

Clarion

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The Great Commission

Almost everyone will know what is generally meant by the expression "The Great Commission". Those who use it refer to the command of the Lord Jesus Christ given to His disciples before He ascended into heaven: "Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things, whatever I commanded you." Mat. 28:19, 20. In addition to this, Acts 1:8 is quoted: "And you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth."

That, it is said, was the great commission, the tremendous charge given to the Apostles. However, it is added, the Apostles could never complete it: until many centuries after the death of the Apostles there were nations and tribes that never heard the Gospel; thus the charge still stands, and it is still *the* great task of the Church to teach all nations, to spread the Gospel, abroad as well as at home. That should even be the main thrust of all the Church's activities.

Be it far from me to deny that the Church has the duty to spread the Gospel. He who has seen the riches of being a member of Christ's Church, the treasures of the Saviour, and the immeasurably rich grace bestowed upon us, how would he not spread it as much as he is able to do? He who is conscious of his own privileges, will he not have compassion on those who are living in darkness and fear? The Church *is* to be a light on a lampstand, indeed.

And yet I question not only the correctness of the use of the term "The Great Commission" but also the statement that the Apostles could not finish the task given to them by Christ. They *were* the witnesses of Christ, not only (among the Jews) in Jerusalem and Judea, but also among the (mixture of the) Samaritans, as among the (heathen) nations: they did fulfil their task in that ever-widening circle which, in the end, included all (heathen) nations: the Church has

become world-wide. An obligation for the Church in the same line can - I am convinced - be derived from the above texts only by way of deduction and drawing consequences.

Besides, if spreading the Gospel by means of "foreign" mission and "home mission" were *the great* commission of the Church, would we then not expect to find almost constant reminders in the Epistles which the Apostles wrote to the Christians in Asia, Rome, and wherever they may have been found?

It is striking, however, that we find only indirect references in this respect, whereas the main obligations of the Church, the *great* commissions - to use that term for a moment - appear to be of another nature, though very closely connected with the Church's duty to be a city on a mountain, so that others may see it and glorify our heavenly Father.

When our Lord dictated some letters, to be sent by John to the Churches in Asia, He did not speak at all of the (supposedly main) task of the Church to conduct mission work.

Ephesus is praised because they suffered for Christ's sake and had not fainted. They are commanded to repent and do the first works, since they had left their first love.

Smyrna is urged to be faithful unto death, while Pergamum is admonished not to listen to those who tempted them to go along with the surrounding world. Thyatira is exhorted to hold fast what they have and to "keep my works to the end"; Sardis receives a similar charge: Be watchful, hold fast what you have, and do not defile your garments.

Philadelphia is praised because "you have kept the word of My patience". They receive the assurance that the Lord will cause others to come. They themselves are to hold fast what they have.

Laodicea, finally, is rebuked because they should be zealous and diligent instead of lukewarm. They are told to repent and to listen to the Lord.

What we may gather as the main

points of these letters is: Hold fast what you have and keep yourselves undefiled.

This very same line is found in the Epistles which Christ's witnesses, the Apostles, wrote. Repeatedly the Churches are exhorted to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, not to walk as the Gentiles walk, not to partake in sin, to let their conduct be as becomes the Gospel of Christ, to be blameless amidst a perverse generation, to walk worthy of the Lord, to continue in the faith, to walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, always to speak with grace, to stand fast, to see to it that the only thing the heathen can say is that these people are Christians, and so on.

The emphasis in the Epistles is on the very same points which the exalted Saviour stressed in His letters to the seven Churches in Asia.

Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven. To that end, hold fast what you have.

We should see to it that our speaking is not influenced, by it almost imperceptibly, by a usage of terms which finds no basis in Holy Writ but does fit in the theories and practices of those who propagate such use. It would tend to distort our view and evaluation of the Church's position, task, and activities. It would also lead to false dilemmas which should be avoided at all cost.

There is only one case in which we are allowed to use the expression "The Great Commission" and this one case is: Prove yourself to be the Church of Christ!

No aspect of the way in which and the means by which this is (to be) shown and proved should be exalted to the rank of the sole or even prime commission.

If one should yet wish to call the missionary activity of the Church *the great* commission, I, for one, beg to disagree.

vO

Understanding the Old Testament

NAHUM [3]

After several introductory remarks, we are now going to pay all our attention to the contents of the book - "the book of the vision of Nahum." "Vision" it reads, strictly speaking. Later on the word came to mean "revelation", visible as well as audible. However, of the original meaning so much remained as to picture the receiver as someone to whom the LORD had manifested Himself. It was the LORD who caused his servant to lift up his voice in an oracle against Nineveh or, if Nahum never uttered the prophecy, made him take up his pen and write down the oracle.

In this book we shall hear a great many things about Nineveh, especially in ch. 2 and 3. Those who are interested in Assyriology will find something to their taste here. But much more important than the Assyrian empire and its capital is the LORD: YAHWEH. He is the subject, the great theme, in vss. 2-10, where He is portrayed as appearing, as coming to judgment, in an impressive way.

YAHWEH is His name. It is the name by which He had revealed Himself to Moses in Midian, in the Sinai peninsula.

This name, whether it was known to the Patriarchs or not (I for one suppose that the former is the case, although e.g. Abraham could not have understood the sense and the contents of the name in the way Moses did, of course), designates a GOD who *IS*. The verb "TO BE", however, is not to be conceived of here as something abstract, for on this *being* of the LORD all stress is laid. He is the GOD, who indeed *is*, who actually *is*; He is present; He is ready to come to the rescue, the redemption of his people from the Oppressor.

In Moses' time the Egyptians were the oppressors, in Nahum's time the Assyrians. In such time YAHWEH reveals Himself as the One (the GOD who *is what a God is to be like*, what a GOD ought to be.

It sounds somewhat strange, I admit, that I speak of a GOD in a

general way, and of what a GOD ought to be. Nevertheless, that's the point at issue here. Moses, in Exodus 3:13, presumed that the Israelites would ask something like this: "What is his name?" That is: "What kind of God do we believe in?" And in Nahum's time circumstances were similar. Assyrian oppression lasted so long that Israel might then, too, have asked with good reason: "What is his name?" That is: "What sort of God do we believe in?" What kind of God is it who permits the Assyrians, the people of Nineveh, to go their way, to follow their own devices?

Here is the answer. And so we are to read Nah. 1:2. And here I prefer the R.S.V.; anyway, it is more in the line of what I would propose: "YAHWEH is a jealous and avenging God." *Yahweh* is the proper name of Israel's GOD; the word "god" (*EL*) is a class-name here, applicable in a wider sense even to other gods and idols, although they are not gods at all. But also to those the standard is applied (cp. Is. 44). But here is the GOD who meets the requirements: YAHWEH is His name.

YAHWEH is a jealous God. We know the word from the second commandment. There it is His own people who can provoke His envy, His jealousy, by having a graven or molten image, by misrepresenting the LORD.

Here it is the Assyrians who are oppressing His people, giving the appearance that heathen idols, e.g. the gods of Ashshur, are more powerful than the LORD. So the LORD does not receive the honour due to Him. He cannot tolerate this. He is a jealous God. And let us be happy that our God is that way, that He is keen on His honour. That is proper, fitting for a God. If He is a father, where is His honour?

Then we read the participle "avenging", also applied to God. Avenging. We shiver, and it is understandable that man should do so. If only we do not push aside or argue away the idea, or rather revelation, so that no vengeance of GOD is left. For then

the question may be asked: Is man allowed to do everything and is God permitted to do nothing but that which is agreeable? Is it not because of all those affronts, those insults offered to Him by man that He is avenging? One who occupies himself with the book of Nahum, of the consolatory one, will discover more and more that the Catechism, the book of comfort, especially in Lord's Days 1-5, is built upon this part of God's Word. With regard to the avenging God, I remind the reader of Question and Answer 12: "God will have His justice satisfied." Further, the vengeance of God is not only an O.T. but also an N.T. concept. I may point at Romans 12:19 in this connection: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, . . . for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay says the Lord.' "

Via the text just quoted we come to the next point: the wrath of God. In Nah. 1:2, just as in Rom. 12:19, the difference between God and man is pointed out. For it is striking that the expression applied to God here, namely that He is a "Master of wrath" (Hebr. *ba'al hemāh*), occurs three times in the book of Proverbs as applied to man, and therefore in an unfavourable sense: Prov. 15:18, "a hot-tempered man"; Prov. 22:24 and 29:22, "a man given to anger." This line is extended in the N.T. in the Letter of James (1:19, 20).

God and man (especially sinful man) - that is all the difference. And that puts a different face on the above expressions. What is permitted to God, is not allowed to man. Therefore: leave it to the wrath of God. Sometimes we speak of "holy anger". Right, but then it should be anger that is holy throughout. The holiest man, while in this life, has only a small beginning of the obedience. With God such anger is possible - anger that is in complete accordance with His holiness. That's why He is called *Ba'al hemāh* - Master, Lord, of anger - without His name being blasphemed.

As often as is spoken of the Lord's anger, it is with good reason. In the second part of verse 2 people who provoked Him to anger and wrath are mentioned. The Lord takes vengeance on His adversaries. In view of the heading, we know towards whom we are to turn our eyes: towards Nineveh. However, that does not mean that within Israel there

Continued on next page.

would be no adversaries. When it comes to that, the Psalms inform us otherwise. At any rate, we see that God's anger is not an anger at random, but an anger that is directed to those who have deserved it. This is putting God's wrath in the proper light. Yahweh, God of Israel, is quite the opposite of the heathen idols, the gods of Canaan, Syria, Assyria and Babylonia. In the so-called Babylonian penitential psalms complaints are raised about gods who are angry, while nobody can find out why. There is darkness in the "psalms" of ancient Mesopotamia - over against the light shining in Israel, the light of its God, Who is Light, even when jealous, avenging, and wrathful.

In the last line of verse 2 the same is said in other words. We have here an example of parallelism such as we find also in the Psalms. Nah. 1:1-10 reminds us of a psalm. In the translations of the A.V. as well as of the R.S.V. the word "wrath" is smuggled in. "He reserves" or "He keeps" it says; that is to say, according to what the exegetes assumed to be the meaning of the Hebrew word. That this is the meaning of the word, holds good for Canticles 1:6; 8:11, 12. But how about Ps. 103:9; Jer. 3:5, 12; Lev. 19:18? For a long time they understood the word as "to keep, to preserve," always adding the word "wrath", for they could not make sense of the text with the word "to keep" only. What was it that the Lord kept or preserved? Especially in Lev. 19:18 it caused problems. From the context one gathered that something like anger must have been meant. Well, since by the excavations in the Near East the language of Assyria-Babylonia, a language cognate to Hebrew, became known, scholars came across a word, *nadârum* - very similar to the Hebrew word in question, *nôôtêr* - meaning "to be angry, wrathful". Well, that way it can be translated. And we can drop the "preserves" of the A.V. and the "keeps" of the R.S.V.

We'll stop now. It was just one verse we digressed upon. It is not my intention to continue this way. But this verse, the first after the heading, is significant, dominating all that is to be said by YAHWEH through Nahum to Nineveh, the enemy, and to his people that is to be comforted.

H.M. OHMANN

Reformation and

An address delivered in Hamilton's Cornerstone Church on the occasion of the official opening of the Canadian Reformed TIMOTHY SCHOOL on Tuesday, September 4, 1973.

"This is the LORD's doing; it is marvellous in our eyes." (Ps. 118:23).

This expression, taken from the "Cornerstone" psalm, spontaneously comes to our mind now that we are gathered here in this church building to celebrate together the opening of our Canadian Reformed 'Timothy' School in Hamilton.

Marvellous is this opening because of all the distress and feelings of frustration experienced in previous years. Sometimes it seemed to be a hopeless case; did anybody really believe in the possibility of a Canadian Reformed day-school in Hamilton? But as real as the walls of the school-building are, so real was the beginning of the operation of our school today.

Thankfully we admit: This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!

'Timothy' is supposed to be a *Reformed School*. Those two words - 'Reformed' and 'School' - lead our thoughts to the topic of tonight: *Reformation and Education*.

Introduction.

When we speak about the Reformation, we think of the Spirit-wrought movement in the sixteenth century. God brought His Church back to Himself and to His Word; He brought His people out of the darkness of the Middle Ages, out of the bondage of the pope and of the whole unScriptural hierarchy.

Each of us knows the slogans of the Reformation: grace alone, Christ alone, Scripture alone, and faith alone.

Each of us knows that *Luther* was brought back to the gospel of the *righteousness* of God and that he understood this God-righteousness -

over against works - righteousness - as the righteousness that God graciously and freely bestows on a sinner, only for the sake of the merits of Christ.

And each of us knows that *Calvin* was deeply impressed by the *sovereignty* of God.

Paul's hymn of praise resounded in Calvin's heart: From God and through God and to God are all things. To Him be *glory* for ever. Glory to God alone!

It would not have surprised us if the Reformers of the sixteenth century had restricted themselves to the great and difficult task of proclaiming this glorious gospel. The turbulent circumstances of the sixteenth century, the struggle against the power of the church of Rome that availed itself of the worldly powers (e.g. the mighty Habsburg dynasty in Germany and Spain), the tremendous task of reforming the church of Christ, could easily have prevented any concern of the Reformation for education.

Therefore it strikes us the more that right from the beginning *Luther* in his writings did not restrict himself to the Reformation of the church as such.

There are especially *three* publications of Luther that call for our attention with respect to education.

Already the year of the Reformation itself, the year 1520, saw the publication of "An open letter to the Christian nobility of the German nation concerning the reform of the Christian estate."

In 1524 followed the treatise "To the Councilmen of all cities in Germany that they establish and maintain Christian schools."

And in 1530 Wittenberg's reformer preached "a sermon on keeping children in school." It is a well-known fact that in the Lutheran reformation it was especially *Melanchthon* who organized education in Germany and who thus earned the name 'Praeceptor Germaniae', the teacher of Germany.

Not only the *Lutheran* branch of the Reformation movement showed

Education

urgent concern with education, but also Martin Bucer, the Reformer of Strasbourg, and John Calvin at Geneva busied themselves with educational matters.

Europe's first Reformed high-school was established at Strasbourg, in 1538, the same year that Calvin arrived there, and the establishing of this school was mainly the work of Bucer.

Calvin himself was the stimulating force behind the erection of the Academy of Geneva in 1559, the institution of learning that has been of tremendous significance for the spreading of the Reformation in Europe, especially in France, Scotland and the Netherlands.

General Position.

What now was the general position of these Reformers with respect to education?

The Reformation fought on *two* fronts: against the doctrine and practice of the church of Rome and against the radicals in the time of the Reformation, the spiritualists, sometimes mistakenly called "the left wing of the Reformation."

Against the spiritualists the Reformers had to defend the significance of education as such; against Rome they had to show the necessity of *reformation* also in educational matters.

If we may generalize a little bit, you could say that Luther's first publication - the open letter concerning the *reform* of the Christian estate, 1520 - shows his struggle against *Rome*, while his second and third publications about the establishing of Christian schools and the duty of parents to send their children to school were directed against *spiritualism* and against the laxness that sometimes used spiritualist reasoning. But let us now listen to Luther himself.

Why does the Reformation of the Church also concern the schools and what are the purposes of education? In his open letter concerning the reform of the christian estate Luther

says already in 1520: "The universities, too, need a good, thorough reformation . . . Everything the papacy has instituted and ordered serves only to increase sin and error. What else are the universities, unless they are utterly changed from what they have been hitherto, than what the book of Maccabees calls *gymnasia epheborum et graecae gloriae*? (i.e. places for the training of the youth in the fashions of Greek culture. Cp. II Macc. 4:9). What are they but places where loose living is practiced, where little is taught of the Holy Scriptures and Christian faith, and where only the blind, heathen teacher Aristotle rules far more than Christ?" (*Luther's Works*, Vol. 44, p. 200).

In these first words of Luther about education, we already hear the *motivation* of his concern. It is not only an *ethical* concern, though the loose way of living at the universities of the Middle Ages caught Luther's attention. Reformation of education did indeed mean a restoration of discipline in school. When we read the qualifications the Reformers required for a teacher, it becomes clear that they were concerned about the moral influence of a teacher on his students.

But especially the *contents* of teaching and instruction was at stake. Luther places over against each other the domination of Christ and the domination of the blind, heathen teacher Aristotle. Aristotle is mentioned not

because Luther did not want to know about logical reasoning - for Luther was not a spiritualist fanatic - but because Aristotle taught that a man becomes good by doing good. Aristotle led people to a belief in man's power to save himself. The fact that the blind, heathen teacher Aristotle dominated medieval education meant that there was no place for Christ, for the redeeming grace of God, for the acknowledgment that man in himself is lost forever and cannot perform works that are agreeable to God.

At the same time we heard Luther mention the Holy Scriptures. Reformation of education meant that the infallible Word of God regains its right place as foundation of Christian education.

The dilemma is: Aristotle *or* the Bible; human wisdom *or* the wisdom of God:

"It grieves me to the quick that this damned, conceited, rascally heathen has deluded and made fools of so many of the best Christians with his misleading writings. God has sent him as a plague upon us on account of our sins.

Why, this wretched fellow in his best book, *Concerning the Soul*, teaches that the soul dies with the body . . . As though we did not have the Holy Scriptures, in which we are fully instructed about all things, things about which Aristotle has not the faintest clue! And yet this dead heathen has conquered, obstructed, and almost succeeded in suppressing the books of the living God. When I think of this miserable business I can only believe that the devil has introduced this study." (p. 201).

So the Reformation reformed the

Continued next page.



Timothy School, Hamilton, Ontario (photo by N. Nyenhuis)

REFORMATION and
EDUCATION - Continued.

schools into schools *with the Bible*.

"The foremost reading for everybody, both in the universities and in the schools," Luther says, "should be Holy Scripture - and for the younger boys, the Gospels. And would to God that every town had a girls' school as well, where the girls would be taught the gospel for an hour every day either in German or in Latin" (pp. 205-6).

"I would advise no one to send his child where the Holy Scriptures are not supreme. Every institution that does not unceasingly pursue the study of God's word becomes corrupt . . . The universities only ought to turn out men who are experts in the Holy Scriptures, men who can become bishops and priests, and stand in the front line against heretics, the devil, and all the world. But where do you find that? I greatly fear that the universities, unless they teach the Holy Scriptures diligently and impress them on the young students, are wide gates to hell." (p. 207).

Luther thought it right that every Christian man should know the entire holy gospel by the age of nine or ten. "Does he not derive his name and his life from the gospel?"

Parents.

Very important is the fact that the reformer of Wittenberg stressed the responsibility of the *parents*.

In 1520 he speaks in a general way: "Oh, we handle these poor young people who are committed to us for training and instruction in the wrong way! We shall have to render a solemn account of our neglect to set the Word of God before them. Their lot is as described by Jeremiah in Lamentations 2:11, 12, 'My eyes are grown weary with weeping, my bowels are terrified, my heart is poured out upon the ground because of the destruction of the daughter of my people, for the youth and the children perish in all the streets of the entire city . . .' We do not see this pitiful evil, how today the young people of Christendom languish and perish miserably in our midst for want of the gospel, in which we ought to be giving them constant instruction and training." (p. 206).

Two years later, in 1522, Luther wrote "The Estate of Marriage" and here he describes the importance of

the instruction of the children by the parents in the home:

"(But) the greatest good in married life, that which makes all suffering and labour worth while, is that God grants offspring and commands that they be brought up to worship and serve Him. In all the world this is the noblest and most precious work, because to God there can be nothing dearer than the salvation of souls. Now since we are all duty bound to suffer death, if need be, that we might bring a single soul to God, you can see how rich the estate of marriage is in good works. God has entrusted to its bosom souls begotten of its own body, on whom it can lavish all manner of Christian works.

Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops, and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children, for this authority is both spiritual and temporal." (L.W., Vol. 45, p. 46; cp. the sermon on the estate of marriage, 1519, Vol. 44, esp. pp. 12, 13: "If we want to help Christendom, we most certainly have to start with the children.")

But especially in his appeal to the councilmen of all cities in Germany (1524) Luther speaks about the duty of parents in a way that reminds us of the Reformed theology and its stress on the Covenant of God with us and our children. Luther gives reasons ('considerations') why the councilmen should establish Christian Schools for children:

"The third consideration is by far the most important of all, namely, the command of God, who through Moses urges and enjoins parents so often to instruct their children that Psalm 78 says: How earnestly He commanded our fathers to teach their children and to instruct their children's children (Ps. 78:5-6). (This is also evident in God's fourth (fifth - JF) commandment, in which the injunction that children shall obey their parents is so stern that He would even have rebellious children sentenced to death (Deut. 21:18-21.) Indeed, for *what purpose do we older folks exist, other than to care for, instruct, and bring up the young?* It is utterly impossible for these foolish young people to instruct and protect themselves. This is why God has entrusted them to us who are older and know from experience what is best

for them. And God will hold us strictly accountable for them. This is also why Moses commands in Deuteronomy 32: 7, "Ask you father and he will tell you; your elders, and they will show you." (L.W., Vol 45, p. 353).

On another occasion I spoke about *Calvin* and education and I will therefore not elaborate on him. You all know that especially the Reformers from Zwitserland - Zwingli, Bullinger, Calvin - and also Bucer over against Anabaptism emphasized the Covenant of God with us and our children. Dr. M.B. van 't Veer in his thesis "Catechese en Catechetische stof bij Calvijn" wrote a separate chapter about "Family, School, and Church" (p. 58 ff.) and he provided us with several quotations, Calvin about the significance of the office of parents. There is no greater gift of God than children and God honours us who are nothing so highly that He bestows on us the name of father, a name that only belongs to Him (p. 65).

Instruction in the fear of the Lord is, according to Calvin, the best heritage that parents can bequeath their children with. (p. 65).

Let us not forget that is would be completely *unReformed* if we as parents would delegate our calling to the teachers in school in this sense that we would not perform our own parental duties anymore.

[To be continued]

J. FABER



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Do We Have Only Half The Truth?

The Challenge of
Neo-Pentecostalism [2]

"Forgetting what is most important?"

The first article ended on that note.

We came to the conclusion that, in order to understand what was new on Pentecost Day, we must think of the Holy Spirit in terms of dispensations or periods in the Kingdom of God. The "new" thing is now that Jesus Christ, exalted in the highest glory, may use the Holy Spirit as an instrument to proclaim his Good Tidings, thus changing people and gathering his Church.

In all this we did not speak about "glossolaly" or tongue-speaking.

Did we, in doing so, not forget the most-important mark of the new dispensation, i.e. that people, filled with the Holy Spirit, now started to speak "in new tongues", glorifying the mighty acts of God? And is this glossolaly not the most important and even necessary mark and proof of having received the Holy Spirit and having been filled with Him?

And does it not stand to reason that, whereas Pentecost was the beginning of "the last days", this tongue-speaking, and also the miracles that accompanied it, were meant to stay? So that one must say, if in a gathering of believers these new things are *not* found, the real, the full thing isn't there (yet)?

Glossolaly was not "new".

Although I do not want to stress this too much, there may be some benefit in stating that these remarkable happenings which accompanied the outpouring of the Spirit were *not* completely new.

There is an Old Testament parallel.

It is interesting to find out that in the history of prophecy in the Old Testament the beginnings were marked by things somewhat similar to what happened on Pentecost and in the first decades thereafter.

Not only did the history of prophecy start with "seers" who were later on replaced by the well-known prophets, but *1 Samuel 10: 9-12* records events that were surprisingly similar to enthusiasm expressed in

jumping up and down and in the uttering of strange sounds. "Saul was among the prophets." He "met a band of prophets, and the Spirit of God came mightily upon him." It happened once more (*1 Samuel 19: 23, 24*); the second time Saul "too stripped off his clothes, and he too prophesied before Samuel, and lay naked all that day and all that night."

Thus Saul "prophesied". The same way as Isaiah and Ezekiel? Certainly not. He was "beside himself". He did not preach in clear terms or anything like that, but he was possessed by the Spirit, which resulted in uttering sounds.

Such were the *beginnings* of Old Testament prophecy, and these "bands of prophets" made place for the far more important words of the later, great prophets. Just as Paul said (*1 Cor. 14*; we plan to return to that chapter in detail) that he preferred to speak in plain language rather than in a tongue.

Glossolaly was replaced by plain teaching, not only in the New, but already in the Old Testament.

Glossolaly is not the end but the beginning - a lesson to be remembered!

The "old" heresy in the "new" Pentecostalism.

The number of those who are convinced that glossolaly is not the beginning but the end of God's works in the Spirit, is growing by the day. Under the name of "Neo-Pentecostalism" it is invading many, if not most, churches. It is considered to be the greatest event of the 20th century coming to its close. It is prophesied that this movement will mean and become the restoration of christendom to its original impact and influence.

One is wise in trying to evaluate such a "neo" movement in the light of what has been, keeping in mind the maxim of the Preacher, "What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; and there is nothing new under the sun" (*Ecc. 1:9*).

All through the centuries, even before the Reformation, there have

been such "enthusiastic" movements, groups and sects ("sects" in the literal sense of groups cutting themselves off from the mainstream of Christianity). They saw a measure of deadness in the Church, were not satisfied with "official religion" and their hearts were hungry for more.

Especially after the Reformation this development was very strong. It is too little known to the average church member that the sixteenth century brought more than a return to the scriptures (Luther, Calvin, etc.). Our Reformed fathers had to do battle on two fronts! The Heidelberg Catechism bears the clear marks of that situation. One example: L.D. 32 does not only reject the Romanist doctrine concerning good works, but also what is called Anti-nomianism ("against the Law"; the same tendencies are again widespread).

Without burdening the reader with many historical details, we may state that there were numerous, if not innumerable, spiritualistic groups that swooned in enthusiastic and extraordinary experiences.

Our day witnesses a great deal of sympathy for the new Pentecostalism, but before we share that sympathy we had better find out first what those spiritualists said to the Reformers. They were among the most bitter enemies of the Reformation.

Their main accusation was that the Reformers brought about only the *first half* of a Reformation. (The reader remembers that similar accusations were heard in our own midst some years ago . . .)

The "*second half*" should have been to get rid of church organization and institution, of all so-called "outward things" which were an impediment to the freedom of the Spirit. Next on the list were the special offices. Then came the creeds as clear and firm formulations of the truth. And finally the binding to "a book", the Bible, which became the "Paper Pope" of the Reformation.

Only in that way, so the Spiritualists said, could the real Pentecost be recovered and restored: the freedom of the Spirit without any outward binding. Every believer led by his "inner light", which was considered to be identical with the Spirit of God.

Once this freedom was won, other things followed which caused the Reformers to say in their Creed, article 36 of the Confession of Faith,
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news medley

The other time we mentioned that the Rev. A.B. Roukema was making progress. Meanwhile, he had been discharged from the hospital, although he has to take it easy. Thus he was not yet able to attend the office-bearers' conference which we had in Burlington a few weeks ago. Yes, we had another office-bearers' conference, and we can only deplore the fact that so many office-bearers do not attend such a conference. I know that life is very busy and that the Saturdays frequently are needed for extra work or for work around the house. Yet it is one of the not so frequent opportunities to discuss together the matters which pertain to the execution of the office in Christ's Church.

I do not think that I am mistaken when stating that office-bearers generally do not have much time to increase their knowledge about the specific aspects of their duties. The ordination form states that the elders shall continually meditate on the mysteries of faith. And as for the duties of the deacons, everyone who knows a little about that point will agree that much wisdom is needed, a wisdom which is not acquired except by study and discussions.

It is, therefore, very important that office-bearers attend such conferences and via the introductions and discussions and the contact with each other endeavour to edify themselves that they may be able to edify the Church. The time of study required for ministers of the Gospel shows that the Churches do not deem a simple call by a Church sufficient for a fruitful labour. The conferences which we have here in Ontario twice a year should be better attended.

As for the introductions: Mr. H.C. VanDooren spoke on "Modern Trends in Counselling" and told us about some of the background of the various theories adhered to in our modern society. The Rev. G. VanDooren also spoke on "counselling". That I put this word between quotation marks is because I think that it should be replaced by another word (Rev. G. VanDooren suggested "pastoral care"). The word "counselling" reminds me too much of psychology and psychiatry and all the theories which are behind that. The work which the office-bearers do is not "counselling" in that sense. And what is commonly understood by "counselling" is different from the work of "counselling" which the Holy Spirit does.

The Rev. W. Huizinga spoke on the point of periodical retirement of Elders and Deacons and the Scriptural directives, if any, for such practice. The very same topic will again be dealt with, again from a different angle, at the next conference.

All the above remarks about the office-bearers' conference were occasioned by the fact that the Rev. A.B. Roukema, the secretary, could not yet be present. Next time, we hope.

About the Rev. H.A. Stel we hear good things: he gets injections with chemicals at regular intervals and they seem to work well. What a blessing that we live in these days in which the knowledge and ability of the medical profession has increased so tremendously! We note it time and again when a fellow-member recovers after having

undergone serious surgery. Thus lifespan and productivity are increased. May it, in all cases, be used for the promotion of the coming of the Lord's Kingdom and Day.

We turn to the Churches.

The Consistory of Carman decided to promote the suggestion that serious organ students use the organ to practise pedal-work. Good! The faulty part of Brampton's new organ has been exchanged and is now on its way. They expect the organ to be installed in the near future. With a view to the cost of the new organ, of the expected arrival of the ministerial family some time in April next year, and with a view to other expenses which I shall not mention here, the Consistory of Brampton also made some suggestions as to weekly amounts which every family and single member are to contribute. For families it is some nine or ten dollars per week, for single persons it was set at five dollars per week.

Some time ago we here in Fergus/Guelph also discussed the voluntary contributions, and then too the suggestion was made to set the standard for families much higher than for single persons. Personally, I do not think that it is good to do that. It is much easier for single persons to pay ten dollars per week than for a family, at least in by far the most cases. When young people are employed, they make oftentimes just as much as one who is married, but their expenses are far less. Besides, their tax-savings are percentage-wise much larger, so that it actually "costs" them less than is the case with married people. I still think that a percentage is better than a fixed amount. We do not have to go to the 10% which many groups demand; I have an idea that 6% would be sufficient to cover all expenses the Church has to face. Many young people make some four dollars per hour and even if they work just forty hours a week, a mere 6% would already amount to approximately ten dollars per week. I would suggest that it is better and "fairer" to all members of the Congregation if the above method is followed.

Now that we are speaking of money anyway, we might as well mention that in quite a few Churches the members are requested to donate the equivalent of one loaf of bread per week for aid to Korean orphanages. Such is the case in Burlington, but also in Neerlandia and London. The latter's bulletin reminds the members that a loaf of bread may have been 25 cents at some moment in the past but that its price has gone up to more than 40 cents! Something to remember!

London also has definite plans to establish a day-school. Right now it is a "Friday-night school". To that end the weekly contributions have been increased from ten to twelve dollars and as date for the opening of a day-school they set September 1975. We wish them from the heart that they may see their desire fulfilled and their plans realized.

Chatham's ladies still go housecleaning for the school and so far they have earned an amount of \$740.00 by that enterprise. The Fraser Valley is buzzing with preparations for various bazaars and sales. It may have escaped my attention, but I have never read what the ladies there do with the rags they collect. It was reported in the **Church News** that some 100 pounds of it had been collected. I presume that there are lots of rags among our families and if we know what they can be used for, we might all benefit from such collections. The days have passed that each garment had to be repaired till it was completely worn.

Also the days have passed that children still were willing to wear each other's clothes, not only within the same family but also within the Congregation as a whole. I remember the days when little dresses and coats were freely exchanged among the families in the Church and when the corner where second-hand clothes were sold during a "School-sale" showed the most activity. Nowadays you can bring them to one sale after the other: you have to take them home every time. The Fraser Valley ladies know an address for them nevertheless: they ship the lighter clothes to Brazil for the missionary family and the Kuik family to distribute them among the needy; the heavier clothes and the winter clothes they ship to Hungary. Thus they are still being used for a good purpose. The question should be asked, however, whether we are fully aware of the luxury in which we live and the progress which we have made in the years that have passed. And another question in addition to the first one is: "Do we use these blessings to serve the Lord more and better?" In those early days the members attended Church faithfully. Nowadays the increased standard of living oftentimes entices members to leave for a weekend or even for some weeks in a row, and to spend a weekend or weeks away from Church. I thought that gratitude for blessings received should show itself in another way!

To stay in the Fraser Valley for a moment: Mrs. C. Van Spronsen was the special guest at a meeting of the Women's Society in Abbotsford where she answered questions concerning daily life in Brazil. She told the ladies in New Westminster about that too. No definite news yet about New Westminster's "old" Church building; there seems to be a definite trend to build a new one south of the Fraser river, somewhere in Delta.

In the past it sometimes happened that I asked the mechanic at the garage to fix my car. He might reply: "We do not fix things here, we repair them." Therefore, I have my doubts about the ultimate results of what I read of Abbotsford's tape recorder: "The tape recorder of the Church could not be repaired yet, but it is still tried to get it fixed."

On our way East again, we mention that in Edmonton 19 children registered for a children's choir. Rev. D. DeJong suggests in the **City Guide** that the booklet by Rev. G. VanDooren, **Get Out!**, might be a good present for those who have made profession of faith, wherever it is the custom to give a present on that occasion. Rev. J. Mulder was going to make some remarks about this same book at a Congregational meeting in Cloverdale. These reactions are gratifying.

Burlington West reached approximately the half-way mark of their set goal for a building fund. A collection for furnishings in the (expected) new Church building yielded \$664.65.

Burlington East, on the other hand, is seriously considering to abolish all second collections (among them those for the Property Fund). There is a growing conviction that this should be done. During the discussions it was argued that we are deceiving ourselves by having such collections and using them to defray the normal expenses. Either they should be used for a special purpose, or they should be abolished, it was argued. It goes without saying that the above stand is one with which I agree fully. In the past I drew attention to that strange phenomenon more than once: that we have two or sometimes even three collections for - indirectly - the same purpose.

Burlington East also decided to continue various arrangements with "West" until such a time when West will have their own Church building. These arrangements cover use of the building, times of services, etc. The only thing that is exempt is the preaching arrangement. For three years now "East" has shared their minister with "West" and the result was that, due to holidays, classis-appointments, etc., they actually enjoyed his presence for only a small percentage of the total number of services. It is understandable that they wish to have their own minister conduct both their services again. With the present number of ministers (professors, resp.) West should not have too many difficulties in obtaining pulpit supply.

We did mention Chatham already, but some more things have to be told. The Rev. M.C. Werkman informs us that he spoke for a group of highschool students during their lunch hour. The topic was the Holy Scriptures as the infallible Word of God. That is the first time I have heard of something like that taking place.

The Consistory of Chatham deemed it wrong to charge the minister with an extra catechism class on Sundays, but since the minister was willing to conduct it, the Consistory did not forbid it. There appear to be students who are not able to come during the week. That is a strange thing. Would there really be no opportunity during the week? Apart from the services, the Sunday is the only day of the week when a minister can be together with his family. Yet it happens more than once that even part of that day is taken up by visits-for-a-specific-purpose which should have been brought during the week. (I do not refer to "social visits", as you'll understand.) Some time ago I had the privilege of speaking to the Fellowship of Canadian Reformed University Students and there the point of a minister doing "work" on Sunday was also discussed in connection with a remark which I made about going to the study on that day. I then said, among other things, that a minister actually is always "on call". If someone comes and wants to talk on Sunday, stating that he had no time during the week, what do you say then? Do you say, "Sorry, but apart from the services it is my day off"? Of course not, although you should say that even though you are a minister. If a matter is so "unimportant" that no time can be found during the week, then it does not have to be done on Sunday either! Just as no minister **has** to give the opportunity to discuss his sermon of that day or of any other Sunday on the day on which everyone else would say: "Sorry, but I am not coming unless it is an emergency!"

I am glad that I could make the above remarks in connection with what I quoted from Chatham, for I have the impression that oftentimes people don't even think about it when they decide to discuss a certain thing with the minister just before or just after Church or between the services, because they "are in town anyway".

Chatham also decided to reinstate a Dutch service every first Sunday of the month for a trial period of three months. They are not the only ones: Fergus/Guelph made the same decision and will have an extra (third) service the second and fourth Sundays of the month at 7:00 P.M. It appears that many older members do not receive sufficient nourishment from sermons held in English. However, sometimes I get the impression that there are some who think that you cannot serve the Lord well in English and

Continued on next page.

NEWS MEDLEY - Continued

that Dutch is the "language of Canaan", which is a foolish notion.

Meanwhile, the weather is turning colder and the deciduous trees have shed their leaves, at least here in Southern Ontario. For the Rev. G. VanRongen, however, we hope that it will stay mild for some time: he told the Congregation of Grand Rapids that their household goods, warm clothing, and library were still in Melbourne! They may, at this moment, be approaching the equator or have

already crossed it; yet we expect that it will take a few more weeks before they will have arrived and the ministerial couple can really feel at home when they can use their own furniture and see again all those things to which they have become attached in the course of the years. And for my colleague it will be a joy to be surrounded by his books again.

It is about time to conclude this news medley. It has become longer than I thought it would be. But now it is enough. vO

Mixed Courtships and Engagements*

From more than one congregation I hear that boys and girls from our church are going steady with, and become engaged to, a girl or a boy from outside our churches . . . In my book *Gij zijt Gods medearbeiders* I wrote at length about this subject, but it appears necessary to give it again our special attention today. We encounter in those "mixed" courtships and engagements an evil thing that threatens to bring great harm to our churches.

That goes without saying. With respect to the outcome of such a mixed engagement there are three possibilities:

A. In the most favourable case the girl or boy who did not belong to our church will come along with her boy or with his girl and will do confession of faith in our Reformed Church before marriage. That can turn out well. I know from experience that a man or a woman who in this manner, through marriage, had joined the church, later appeared to be a better church member than the woman or the man for whose sake they had joined. However, those are exceptions. Very often such people become *lax* church members; family life is affected by it, and the consistory has considerable difficulties with such families.

B. It is also possible that the girl or the boy of our church goes along with her or his fiancé(e), and becomes a member of the other church . . . Thereby our churches lose members, but for the boy or the girl in question it is also such a very bad thing that they join a "church" which cannot be given the name of "true church" because it does not preach the pure

Word of God. A result is also that the children grow up in such a church, and thereby are in danger of becoming totally estranged from God and His service.

C. A third possibility is that each of the parties remains with his or her own church. A mixed marriage. Experience has shown what an evil thing that is. It is not without reason that in course of time the rhyme was made:

"Twee geloven op èèn kussen,
Daar slaapt de duivel tussen."

(If on one pillow two faiths are found, the devil sleeps between them.)

It is to be expected. How can there be a real unity in a marriage if one goes to this and the other to that church; if one receives visits from office-bearers of this church, and the other from that one? And where are the children to be baptized? To what catechism instruction, and to what school will they have to go? In such a family there can never be the possibility of a good, harmonious upbringing. Everything will be a source of difficulties and disagreements. What a misery has the church already experienced as a result of those mixed marriages!

For that reason it has to be impressed upon our young people with great seriousness: *Never start going out with a girl or a boy who does not belong to the church of which you yourself, thanks to God's grace, may be a member.*

I can imagine that someone will say, "Yes, but what if I can persuade my boy or my girl to become a member of our church, for that certainly is my purpose." I said that I can imagine it if one says that, and also

really means it, and yet it is wrong. In the first place already because, even if it should succeed, there is a real danger of a "feigned conversion" whereby the only purpose is to get the girl or the boy, but where there is no true change of heart and mind. But also, who tells you that it *will* really happen? You do not have the heart of that boy or that girl in your hands.

True, you will possibly say, but if he or she in the long run remains unwilling to come with me, then I will break up. Yes, that is what you may think when you start going together. But when you have been going together already for some time, and when gradually strong ties have been formed, do you believe that it will then be easy to break those ties? And if nevertheless, for the Lord's sake, you should do it, what misery, what sorrow and tears, will be the result. Then there will be a real chance that, in order to escape such heartbreak, you either go along with the other and become unfaithful to the church and to the Lord of the church, and thus endanger also your children, or that you will settle for a mixed marriage with all the miseries connected with it.

Therefore, there is only *one* way, which I just pointed out: Never start going with someone who is not a member of the church. *Never start with it. The first step here means setting your foot on a slippery slope, from where it will be very difficult to return, and where you are in great danger of getting lost in the future.*

But what then is the reason that in more than one place such mixed courtships and engagements are so

prevalent? I know that some will answer this question with the remark: "The reason is that in many places our churches are so small, so that within the local church there is little choice for our boys and girls."

That is not everywhere the case, however. I know, e.g., one large congregation where that complaint cannot be made, but where nevertheless mixed engagements occur quite frequently. But I admit that there are many small congregations where the "choice" is indeed not very great. I can understand that this may cause difficulties, although these should not be exaggerated. In small congregations there are few girls, but there are also few boys who need a girl. Moreover, the situation is not new. There have always been small villages, and yet it did not often happen formerly that a boy married a girl from another village. It took place sometimes, but not very frequently. In Blija, the place of my birth, there used to be a "Hervormde kerk" which was quite small; yet the young people of that church usually found their marriage partners among fellow members. Not much "foreign blood" was brought into the village community.

Even so, I agree that such a small congregation can make it difficult for a boy to find a girl belonging to his church, and that a girl can run the risk that she is not asked by a boy of the church. In my opinion it would be good to do something about this. Is it not possible to create opportunities so that young people from several congregations can come together and meet each other? For instance, youth rallies, singing contests, and similar meetings? Formerly we used to have here in the northern part of the country the so-called "Northern Evangelical Mission Festival." It was an ecumenical enterprise in which I would not take part anymore. Many people, from far and near, came together there. Those festivals were sometimes mockingly called "a marriage market." And in fact many ties were laid there which later turned into marriage ties.

I do not believe that it was bad. It is indeed true what in those days was sometimes said: "It is better to meet each other at a mission festival than at a 'kermis'." In my opinion there would be no objections whatsoever against the creation of such opportunities where, in a truly Reformed environment, boys and girls can meet

each other. It would in any case broaden the possibilities of choice.

Yet I do not believe that this problem of "limited choice" is the major cause why we have so many mixed courtships and engagements. The reason for this must especially be sought in a lack of understanding regarding the meaning of the church and of the fact that we may be a member of that church which we may rightly call "the true church". That young people so easily start going out with someone from another church finds its reason herein that they think, "Well, does it matter all that much to what church you belong?"

The Liberation took place only a short time ago; not even thirty years have passed. We saw at that time the Lord demanded of us to free ourselves as church from human doctrines and from human dominion; that as church we should bind ourselves only to God's Word and to the confessions based on that Word, and that we should recognize as King of the church Jesus Christ alone. In those days we liberated ourselves for the Lord's sake, for our own sake, for the sake of our children, for the sake of the preservation of the church. Many members were forced to bring great sacrifices for that purpose, in terms of money, but also in terms of friendships and even family ties.

That several young people in their choice of partners now play with the "church" can only be a result of the fact that they no longer see the meaning of that Liberation; that they no longer realize the meaning of what I would call "the question of the Church." How is that possible? I am convinced that the cause is two-fold. In the first place there is the matter of the instruction by the office-bearers. If it happens that in their work the office-bearers are constantly criticizing the developments in our church life, and if they neglect to point to the great privileges which we possess as liberated churches; if they fail to emphasize that we may and must say: We are the true church, and everyone who wants to obey Christ, the King of the church, has to join it, then the true "knowledge of the church" slackens and withers, and a certain indifference with respect to the church takes its place.

In the second place there is the question of the parents' attitude. If dad and mom also always criticize our churches, if they do not speak contin-

ually with great love and thankfulness about the church, if the children do not notice a sacred enthusiasm about, and a great gratitude for the fact that we as church may be what we are, then there must develop in our children also an indifference, so that they are less strict with respect to their choice of a partner.

Let us as office-bearers and parents be very careful in this matter. The danger threatens here that we will lose the great riches that have been given us in the Liberation. We see what becomes of the churches around us, how the apostasy there is growing. What a terrible thing would it be if our children, our posterity, should be drawn into that whirlpool.

Young people, think of these things when you start going out with a boy or a girl. You may have to bring sacrifices; your own desires may have to be overcome and given up. But realize that our obedience to our Saviour is at stake, and your own peace and true well-being for now and for ever, and the well-being of your children.

How terrible would it be if also through your indifference the church should crumble away and perhaps perish. Be faithful; place your desires with a child-like attitude and faith into the hand of your God and Father. *Wait for His time.* You yourselves must live in the faith that you, according to God's promise in Christ Jesus, are His children. That is what matters. Only when you really live by that faith will you be able to go in the ways of the Lord, also with respect to courtship and engagement. But then things will also turn out well.

And let us as office-bearers and as parents, by always showing our great joy about and our love toward our churches, give support to the young members of the church, our children, in order that they may remain steadfast and faithful. It should be again as it was in the days of my youth when the young people did not even think of starting a courtship with someone who "did not belong to the church."

**This is a translation of an article which the well-known Rev. Douwe van Dijk, minister-emeritus of the church at Groningen, the Netherlands, published in the Gereformeerde Kerkbode under the title "Gemengde Verkering en Verloving." Translation by Rev. H.A. Stel, Winnipeg.*

Women's Convention in Orangeville

On Oct. 10, the annual convention of the women's societies was held. Hostesses for the day were the two societies of Orangeville. They had been working behind the scene for weeks, and were therefore well prepared to receive the more than 300 guests. The weather was beautiful, the church just the right size and all of us in the right festive mood. Because that's what it is, a feast and a blessing that year after year we have the opportunity to come together to praise God in singing, to learn from Scripture and Confession, and to meet one another as sisters.

Around 9:30 a.m. the cars and buses started to arrive. Coffee and cake were awaiting the travellers in the basement, while the church itself slowly filled to almost capacity. Mr. Doekes of Orangeville was ready at the organ to accompany any song we might wish to sing. And we sang a lot that day!

At 10 a.m. Mrs. Selles opened the meeting. We sang Ps. 68:2 and 17; she read Eph. 2:1 to 10 and she led in prayer. In her word of welcome Mrs. Selles explained the theme she chose for the day: "En gij geheel anders", in the light of what we read in Eph. 2. Yes, we are different. Let us not take this negatively only, that we differ from the world in the activities we cannot participate in, in amusements, closed for us. Nor should we find this different in outward behaviour only. No, we are different, because Christ through his blood made us so. He set us apart from the world, put His sign on our foreheads, marked us as His own. We are Christ's and Christ is of God.

Some announcements followed. Mrs. Riemersma of Fergus was elected as our new president. Mrs. Zuidhof of Ottawa as our new vice-president. Both accepted, be it with fear and trembling. Mrs. Selles welcomed Mrs. Knigge in our midst. We thought it appropriate to give the proceeds of the collection to Rev. Knigge to be used at his discretion for the work of the mission. Best wishes per letter, telephone and telegram were received from the Fraser Valley, both Grand Rapids' societies, and the Netherlands. Mrs. Selles thanked Mrs. Lindhout for the work she did as vice-president.

Reports of secretary, treasurer and savings-can action followed. While on stage, Mrs. Lindhout took this opportunity to bring the thanks of all of us to Mrs. Selles, for the work done in the many years she presided over us. She received a lovely crystal dish and a bouquet of flowers as small token of our appreciation. A difficult job well done, Mrs. Selles! Roll call told us that over 300 guests were present. (With so many "Marthas" working behind the scene, it is always difficult to get at the exact figure.)

After the singing of our league-song, Mrs. Jonker had the opportunity to read her essay on: Perseverance of the saints. She showed us that we possess God's promise, that through life and death He will keep us as his own. This does not mean that we cannot fall into grave sins, yes, through our own guilt temporarily break the communion with God. However, the Holy Ghost will work a true repentance in our hearts, so that we will seek to live close to the Lord again. Often true believers will not feel the full assurance of faith, but for a time may experience grave doubts. However, rest assured that God will not suffer them to be tempted beyond what they are able, but by the Holy Spirit again inspire them with the assurance of faith. This does not make the believer careless, but on the contrary, truly thankful for what God promises in this doctrine. The world may disbelieve, yes, ridicule it, but the Church has defended and upheld it through all ages.

After singing Ps. 27:1 and 7, the discussion followed. Many questions were brought forward, and answered by Mrs. Jonker or amongst ourselves. After the discussion was closed, we sang Ps. 103:1 and 9, and the meeting was adjourned till after lunch.

In order to be able to better look after our hungry bodies, the group was split up for lunch; however, we all received the same excellent lunch of soup, buns, fancy rolls, fruit and ice cream. And ample time to visit with relatives and friends. And a breath of country-fresh air.

At 1:30 p.m. the afternoon meeting was opened. We sang together the national anthem. A very original game followed. Mrs. Van der Sluys of Orangeville (a true artist she is!) had

made pictures of many of the names of sisters present, and we, the audience, had to guess, "Who is it?" In every instance we came to the right answer. Afterwards the paintings were for sale, proceeds for the College.

Scripture reading of 1 Cor. 3:10-23 followed; we sang Hymn 52, while the collection was held. This brought \$237.97. Rev. Olij was then given the floor to hold his introduction: Our Christian family life today. An ever-interesting topic for us women of the Church. After singing Ps. 42:5 and 7, a lively discussion followed. Many questions were brought forward but a minister is never without an answer.

After closing the discussion, Mrs. Selles thanked all, who had an active part in this day: the essayist, the speaker, the organist, and the hosting societies. The hostesses of Orangeville donated the flowers which decorated the church for the day, to Mrs. Knigge and to a sick member in the hospital.

Mrs. Selles, in her word of farewell, took us in fast tempo through the nine years that she presided over us, mentioning the major changes and events that took place. They were very difficult years for her in her personal life, but from personal experience she can testify that God himself will carry and sustain his children through the darkest times. This could easily have been a moment of regret for both her and us, now that she is about to hand over the hammer of the presidency, but no, let it not be so, stated Mrs. Selles; be happy that we found a new president who with God's help will take over this task. On this lighter note she closed her speech.

We sang yet Ps. 134. Rev. Olij closed with prayer of thanksgiving, thanking God for this day, and asking His protection on our way home. Mrs. Selles closed the annual convention 1973.

Coffee and cake were still available to us in the basement, before we said good-bye.

League day 1973 is a day of the past, but it was a good day, and Lord willing, we shall all meet again in Smithville, a year from now.

OUR COVER

The church building of the Brampton congregation, located on Highway 7, about four miles west of Brampton, Ontario. Photographed by John Wanders.

DO WE HAVE ONLY HALF THE TRUTH - Continued.

"Wherefore we detest the Anabaptists and other seditious people . . ." If the word "detest" is too strong for you, remember that these people "confounded that decency and good order which God has established among men." Nudism followed, and free love, and polygamy, and the experiment of Munster, that "heaven on earth" which ended in mud and blood.

No, we do *not* say that every pentecostal-minded person would go that far, but it is always wise to be taught by the lessons of history, and to discover the roots which certain movements have in common with older ones. The later Mennonites were quite different from the followers of Jan Van Leyden in Munster, but they are motivated by the same principles! Why "neo"?

The reader might wonder why the present-day growth of Pentecostalism is named "neo-" or new.

The distinction is commonly made between *Classic, Catholic* (meant is Romanist), and *Neo-Pentecostalism*.

By "classic" is meant the older movement that since the Reformation established itself in separate organizations.

By "catholic" is understood the development within the Roman Catholic Church (it seems, remarkably! to have started in Quebec but is nowadays certainly stronger in the U.S.A., while it is found in many other parts of the world.) We will still have to discover that there is a remarkable growing closer and together between Roman Catholics and Pentecostals in our day. The explanation is that Pentecostalism ("neo" or not) is in more than one respect, especially in doctrine, a return to Roman Catholicism.

"Neo"-Pentecostalism, however, is understood as the recent movement within the existing, "established" churches to bring "new life" by the promotion of special "gifts", first of all the gift of tongue-speaking in the churches.

I realize that this definition is not complete and therefore, maybe, not completely accurate, but it will do for our purpose. Its merit is that it makes clear to us that Neo-Pentecostalism is a challenge to all churches, also to the Canadian Reformed Churches, to

become a Spirit-filled community and deliver the proof by speaking in tongues.

This brings us to the next paragraph.

What is understood by the "second blessing"?

You may have heard that expression before. What we need, in addition to what we have, is a second, an additional blessing. The "first blessing" is only the first, and not sufficient really.

The reader be advised to keep in mind that this distinction between first blessing and second blessing runs parallel to the distinction between the first half and the second half of Reformation, as understood by Pentecostals.

The first blessing, then, is - or was - that you became a christian. You learned to know Jesus Christ. You found in Him the redemption from all your sins and guilt. You were washed in his blood. You were justified by faith. That was the great "discovery" of Martin Luther; the message of the letter to the Romanists. And that is just wonderful. You may, so the Pentecostals say, recite every word of that beautiful answer in Catechism Lord's Day 23 to the question, How are you justified by faith.

But . . . that is not enough! That was only the first half of becoming a christian.

You need the second blessing.

And *that* is that, after having been justified by faith, you are to be "filled" (that word is strongly stressed), "filled" with the Holy Spirit to such an extent that you are not only (as the Catechism says, L.D. 32) "renewed by Christ's Holy Spirit after His own image" and thus from now on live in gratitude: "that with our whole life we may show ourselves thankful to God for His benefits, and that He may be praised by us" - no, that is not all. That is not even sufficient.

The "second blessing" is that you are "filled" to such an extent that you receive the gifts of the first Pentecost as described in the Book of Acts. If you are unable to show these gifts, you have not yet really received the second blessing. You remain an incomplete christian.

One feels the cruel element in this doctrine, similar to that which reveals itself within the circles where faith-healing is considered to be the requisite. If you are not healed, and

even stronger, if you cannot heal others, you might well wonder what's wrong with you.

You may, next to Catechism L.D. 23, recite also that beautiful answer to the first question, "What is your only comfort in life and death?" - but it is not enough. It does not make you a "full christian".

To give the reader some food for thought till the next article, I print here next to each other the confession of Lord's Day 1 ("only the first blessing") and an example of the "second blessing" of glossolaly. I found the latter in *Outlook*, October 1971. It was taken from a tape-recording and previously published in *Eternity*, July 1963.

The "first blessing"

"That I, with body and soul, both in life and death, am not my own but belong to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ, who with his precious blood has fully satisfied for all my sins, and delivered me from all the power of the devil; and so preserves me that without the will of my heavenly Father not a hair can fall from my head; yea that all things must be subservient to my salvation; wherefore by His Holy Spirit He also assures me of eternal life, and makes me heartily willing and ready, henceforth, to live unto Him."

The "second blessing"

"Prou pray praddy
Pa palasatte pa pau pu pe
Teli teratte taw
Terrei te te-te-te
Vole virte vum
Elee lete leele luto
Sine sirge singe
Imba imba imba . . ."

J. VanderPloeg adds in *Outlook*: "I have never experienced the slightest suggestion from the Spirit that I should ask for or attempt to practice the gift of speaking in tongues. On the contrary, my assurance of faith might become badly shaken, the fact of the leading of the Holy Spirit very uncertain, and my emotional stability questionable, if I were on record as uttering anything like this example of tongue-speaking . . ."

Which one do you prefer? The confession of the "first blessing" or that of the "second"?

All right, but does not the Bible think a great deal of tongue-speaking?

[to be continued] G. VANDOOREN

What Others Say

The *Book of Praise* has been sent to various periodicals with the request to review it. The purpose of Deputies in doing this was two-fold. First, to learn from these reviews, which are carefully filed for the time that a revision may become a necessity. Second, to make the Genevan Psalter known among other 'denominations'. In the back of our minds is some hope that others may also want to use it.

For once, our readers should hear something from such a review. It was published in the *Journal of Church Music*, Sept. 1973 issue, and written by LAWRENCE R. LIKNESS of Saskatoon. We leave out several details which Mr. L. passes on to his readers but which are well-known to our readers.

"This is probably the most conservative hymnal that will appear in the English language in the latter decades of the twentieth century. Most churches of Calvinistic background have long since forgotten or gently laid aside Calvin's directives with regard to singing in the church, and his insistence that if there be music at all, it must be metrical psalms. It appears that the Canadian Reformed Churches are moving very cautiously in the area of hymn singing.

The preface of the book terms the publishing of the Book of Praise as 'an event of considerable significance in the life of the Canadian Reformed Churches as well as a landmark in the history of psalmody.' It may well be that the statement is correct, and even hymn-singing churches might well renew their interest in metrical psalm singing.

. . . The selection of hymns is most conservative. [Many details follow, vD]. It appears that there is a determined effort to select hymns that are as close to scripture paraphrase as possible.

Lutherans, as well as most other Protestants, would find the Book of Praise very strange and foreign to their heritage and present practice of hymn singing, as well as very monotonous for weekly use. Its value may be found in the renewed interest in psalmody among most Protestants today.

It could well provide an alternate to the practice of chanting psalm texts, as we are most accustomed to, and provide a richer selection of metrical psalms for congregational and choir use."

Thus far Mr. Likness.

We hope he is right in his expectation as expressed in the last paragraph. However we question the word 'monotonous'. We hesitate to assume that a writer in a *Journal of Church Music* knows so little of the rich variety of meter, mood and colour in the Genevan tunes that he fears singing them would result in monotony.

We are happy with his correct impression of the hymn section as being "very cautious" and "as close to scripture paraphrase as possible."

G. VANDOOREN

NOTICE TO OUR READERS!

Christmas and New Year is approaching rapidly. May we ask everyone who wishes to put in a Greeting and/or a New Year wish to contact your local correspondent. Deadline date is December 5, 1973. We plan to publish a combined Christmas/New Year's issue, to be mailed December 12, in time for all our readers to receive *Clarion* before Christmas.

BUSINESS ADS ARE ALSO SOLICITED!

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Such a pile of letters this time! And one of them was addressed to both you and me! It was from a Busy Beaver who lives far away in Australia: *Anneke Hart* had read the letter from Busy Beaver reporter Ronaldo Kuik. She liked his letter about Brazil and so she thought she would tell you something about Australia. Just read on . . .

"There are lots of mountains around Albany, like: the Stirling Ranges, otherwise known as the Stirlings, the Porongorups, Mt. Clarence, Mt. Adelaide and Mt. Melville. At the Stirlings there is a mountain named the Bluff Knoll. I climbed a wee little way up, my Dad climbed half way up and a few other men went right to the top. We haven't got many trees around here, only bushes . . . We don't have snow in Albany. But at the Stirlings there was some on the highest peaks last year. That was the first time in my life! We also have snow on the Snowy Mts. in New South Wales. I, myself, have never seen snow . . . It is getting summer here. We have it from December to February. It's spring now. Many wildflowers are growing around here. If you would go to the Stirlings now, there would be many, many flowers. Are there flowers in Canada now? . . . And last of all, I'd like to tell you that I have an auntie in Canada who is a Busy Beaver, too!

Good-bye for now. From a Busy Beaver in Australia.

Anneke Hart

Thank you very much, Anneke, for telling us about your country.

Thank you, *Hetty Witteveen*, for this funny poem. I think the other Busy Beavers will enjoy it too!

I had a cow that gave such milk
I dressed her in the finest silk;
I fed her on the finest hay,
And milked her twenty times a day!

BOOK NOOK

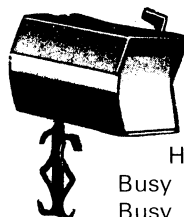
Title: *Reddy Fox*

Author: Thornton W. Burgess

This is a story about a fox named Reddy. He is taken from his mother to live with his grandmother. The animals call her Granny Fox. One time Reddy was doing something when Farmer Brown's boy shoots him in the leg. He really gets hurt.

I like this book because it tells about adventures. There are 19 other books about animal adventures (by this author).

by Patricia Van Raalte



From the Mailbox

Hello, *Cathy Dalhuisen*, welcome to the Busy Beaver Club! I think you'll make a good Busy Beaver because you had all the answers

right in the LADIES quiz. Keep up the good work, Cathy!
 And welcome to you too, *Marcelle Lindhout*. We hope you will like being a Busy Beaver. And thank you for your pretty picture, Marcelle.

Hello, *Henrietta and Carolyn Stieva*. So you two would like to become Busy Beavers, also? You are welcome to join. Thank you Carolyn, for your nice picture. Maybe you could write me, and tell me Carolyn's birthday too, Henrietta? And thank you for your contribution to the Birthday Fund, girls.

How is your lawn coming, *Patricia Van Raalte*? And how do you like Grade 4? You did very well on the quiz, Patricia! Write again soon.

Thank you, *Nellie Jane Knol*, for your story on Reformation Day. Too bad it was too late for this year's Reformation Day. But don't worry! It'll keep till next year.

You really enjoyed staying at your grandparents' place didn't you, *Charles Doekes*? You must have had a lot of fun with so many aunts and uncles and so many parties!

Think you can wait till spring for your rabbit, *Billy Doekes*? Thank you for your poem, Billy. I really enjoyed it.

Yes, you did very well on your quiz, *Caroline Hoeksema*! And you asked a very important question. The Birthday Fund you asked about is for our Theological College in Hamilton. We Busy Beavers collect money in the Fund to send to the College when it celebrates its Birthday in September. Right now our Birthday Fund stands at 25 cents! So let's hope all the Busy Beavers remember to BOOST our BIRTHDAY FUND.

Congratulations on your new baby sister, *Arlene Schulenberg*. Are you allowed to help look after her? How is your hand now? I'm sure glad you can write so well again!

Hello, *Lorraine De Boer*, thank you for your letters. Did you ever find out what that budgie was doing outside? You did very well on the quiz, Lorraine. Keep up the good work!

I'm sure you must have been glad to see your Dad get over the fence on time when the bull was after him, *Hetty*

Witteveen. Are you still playing baseball, Hetty, or has it got too cold for that?

Thank you for your pretty letter, *Irene Vande Burgt*. I'm glad you had such a nice time on your birthday, and that you had such a good summer. Bye for now.

You're a lucky girl, *Jenny Bosscher*, to go for such a nice trip at Christmas time! Thank you for your nice Reformation Day story, Jenny. Did your Daddy help you with it?

And thank you for your poem, *Clara Barendregt*. Did you get your snow already? Or can you still play outside on your new sports equipment?

TALKING SHOP

Who would you ask to help you to:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Make a bookshelf? | a. Paul |
| 2. Dye your coat purple? | b. Luke |
| 3. Catch a mess of fish? | c. Gamaliel |
| 4. Go hunting deer with you? | d. Tertius |
| 5. Lance an infected finger? | e. Lydia |
| 6. Teach you Hebrew law? | f. David |
| 7. Copy your manuscript? | g. Peter |
| 8. Tend your sheep? | h. Joseph of Nazareth |
| 9. Interpret your dreams? | i. Daniel |
| 10. Make you a camp tent? | j. Esau |

How did you do on last time's quiz? Let's see!

- | | | |
|---------|----------|------------------------------------|
| 1. east | 5. east | 9. west, north, south |
| 2. east | 6. south | 10. west |
| 3. east | 7. south | |
| 4. east | 8. west | Bye for now, Yours,
Aunt Betty. |

Church News

Declined:

REV. W. HUIZINGA

has declined the call extended to him by the Church of Toronto for the mission work in Irian Jaya.

* * *

Smithville: The address of the secretary of the Deacons is:

Mr. P.J. Lof
R.R. #1, Grassie, Ont.

All mail for the Deacons of Smithville is to be sent to the above address.

Note: This includes all mail in connection with the Fund for Aid to Korean widows and orphans of ministers.

* * *

New mailing address of:

Can. Ref. School Society
TIMOTHY

is: P.O. Box 6246, Station "F", Hamilton, Ontario L9C 5S3.

Secretary and Assistant Secretary are: A.L. "Tony" Vanderhout and Ed Helder.

With joy and gratitude we announce that God has entrusted into our care our first son:

DAREN MARK

October 18, 1973

Collin and Irene Spithoff

3055 Glencrest Rd., Apt. 1103
Burlington, Ontario

Engaged:

MARTHA M. VREUGDENHIL

to

HARRY H. MOES

November 2, 1973.

Box 103 Hillview Rd.
Sumas WA 98295
U.S.A.

4124 W 14th Ave.
Vancouver 8, B.C.
Canada

With thankfulness to the Lord, we announce the birth of:

CHRISTINA MARIE

on November 3, 1973.

A sister for: *Ramona* and
Jeffrey

Ralph and Ellen Kleefman
11457 - 85'A' Avenue
Delta, B.C.

De Heere nam tot Zich ons geacht en trouw medelid zuster:

L. DE BOER - (nee Brouwer)

October 23, 1973

Vrouwenver:

"*Belijden en Beleven*"

Smithville, Ontario.