rock music and the seriousness of the sins against God in rock music you would think that God would have something to say to us about it in His Word. There are many passages in the scripture that warn us about the evils of rock music. We should look at the passages and take heed to them.

Matthew 15: 18 - 19 warns us that all that comes out of our mouths (Talking or singing) is what is really in our hearts as we read, "But these things which precede out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile a man. For out of the heart proceeds evil thoughts, murders, adul-

teries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies." This passage states all the basic parts that make up rock 'n roll and tells us that they are evil.

I Timothy 2:16 follows this by warning us to "Shun profane and vain babbling: for they will increase unto more ungodliness."

Furthermore we are also warned in the Bible about lust, which rock music so openly promotes. Proverbs 6:32 warns, "But whoso committeth adultery with a women lacketh understanding; he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul." In the New Testament Jesus tells us that whoever looketh on a woman to lust after her committeth adultery, so you can be assured that the Devil is using rock music to get us to lust and therefore to destroy our own souls.

The Bible also warns us about the rebellious attitude in rock music. Isaiah tells us that Satan was thrown out of Heaven for rebellion against God (14:12-20), and now he is using rock music to get us to rebel. Accordingly, the Bible warns us against rebellion as Jeremiah tells that those who rebel against the Lord will be cast off the face of the earth (28:16).

The word of God also gives a reason why many rock groups mock Christianity and the cross. I Corinthians 1:18 says, "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness." This explains why they mock the cross—to the reprobate who will perish, the cross is foolish.

Finally I Timothy 4:1 says, "Sons shall depart from the faith giving heed to doctrines of the devils." This warns us that if we continue to listen to the doctrines of the devils in rock music without repenting we will depart from the faith and perish.

Now knowing that there is a great danger in listening to rock music, we should make sure that we and our children and young people especially, don't listen to it. The first thing that we have to do is look at ourselves. We have to make sure that we are not listening to any type of rock music ourselves. After we do that then we can look at others.

The next thing that we should do (as parents) is to find out if there is a problem of the children listening to rock music. We have to check the stations that their radios are on, look at their CD's and tapes. We can't just assume that they are good kids who would never be drawn to rock music. Ephesians 6:4 give the parents the right to look through their kids belongings. It says there that the parents have to nurture children in the admonition of the Lord.

We also have to pray for guidance not to listen to rock music. Prayer is the key in the battle against rock music. Both Ephesians 6:12 and II Corinthians 10:3-6 tell us that all the battles that we fight are spiritual, and we cannot battle in the flesh but we have to battle through prayer.

Another step that we should take in prevention of rock music is to have a heart to heart talk with children about rock music. We can also do this in Sunday School or in Young People's meetings. We should educate our young people about the evils of rock music and the consequences of it.

Finally, if our children do not listen to our warnings, we have to set punishments for them. We have to make sure that they know that it is a serious offense against God to listen to rock music, and that it has soul damming effects.

Looking at all this, we see all the serious and dangerous effects that rock music has on people physically and spiritually. I pray that all Christians take this to heart and seriously reconsider what they are doing if they have fallen into the sin of listening to rock music. Matthew 3 says that every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is thrown into the fire, let us not bring forth evil fruit and be thrown into everlasting fire by listening to rock music.

Where We Stand

Eternal Life

By Rev. G. M. Ophoff

Reprinted from the Standard Bearer December 1, 1939.

“This is life eternal, that they may know thee, the only and true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.” John 17:3

Eternal life. It is a boon unspeakably good. But just what is it? How is it to be described or defined? Is it heavenly felicity? Is it to be identified with holiness, with purity of heart? Christ says that to know God is eternal life. Mark you, not to know *about* Him but to know *Him* is life eternal. It is a knowing that

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The Bible



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a knowing that springs
from experiencing His
power to save from sin

springs from experiencing His power to save from sin, to deliver from the power of sin, to conform such who by nature are the children of the devil, according to the image of His Son. The carnal seed in the church, the children of disobedience, who keep not His covenant, know about Him, about His power to save; for the Gospel is

preached also to them. They, too, together with God's believing people, are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. They, too, behold, in a glass, the glory of the Lord. They are even enlightened, and are perhaps tasting the heavenly gift, and are being made partakers of the Holy Spirit and may be tasting the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come. Yet they do not actually know God, as they have never experienced that power of His by which He quickens the dead, sanctifies the unholy, that power through the exercise of which He causes the vile yet elect sinner to partake of His divine nature. Hence, though they know much about God and about His redeeming power, they know not God. They are like one who, though well informed respecting the competence of a certain famed physician in the treatment of bodily disease, has never himself experienced the competence.

But it is not sufficient to say that to know God is to experience His redeeming power. Consider, that, according to Scripture, this power, as exercised, is the power of

**this power, as exercised,
is the power of His love**

His love, so that to be saved by Him forms the certain evidence of being His beloved. Scripture lays much stress on this. "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us (Rom. 5:8). But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (Eph. 2:4,5). And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour (Eph. 5:2) ... even as Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word (Eph. 5:25, 26). Behold, what a manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: ... (I Jo. 3:1). Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us (I Jo. 3:16) ... but that he loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins (I Jo. 4:10). Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father (Rev. 1:5, 6)."

It is worthy to note that nowhere in Holy Writ do we come upon a statement that reads, "But God, for His great love wherewith He loved us, causes His sun to rise

over us, sends us rain, causes our land to yield abundantly, and blesses us with bodily health." The reason is that the certain evidence of God's love of His people is not His prospering them in a material sense. Sending His people prosperity is no surer or greater indication that He loves them than His sending them adversity. He sends them the one as well as the other in His love. From this it follows that by itself material prosperity is no sign and pledge of God's love (the contention of the exponents of common grace). The pledge of His love is a new heart. And if so, then the certain indication of His hatred of

**The pledge of His love is
a new heart.**

some, is His determination not to save them. And as to material riches, they are gifts of love only if the recipient be a believer. If it were true that such riches as enjoyed by the wicked betoken God's love, it would have to be considered strange that not one statement to this effect can be found in all the Scriptures. So far is Holy Writ from teaching that God prospers materially the wicked in His love, that it teaches the very opposite, to wit, that to the wicked prosperity is a slippery place on which He sets them.

It is altogether understandable that God's bestowing upon His people the gift of salvation should be the pledge of the love which He bears them, that the power by which He saves is the power of His love. Consider what His saving His people means. It means that He washes them in the blood of His only begotten Son, thus making them to partake of His divine nature, that He takes them into His house and to His heart as His children that they may everlastingly dwell with Him and be satisfied by His likeness. How then could His saving them not be the expression of His love.

And so it is likewise understandable that God's bestowing upon the wicked material riches is a doing expressive not of His love but of His wrath. This is understandable. For so far are such riches the means by which God softens the hearts of wicked men, that the more He prospers them, the more they taunt Him, the more vehemently they say, "Who is the Lord," the more determined they become in their resisting Him. And as he determinedly willed this sinful reaction, the contention that also the prosperity of the wicked is to be regarded as the expression and the undoubted testimony of God's love, is grounded neither in Scripture nor in reason.

Now if the power by which God saves is the power of His love it follows that knowing God is experiencing His love. However, knowing God is more than experiencing the power of His love in the sense of unconsciously

**knowing God is
experiencing His love**

undergoing its benign operations. Knowing, it is to be considered, is always an act of man's conscious soul. If a person, who is critically ill, is not conscious of his undergoing a successful operation, he does not know and is thus not rejoicing in the prospect of a speedy recovery. So it is in the sphere of grace. To know God's love is to consciously experience, and thus to taste, its power. It is thus a necessity knowing oneself as forgiven and saved unto God, and as possessing in Christ the right to draw near unto Him. Now whereas this knowledge is the fruitage of an act of Christ's Spirit which consists in His testifying with the spirit of God's believing people that they are God's children and are thus vested with Christ's righteousness and washed in His blood from their sins, and whereas the Spirit is so active in the hearts of believers only when they, by God's mercy, are forsaking their sins and turning more and more to Him the living God, it follows that to know God is to walk before His face in newness of life. A believer, who is living in sin, does not, while unrepentant, know God. The more earnestly be-

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lieving people mortify their members which are upon the earth—fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry—and the more diligent they are in putting off anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of their mouth and in putting on the new man, which is renewed in the knowledge after the image of him that created him, the more vividly do they know God, and thus know that they are God's children. And the less diligently they are in this respect, the less vividly do they know God.

Now if knowing God is undergoing the operation of the power of His love, it is at once a tasting that God is

gracious, lovely, glorious. God being the inclusion of all perfection and virtue, is gracious, lovely, glorious. And in His love, He also beautifies His chosen people by nature ugly, through cleansing them from the sin in Christ's blood, conforming them according to Christ's image and ever-

**He also beautifies His
chosen people**

lastingly causing the heavenly fullness that dwells in Christ and of which God is the eternal fountain, to abound in them. And they know themselves as saved, to His people, as God's Spirit testifies with their spirits that they are His children. Thus a heavenly gladness fills their souls. Now this joyful awareness of what they are in Christ—kings and priests unto their God—is their tasting that God is good. Still all has not been said. Knowing God is also beholding Him with a sanctified and heavenly organ of perception, and as so beholding, a being satisfied by the spiritual beauty of His nature as revealed in Christ.

So, to know God is to be like Him and thus to love and delight in Him. It is to stand in His presence in the consciousness of being the objects of His delight. It is, in a word, having fellowship with Him.

**to know God is to be like
Him and thus to love and
delight in Him.**

Now to so know God is live eternal. If so, it follows that eternal life is more than mere existence. It is heavenly perfection, joy and peace. It is the gladness that springs from the consciousness of seeing God's son in Christ. It is to see the heart of Christ's God. It is therefore even something better than the blissful existence of Adam in the state of integrity. Adam, too, during the duration of his sinless state knew and walked with God. But he did not pray, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgiveth all thy iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction." He therefore was not tasting the pardoning, saving, love of God. He saw not God as He is, as he saw Him not in the face of Christ. And the glory of his existence was earthy. God's believing people, on the other hand, are new creatures. Their glory is heavenly, as they bear the image of the Lord from heaven. And

they see God as He is, as they behold Him in the face of Christ. And they have life eternal, life everlasting and heavenly. For they know God, the only true God.

It is solely because God is only and true that knowing Him is life eternal. He is the only God. In distinction from the creature, He is the foundation of His own being and the well-springs of His own existence. He is thus in

**It is solely because God is
only and true that knowing
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and of Himself and in respect to the creature, the fountain of all life and goodness, so that the goodness of His people—their love and holiness and wisdom—is His goodness shed abroad in their hearts. Hence, He is truly God and none else. Besides Him, the righteous One, there is no righteousness; besides Him Who is love, there is no love; besides Him, the mighty One, there is no might, strength, power, so that not to know Him is to be unrighteous, unholy, unlovely, foolish, vain. Thus not to know Him, the only God, is death with all its concomitants: damnation, curse, hell.

**Thus not to know Him,
the only God, is death**

Being the only God, He is the true God. He is all that a being must be in order to be God. He thus stands opposed to falseness, unrealness, vanity. He is the true, eternal, simple, immutable essence. As compared with Him the creature is nothing. He is the highest essence, truth, good. He is pure being. He possesses not but is truth, righteousness, love, wisdom, might, power. And between His being and the revelation of it in word and deed, there is perfect agreement, so that to know His word is to know Him. He thus also stands over against lying and falsehood. He is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent: He hath said, and shall do. He hath spoken and shall make it good (Num. 23:19). He is true God over against error. His knowing is determinative. He therefore, knows all things as they are and all things are as He knows them. His knowing is consequently correct and unchangeable. It is living and absolute. It is essential in God and thus precedes all things. It is one with His being. His Word, Law,

Gospel is therefore pure truth. He is the original truth; the fountain of all truth, the truth in all truth; the ground of the truth, of the true being of all things, of their capability of being known and thought; the ideal of all truth, of all ethical being, of all rule and law, according to which the being and revelation of all things must be appraised; the fountain and origin of all knowledge of truth in every sphere the light wherein we alone can see light, the sun of spirits.

Being the true God, He is the rock. Through His unchangeable firmness, He is the eternal support of His people, their shield, their defense, their fortress. As true God, He is the faithful One, keeping covenant trust, the faithful and dependable resort of His people. So, to know Him is life eternal.

However, God is known, in the sense described above, only in and through Christ. “This is eternal life, that they may know thee—and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” And the reasons? Firstly, in Him dwells all the fullness bodily—the fullness of grace and truth of which Christ’s God is the eternal fountain. So the Father willed—willed that of this fullness of which He, the Christ, was to be the meritorial source, He should also be the eternal seat and channel. And this He is. Thus He is everlastingly the true bread of His people, their living water, the true vine in whom they everlastingly abide and as so abiding bear fruit, the head of the church, the chief cornerstone of God’s temple, their truth and light, and thus their very life.

He is their light. He sustains to them the relation of light-source, so that knowing Him, they walk not in darkness but have the light of life. They are not merely outwardly illuminated. There is such an outward illumination. It consists in being enlightened by the truth without being made to love the light. That Christ is the light of His people means that in Him they are light, and thus having life abiding in them—the life that is light, truth, love, holiness.

Being their life and light and truth, He is their way to the Father, the triune Jehovah. He is the only way. Hence, no man cometh unto the Father but by Him. No man can know the Father except in and through Him. He, therefore, who is pitted against Christ knows not God, is shut out from the presence of the Father, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, thus the God of mercy and grace. Such a one is thus unloved and unblest.

If Christ is light and life, the seat and channel of the grace and truth that is the portion of God’s people, it follows that He is also the radiance of the Father’s glory,

thus the face in which the redeemed see and know God. God has a face. If He had not, the believers would never be seeing Him. And that they shall see Him, the God and Father of Christ, is promised them. Said Christ, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." The believers will see Him, not, to be sure, His essence, which is invisible, but His face and thus Him. For His face is radiant with the beauty of His infinite perfection, with the glory of His Invisible Self, so that, beholding His face, believers see Him, God, His very heart, the love of His heart, by the power of which they were saved. And God's face is Christ Jesus. For He is in the Father, and the Father is in Him, and the words that He speaks, He speaks not of Himself: but the Father that dwelleth in Him, he doeth the works.

God's face is Christ—the Christ as He brings Himself forward for all that He is. And He is the Lamb of God, Who took away the sins of the world by His suffering and death; the way, the truth, and the life; the resurrection and the life; the Christ with whom God's believing people were crucified, buried, and raised up together and made to sit in heavenly places in Him; the Christ Who ascended into heaven, was crowned there with power and glory and Who now gathers His church and rules His people by His Spirit and His Word; the Christ, Who can pray for His people and save them to the uttermost, because He is the Lamb, "as it had been slain" and because in Him now dwelleth all fullness bodily; the Christ, finally, Who shall roll up the heavens as a scroll and cause the elements to burn, that the new heavens and the new earth may appear and that His people with Him may appear in glory. This Christ is the face of God. Beholding Him, the redeemed see God. Knowing Him, they know God. Loving Him, they love God. Dwelling with Him, they dwell with God. For His love is the love of God. His beauty is God's glory. Where He is, there is God. Of the fullness that dwelleth in Him, God, the triune Jehovah, is the creative fountain, so that the Father is in Him. He therefore is in the absolute sense God's Christ and as such the Christ of His people.

However, God's face, which is Christ, God's people in this life see through or in a glass. And this glass is the Scripture. Hence in this life, God's believing people stand not before God's very face but before this face as reflected by the Scriptures. It is for this reason that believers feel themselves attracted to the Word. It is in the Word that they behold the face of God Whose grace they are ever being made to experience. But the reflection of God's face in the Scriptures is dark. "For now we

see through a glass, darkly" (I Cor. 13:12). This can be explained. Objectively by the circumstance that the language of Scripture is earthy as are also the symbols through which Christ in His Word speaks to His people of the glory of His Father and of Himself. In the Scriptures Christ appears as the true bread, the living water, wine, milk, as the door and the way, as the lamb and the alter, as the morning-star, as the sun that shines in our heaven. It is thus in a speech that is earthy, that the Scriptures were written. The Scriptures being earthy, believers behold an earthy image of God's heavenly face, which is Christ. Thus as compared with God's very face, this image, this glory of God as reflected by the earthy Scriptures is, must be, dark. And it is well that it is thus. For how could believers now in this life have God's face as the direct object of their vision? The dazzling radiance of that face would destroy them. In this life then, the believers do not see God as He is, as they do not see Him face to face. But the promise is that they shall. And by this promise they live. For they want to see His face directly, behold with pure and heavenly eyes His glory. Their desire shall be granted. They shall see Him face to face. Then they shall know as they are known. And their joy will be full. And in heavenly language they shall everlastingly cry out His praises. For they will then be like Him, their God. He, Himself, has said it. "And we shall see Him as He is, for we shall be like Him." It is not the ideal of essential likeness that is here promised, but a likeness that will consist in believers being holy, as He is holy.

"This is eternal life that they may know thee... and Jesus Christ *whom thou hast sent*." It is the Christ whom God *has sent*, that must be known, if God is to be known—this Christ and none other, the Christ whom He *sent* into

It is the Christ whom
God *has sent*, that must
be known, if God is to be
known

the world, into our grief and hell and whom He raised unto our justification. In His name only is their salvation.



The St. Piter Church in Grouw

by J.P. de Klerk

This is a State. Reformed Church, built in Grouw in 1100. Probably One of the oldest Churches in The Netherlands, with a visible history of wars, destruction and restorations (numerous alterations, trying to save at least something of the past).

Grouw is a village in the province Friesland, part of Idaarderadeel, to which also smaller villages belong, like Egum, Friens, Roordahuizum, Warga, Warstiens and Wartena. There are many farmers with cattle, but also the building of small ships for sailing (there are two lakes, the Pikmeer and the Wijde Ee).

The oldest part of the Church is built of tuff, later enforced by hard-baked bricks of various kinds and sizes. At the back there is the remnant of a tower in Romanesque style. The roof above the nave is covered with slates. High above the small entrance door big pieces have been hacked out of the thick walls (though at several places windows of the past had been taken out and the openings closed with bricks, perhaps as a precaution against intruders) and big ordinary windows put in. The gutter has been completely renovated by bronze, against rain and snow water.

In the Church there are yet handmade family benches of the families Donia and Kamstra, made in 1610. From



the same period date three copper candelabra. Before the Reformation there was already an organ, but it was replaced by a bigger one in 1853, at the east side of the Church. In 1907 the old pulpit was taken away and a new one placed under the organ.

In 1973 the organ was restored. In



1985 the dome-shaped roof appeared with a small wooden tower, where in the Middle Ages a mass bell has been. The most famous minister in the St. Piter Church has been Franciscus Elgersma (1627-1712), who wrote ten books of theological value. He had a great knowledge and understanding of the Word of God. His best known book is *Carduus Benedictus* (the blessing of the oppressed). ❖

J.P. de Klerk is an author and journalist from the Protestant Reformed Church of New Zealand.

BAPTISMS *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."*

Mark 16:16

BYRON CENTER, MI

Mr. & Mrs. Terry Holstege presented their children, Kiersten Jean and Jacob Andrew for baptism.

Presented for holy baptism was Judith Ruth, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. John Chesebro.

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

Baptism was administered to Alexander Nicholas, son of Adriana Roolker.

FIRST, MI

Mr. & Mrs. Randy Corson presented their daughter, Rachel Lanae, for baptism.

Presented for baptism was Kevin James, son of Mr. & Mrs. Ken VanPutten and Nicholas Joh, son of Mr. & Mrs. Doug Looyenga.

GEORGETOWN, MI

The sacrament of baptism was administered to Adrianna Renae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Scott Haaksmā.

Baptism was administered to Havila Jael, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Marc Kamps, and to Kaly Jo, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Craig Glashower.

HOPE, MI

Holy baptism was administered to Elizabeth Hope, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jeff Kalsbeek, to Caleb James, son of Mr. & Mrs. Tim Koole, to Michael Edward, son of Mr. & Mrs. James Lanning, and to Elyssa Anne, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Brad Schwarz.

HOLLAND, MI

Mr. & Mrs. Ben Bosman presented their daughter, Ariel Grace, for baptism.

HUDSONVILLE, MI

Sarah Joy, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. George Hoekstra, was presented for baptism.

LACOME, CANADA

Holy baptism was administered to James Robert, son of Mr. & Mrs. Jim Wierenga.

Church News

LOVELAND, CO

The sacrament of baptism was administered to Isaac Joel, son of Mr. & Mrs. Tim Griess, and to Samantha Jo, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. David Stains.

PEACE, IL

Presented for holy baptism were Magdalene Mae, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Jay Martz, and Lainah Matalyn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Ed Heeter.

RANDOLPH, WI

Mr. & Mrs. Dan Hanko presented their daughter, Cassandra Hope, for baptism.

SOUTHWEST, MI

Presented for baptism was Brandon James, son of Mr. & Mrs. Craig Kuiper; James, son of Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Kleyn; and Katharyne JoAnn, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. David Reitsma.

CONFESSIONS OF FAITH

"...and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Romans 10:10

EDGERTON, MN

Daryl Brands, Carisa Bleyenbergh and Lisa Bleyenbergh have made public confession of faith in our LORD.

HOPE, MI

Public confession of faith was made by Susann Huizinga and Dorothy Kalsbeek.

Tamara DeMeester and Rebecca Vermeer have made public confession of faith in the Lord Jesus.

Jennifer Knott, Kari Moelker, and Joanna Rutgers made confession of faith in the Jesus Christ.

LACOMBE, CANADA

Confession of faith in our Lord was made by Sarah Linker and Rodney Wierenga.

LOVELAND, CO

Public confession of faith was made by Anita Brands.

PEACE, IL

Stephan Haney has made public his confession of faith in our Savior.

Public confession of faith was made by Mark and Sandy Brooks.

REDLANDS, CA

Dave Slick and Mark Baker made public confession of their faith in the Lord Jesus.

MARRIAGES *"...and they twain shall be one flesh."*

Matthew 19:5

BYRON CENTER, MI

Mr. John Bruckbauer and Miss Melissa Talsma were joined in holy matrimony.

EDGERTON, MN

Joined in holy matrimony were Mr. Doug Brands and Miss Lisa VandenTop.

GEORGETOWN, MI

United in holy matrimony were Mr. Scott Koole and Miss Suzanne VanOverloop.

Joined in marriage were Mr. Nicholas Westra and Miss Cyndi Fisher.

Mr. David Kamminga and Miss Dawn Saagman were united in marriage.

HOPE, MI

United in marriage were Mr. Jason Cleveland and Miss Tamara VanDenTop.

Joined in holy matrimony were Mr. Arin Windemuller and Miss Sarah Schimmel.

KALAMAZOO, MI

United in the bonds of marriage were Mr. Daniel Wheeler and Miss Mindy Steenholdt.

RANDOLPH, WI

Joined in the state of marriage were Mr. John Huizenga and Miss Jeanine VanBaren.

Gallery of Pictures (1)

As their family toured the art museum, Lydia and Nathan constantly walked ahead of their parents. They admitted the pictures were nice, but one glance was enough for them. Their parents, however, lingered over much of the exhibit. Besides that, their little sister, Anna, clung to Mother's hand and was too little to walk very quickly. Finally Lydia and Nathan rested in front of a large mountain scene and waited for the others to catch up.

"This is a pretty nice picture," commented Nathan, who was slightly younger than his sister.

"Yeah, the more I look at it, the more I see. Look at the way the sun shines on the water there," Lydia said. "And look here—in the shadows is a bear!"

Before they knew it, Dad, Mom, and Anna had joined them.

"Well, how are you enjoying the museum so far?" Father asked Lydia and Nathan.

The two looked at each other knowingly. "Oh, it's not too bad," said Lydia. Nathan added, "It's not as boring as I thought it would be."

Mother smiled. "Some pictures are quite interesting. When you take the time to consider them, they show you something beautiful."

"Consider..." mused Dad. "Consider the lilies," he quoted.

"I didn't see any paintings of lilies," said Nathan.

"No, but God has filled Scripture and Creation with pictures, sort of like this gallery is filled with pictures. We would do well to consider them."

Mother pointed at the painting in front of them. "Oh, look at

"LITTLE LIGHTS"

... let it shine!

by Connie Meyer

the sunlight coming through the valley!"

"Yes," said Lydia, "I like how it reflects on the water."

"Light is a beautiful picture," said Dad, but his eyes weren't really focused on the painting. "Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.'"

Mother nodded. "Yes, let's look for pictures in the Bible when we get home."

Lydia and Nathan looked at each other with wide eyes. They weren't sure they understood everything their parents had said, but they knew something had begun.



Connie is the mother of 5 children and attends Hope Protestant Reformed Church in Walker, Michigan.



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57th Annual Protestant Reformed Young People's Convention

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

Camp Miniwanca

On the shores of Lake Michigan

August 18-22, 1997

Knowing My God

Theme text: John 17:3 Theme song: Psalter #64 vs. 2
"Developing your personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ"

Feature Speakers

Rev. Ronald Cammenga: WHO God Is For Me
Rev. Douglas Kuiper: What He Has DONE For Me
Rev. Carl K. Haak: What I AM DOING To Know Him

We're looking forward to seeing you this summer!

Hudsonville Protestant Reformed Church Young People's Society

• Faith • Fellowship • Fun •
