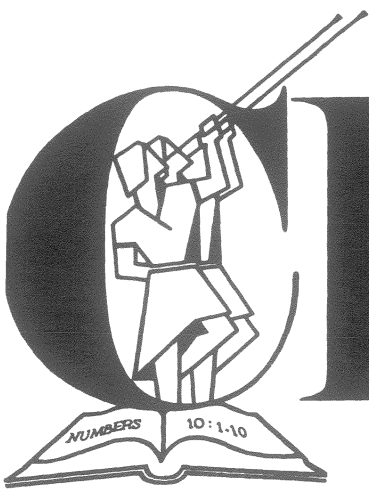


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE



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Work!

The "Labour Day Season" is upon us again. The yearly holiday on the first Monday of September usually means the end of the holiday season. After Labour Day the schools open their doors, Canadian National as well as Pacific Exhibition have closed theirs, Society-work begins to return to normal, the Catechism rooms are brought into a state of readiness, and people start looking forward to and making plans for their holidays next year, even though that time is still far, far away.

It is good at the beginning of the new working season to reflect on the question, "Why do we work?"

That, someone may say, is an easy question: if you don't work, you have no income; you have to work in order that you may make sufficient money to have a decent level of existing, rather of living. That person may even try to give a biblical (which is not necessarily the same as Scriptural) basis to that statement. Does not the Apostle Paul write in II Thess. 3:10, "If any one will not work, let him not eat"? In order that you may eat, you have to make money; and in order to make money you have to work somehow. You wish to enjoy many of the good things life offers, don't you? Then you must work in order to be able to afford them. If you wish to eat, you'll have to work.

How many of God's children have been infected with that wrong conception? Of how many of our readers has the mind become poisoned by that basically unscriptural view?

The Holy Scriptures teach us that life is a gift from God. Life is not the reward upon our work nor is our work the condition for life. In the above-quoted words to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul did not give a definition of life and of work and of their interrelationship. There he spoke only in a specific situation, namely that there were people who refused to work because in their opinion it did not make any sense: the Lord Jesus was to come soon, isn't it? Why then should they work as if that day were still far off?

The general teachings of the Scriptures are: that life is a gift from Him Who knows our needs for our life and work even before we tell Him, and Who knows them thus, that we do not have to take thought for the morrow. We are taught that our God is a God Who sustained His people even in the desert or at a brook in a parched and waste land. No, we do not have to work in order that we may live; we shall live in any case and for as long as it pleases our Father to give us life.

Yet we are to work, not just eight hours a day or thirty-six or forty hours a week, but all the time. Our God gave and gives us life in order that we may be able to work and thus to fulfil our task in life and world. The life which we have is the room and place which enables us to work.

"Work!" the Lord Jesus once said, as we are told in

John 6:27, but not for the purpose of eating. Let not your aim with your working be that you may be able to have a good life and a good time, that you can enjoy the good things of life and allow yourself some extra luxuries. There is another kind of food, and you should do your best to obtain that; there is another kind of eating which results in everlasting life. That's what you should seek. This is that work which is pleasing to God, that you believe on Him Whom He has sent. There should be activity, but not in order to gain that which we already possess or to obtain that which cannot help us in any way towards that which never perishes.

It is in this light that we should consider our work, our labours, our efforts, our aims, our expectations.

Our men and women, both older and younger, all resume their activities now that the holidays are past. How are you going to do your work?

Hopefully not in this state of mind that it is only the means by which you may obtain sufficient funds to pursue your ideals.

Hopefully not so that all you "sell" to your employer is your time and your body, your capacity to think and your skill to do certain things well, while your heart and mind are on something else.

The life which we have received from our God and the abilities which we possess through His grace are to be used differently. They are not the means by which we are enabled to make money, but they are the instruments to fulfil our task in life. And also in the way in which we do our daily work we should prove that we do not seek the things that perish, that we do not live after the scheme of this world.

Then our work shall not take possession of us so completely that we have no time for "other" things. Then society life will flourish, and both the families individually and the Church as a whole will benefit from that.

Then our young people will not spend their evenings just driving around and wasting gas and equipment for no purpose, but they will read something to improve their knowledge of the Scriptures and of the history of Christ's Church, of the Confessions and of the solution to the many questions which are raised regarding our place, position, and task in this world.

What have you that you have not received?
And what have you received that should not be returned to the Giver in faithful labour?

Work!

Your bread and water are secure in any case.

And so is the eating which results in everlasting life.

vO

Life Between Death and Resurrection 11

In the first article I told you what was, generally speaking, our teaching on the condition of the dead, the ungodly as well as the godly. However, several publications in the thirties showed that not all of us were in entire agreement as to these matters. I think of the writings of A. Janse: Man as a Living Soul, The Continued Existence of the Dead, Around the Living Soul, and About Idols and Creatures. Also of the controversies between Drs. J. Waterink, H. Steen, J. Ridderbos, V. Hepp, and of the doctoral thesis of Dr. J.H. Becker: 'The use of nephesh [Hebrew for "soul", ABR] in the Old Testament'. As a matter of fact, Janse asked attention particularly for what H. Bavinck had written as early as 1908 about 'Biblical psychology'. After the Liberation of the church K. Schilder wrote a long series of articles in De Reformatie on the question: 'Is there an Interim?'

Now, for the sake of honesty, I must say something about the background of these discussions and matters which are connected with them. It will show that the problem is not as simple as people sometimes think it is.

First of all, there is the matter of the so-called 'dichotomy', that is the teaching that man consists of a mortal body and an immortal soul. The notorious synod of Sneek made a statement in 1942 about this; it said: 'that therefore it should be maintained that man's soul, although constituting in a miraculous way, a unity with the body, nevertheless is something peculiar, distinguished from the body, from which it can be separated and exist separately'.

The late prof. K. Schilder had, together with prof. D.H. Th. Vollenhoven, written a large report about this matter (published in his Heid. Cat., III, pp. 69-79). In it he shows that the term 'immortal soul' is not Scriptural. Naturally, he believes in a certain 'two-ness' of 'body' and 'soul', but he does so in the sense that Paul mentions it in Rom. 7:22, II Cor 4:16, and Eph. 3:16: 'the inward and outward man'. These words mean: the part of man which is turned outwards, which we call 'body', and the part

which is turned inwards, which we call 'soul'. But that is quite different from what usually is meant by the word 'soul' in 'immortal soul'. For then 'body' means: the lower part in man (sometimes it is even called: the animal part of man) and 'Soul' is the higher part which cannot be touched by physical death, the part of man which is immortal. Then 'to be immortal' is something which belongs to the 'soul', while the 'body' is mortal.

By the way: 'to be immortal' is quite different from 'to continue to exist', for that we do also after death! Death is not the end of our life! But this commonly accepted usage of the term 'mortal body' over against an 'immortal soul' is not in agreement with the Scriptures. For the Scriptures teach us that death is the penalty of sin. And man sinned 'in body and soul'; therefore not only the body but the entire man is threatened with the penalty of death: Gen. 2:17: 'in the day that you eat from it (that is: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) you (not just your body!) shall die'. To prove that what he is saying in this report and in his book on the Heid. Cat. is nothing new. Schilder refers to the writings of Dr. A. Kuyper [*De leer der Onsterfelijkheid en de Staatsschool*, pp. 12, 13, 1870, and *Het werk van den H. Geest*, p. 359], L. Lindeboom, 1882; M. Bavinck, (*Geref. Dogmatiek*, LV, 656). Bavinck says that the Bible never speaks in so many words about 'the immortality of the soul'; also the word 'immortality' has a particular meaning. It means: to be beyond the power of death. Therefore the Bible says about God: 'Who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light' (I Tim. 6:16). As far as creatures are concerned, one can speak of their 'immortality' only when God grants it to them (read: I Cor. 15). He grants it not only to the soul but to man in his totality. We believe the resurrection of the flesh.

Our Confession does not speak of an immortality of the soul either. It does maintain man's continued existence, also after death! Immortality is mentioned in Art. 19, where it is said that Christ has by His resurrection given immortality to His human na-

ture. Also in Art. 37, which says that the wicked shall become immortal; the wicked in their totality, not only their souls.

Secondly, we meet the problem of death. What does death mean? What is its sense and significance? With Paul we believe and confess that 'the wages of sin is death' (Rom. 6:23). But what does this imply? Read Gen. 3, where it is first mentioned. Verse 19: 'In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken'. In verse 18 the thorns and thistles are mentioned which the earth shall bring forth to man. In other words: death is put on a level with the pain of a mother in childbearing, with the sweat of a man's face in the struggle for life, with the thorns and thistles among the plants of the field.

Of course, nobody will claim that the punishment of death does not imply more. For the real thing in it is everlasting destruction, not just temporal but everlasting death. As the late prof. K. Schilder once wrote: 'Look into the depth of hell and you see the total extent of the punishment of sin'. For this very reason, says Kuyper, the term 'immortal soul' is unscriptural. For it excludes part of man from the punishment of sin (*Van de Voleinding*, III, p. 29, etc.).

Now, we know that God did not bring about this absolute punishment



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The Liberation In The Forties

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS (1)

THIRTY YEARS AGO

Exactly thirty years ago* an important meeting was held in The Hague, the wellknown "residence" in The Netherlands.

It was during this meeting that the members of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland who with deep concern had seen how their churches were led in a hierarchical way on a path that drew them from the Reformed heritage in their doctrine and Church Order, were told what to do, to liberate themselves from the responsibility of these sins.

An Act of Liberation and Return was read. In many a congregation it was used. In other congregations the way in which people liberated themselves was a different one.

Anyhow, the meeting which took place on August 11, 1944, played a significant role in the liberation and re-establishing of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.

And since this is the ecclesiastical background of many of our members

as well as the historical origin of our Churches, it may be useful to tell the story again.

We want to do it this time in a more personal way, printing our own personal recollections.

PRELUDE

The war is still not over.

The Netherlands are occupied territory. They were overrun by a well-equipped enemy, Nazi-Germany. Its army had to lay down their weapons after five days only, on May 15th, 1940.

Since then the occupying forces have let the people feel they were there! Slowly and slowly they tried to "nazify" their way of life.

However, the great majority of the population resist these efforts. They long for freedom. Many people - young men in particular - had to go into hiding. The occupiers wanted them to go to Germany and work there in the factories and at the shipyards that supply their armed forces with new weapons and ammunition.

Others have been arrested because of their activities in the "resistance" and carried away to the concentration camps. Most of The Netherlands' Jews have been rounded up and led to the gas-chambers. The rations of food and vital materials are getting smaller and smaller. People talk about "the second front", the imminent invasion by the Allied Forces, and are encouraged by the BBC's broadcast of "Radio Oranje" to which they listen with their hidden wireless.

The Netherlands look forward to their liberation.

However, first another liberation would take place. That of The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands.

Yes indeed, there was trouble in the Church also. This was perhaps the greatest tragedy in these days of war.

The people who were responsible for this should have listened to the voice of Prof. Dr. K. Schilder - the man who, as the first of all in the whole country, had made some strong efforts to open the nation's eyes to the danger of being Nazified, shortly after the capitulation of the Dutch army, and who consequently was arrested soon afterwards, although he was released at the end of the year 1940, be it under certain conditions which were imposed upon him.

He had warned the Church leaders shortly after the May-days of 1940: "Please, bury the whole thing as soon as you can . . . For in days of emergency we need concord and co-operation more than ever. True concord, however, is only obtained in the way of truth and justice".

But he spoke in vain . . . They would not listen to him.

BEGINNING

These troubles dated back to the year 1936.

In that year a small number of members of the General Synod moved - however without any authority given to them by any of the Churches! - that certain opinions which differed from the "current ones" must be compared with the Scriptures and the Confession, "in order that the unrest in the Churches, which has been caused thereby, would not continue".

Was there really so much unrest? I do not believe it at all!

This is to say: There was no unrest in the Churches themselves. None of them had made a proposal or

LIFE BETWEEN DEATH AND RESURRECTION - continued

of sin immediately after Adam's fall. If He had done this, no man would have stayed alive, all men (at that time two) would have perished immediately. But God has postponed this judgment, because He had a Plan of Salvation and wanted it carried out. Right after the Fall He intervened with His grace and goodness and ruled the history of the world with them. For He wanted people again, who know and love Him. He did not want to hand over His creation to Satan! In order to prepare this people He postponed the ultimate fulfillment of His threat and granted postponement of the punishment (that is not the same as acquittal!) and made the world grow and gathers a church for Himself out of every generation and tongue and nation until He will have worked out His plan in the fullness of time.

Therefore, when after the Fall God speaks of death it is different from death before the Fall. Prior to the Fall death means everlasting de-

struction. But after the Fall God means by death no more than the return to the dust, the separation of 'body' and 'soul'. For the believer it is nothing but a passage into everlasting life, for the unbeliever a passage into everlasting destruction.

Therefore, the physical death is the entrance into an 'Interim', a transition period, or, as prof. Schilder called it: 'the entrance into the waiting-room, where one must wait till the door will be opened and the Judge of Heaven and earth will finish this time of waiting to show everybody the place where he will be for ever and ever, either heaven or hell'.

Or in other words: the purpose of physical death is to assemble men that in the End they all together can stand before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one, the godly as well as the wicked, may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body (II Cor. 5:10).

A.B. ROUKEMA

sent an overture to Synod concerning this matter!

Unrest was living only in the minds of those who feared the waning of their influence.

For, indeed, a Reformatoric current was gaining more and more ground in the Churches, since many people were no longer satisfied with the scholastic and subjectivistic preaching and teaching of many a professor and minister.

The most prominent men of this group were: Prof. Dr. K. Schilder, who was strongly supported by his older colleague, Prof. Dr. S. Greijdanus; further the school principal A. Janse, and the professors of philosophy Dooyeweerd and Vollenhove - the last two, however, making a wrong decision at the decisive moment.

The outcome of the committee that had been appointed concerning these "doctrinal differences" was that a series of statements was proposed on the subjects, "Common Grace", "The immortality of the soul", "Pre-supposed Regeneration" in the infants to be baptized, and others.

It was a remarkable fact that none of the Churches has asked for such an examination, let alone for any official statements as were made by the General Synod of 1942.

Here, then, is the hierarchical tendency of the "leaders" - mostly professors of theology who attended the Synods as pre-advisers - comes into the open.

Later on this hierarchy became even more impertinent, as we will see.

It was no wonder that men like K. Schilder and S. Greijdanus publicly protested against this violation of the Church Order - which in Article 30 says that in major assemblies only those matters can be dealt with that regard all the Churches (the training to the ministry e.g.) or which have been tabled by or from the minor assemblies. The delegates are in no way authorized to add anything to the agenda!

PREPARATIONS

There is a lot of activity in the parsonage of the Church of Waardhuizen, a tiny village somewhere in the centre of the "Land van Altena", the most northern part of the province of North Brabant in The Netherlands.

This is June, 1944. The house has to be prepared for its new occupants, a young couple that hopes to get married very soon.

All sorts of problems were to be faced. How to obtain furniture for the livingroom and for the bedroom? The studyroom will be alright for the time being. That is to say: there is a desk, there are some bookshelves, and there are even some of the most essential books. But where to get floor coverings, and material for the curtains? For the war is not over yet. And these goods are all rationed and very scarce.

There was even the problem how to get the couple's belongings to this place. But in the meantime this problem has been solved. A carrier was found who was willing to take the risk of being robbed of his truck. He made some unauthorized trips. For even a truck could not be driven - on charcoal, and definitely not on gasoline; there was a real energy-crisis at that time! - without the permission of the Germans.

So the male half of the new occupants of the parsonage arrived sitting among his belongings in the back of the old truck, his blood having been milkshaked because the tires of the car had been too frequently repaired and the roads were in a shocking condition.

With the assistance of a student friend the young people are now very busy furnishing their new home. It is going to be their first home as a married couple. In a couple of weeks' time they will have their great day, their wedding day!

MORE PREPARATIONS

However, some more preparations are to be made. Another exam has to be passed, the last one for the minister-to-be.

This one is held by the Classis in which the congregation that he is going to minister is situated.

This time, at the Classis of Almerkerk, at the end of June 1944, there is even more tension than usual in the minds of all people who are involved. For if things go well - and they went well! - a final question must be asked and the answer to this question will decide whether the young man will become a minister of the Word or not.

For the General Synod of the Churches made a new rule - in spite of many protests lodged by or from within the Churches, this being another proof of the hierarchical attitude of this body.

This rule reads, in our own words: Every minister is supposed to

agree with the "doctrinal statements" made by the Synod of 1942, and if he does not, he can make his objections known in the "ecclesiastical way" of Consistory - Classis - Particular Synod - General Synod. However, in the meantime he is not permitted to speak up publicly against the said statements. As for the candidates to the ministry, they shall subscribe to them, and the classical assemblies shall seek such a statement from them at the end of each examination. For nobody shall be allowed to teach anything that is not in full accordance with the said "doctrinal statements".

ANSWER

What, then, happened as soon as the examination of our candidate was finished?

This, that the chairman asked him if he could agree with the "doctrinal statements".

His answer was: "Yes, I can, except with that concerning pre-supposed regeneration".

Well, this answer caused some consternation.

This was only the fourth time that such an answer was given. The first time it happened at Classis Gorinchem after the exam of the then candidate - now Professor of Theology at Kampen Seminary - H.J. Schilder. Consequently he was not admitted to the ministry of the Word, and the congregation of Noordeloos - shame upon her! - withdrew its call under pressure from synodical deputies. The second time it happened to candidate J.F. Hey. The Church of Langerak had him ordained, joining the "liberated" Churches. The third candidate was the Rev. J.C. Janse, a son of A. Janse who was mentioned above. He was not given permission to propose for the ministry at his first "classical exam".

G. VAN RONGEN

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OUR COVER

Middlesex County Court House,
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Ontario Ministry of Industry and
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God's Word and the Little Ones

Sheri Dunham Haan. A Child's Storybook of Bible People. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1973. 239 pp., \$5.95.

Mrs. Haan's book, a combination of 'carefully selected Bible stories', rhythm poems, and songs, arouses many questions about the way we acquaint our children with the Word of God. Rather than giving a short review in which we have to distance ourselves from the approach of Sheri Dunham Haan, I should like to elaborate on some aspects of current Children's Bibles in general. In order to do so we must know first what the Bible really is.

In the Bible the LORD reveals Himself. The LORD shows Who He is by recording what He has done to His creation, to His people, to individual persons. We find unfolded the history of redemption, step by step, from the beginning to the end of the world. In the Bible, as a result, we do not find the history of e.g. Abraham or David; if that were so, different facts would have been recorded, facts that we sometimes are able to discover by studying Ancient History or Archeology. No, we find the history of the LORD with His people, redemptive history. The lives of the different people which we find recorded in the Bible, must always be seen in that light and be left in that framework. While reading the Bible, it becomes so very, very clear that, had it been up to the people, there would not have been any redemption; not any of the people have been faithful. Not the people, but the LORD Himself 'makes (redemptive) history', turns all evil of men to our profit, and works toward His glorious Day. The Bible does not present a number of heroes or saints that brought about salvation and justice, but shows that, notwithstanding the incompetence and disobedience of chosen people, God brings about salvation.

If we want to tell about the lives of the 'people of the Bible', we must be careful to leave them in that 'work-plan' of God; we must not separate them from their historical background. Such a procedure would be like cut-

ting up a plant and arranging the various parts, the stem, the leaves, the flowers, on a table: all the parts wither and do not together form the living plant. Stories out of the Bible taken out of their context and put in an 'own' order do not present the Living Word if the red thread of redemptive history is ignored. Such stories, cut off from the root of Life, are lifeless indeed, and the question stands whether such stories may be called Bible stories at all, even though they receive their information directly from the Bible.

The book under review falls into three sections. In the first section we find stories, plays, poems, and songs about different 'Children of the Bible', in the second and third section respectively about various 'Women of the Bible' and 'Men of the Bible'. The stories in each section are in chronological order, but each story is 'self-containing': no reference is made to stories that have been told already, no reference to stories that will be told later in the book. While the Bible is a self-revelation of God, the *Child's Storybook of Bible People* does not intend to 'reveal the LORD' to the children, but tells about the people we meet in the Bible in a series of biographies and auto-biographies, dialogues and poems. The book does not give Biblical HISTORY and is in that sense different from what we usually call a 'Children's Bible'. We find a compilation of lifeless stories as I defined them in the preceding paragraph. According to the author the book "was first of all written for family devotional use", but as this book does not tell about the LORD, but about the people only, I wonder what the subject of devotion of the family must be.

In the book under review, as in many other 'Children's Bibles' (I put the word in quotation marks because the term is actually highly improper), we find a selection of stories. On what grounds is the selection made? In this book it is hard to tell why certain stories or parts of stories have been chosen and others not. We must be alert, though, that we shall not be

satisfied with a mutilated Gospel. In Mrs. Haan's book we come across unacceptable omissions. In the first section of the book she has Naaman relate his own experiences in Israel and he finishes his story with the words, "Elisha didn't want the gifts. So I thanked him over and over again. When I went home I had healthy skin and a love for God in my heart. How thankful I am for our little servant girl who knew about God and believed in Him!" End of the story. Not one word about Gehazi. Why not? Does not the author want to relate sin? Could not Naaman tell that part because he did not know about the end of Gehazi? If so, the autobiographical form in which the story is narrated, is unacceptable. Did not the LORD reveal Himself to Naaman as the God of Israel Who is different from all other gods, Who does not make use of the incantations and manipulations of a priest, but Who heals by His Word and demands faith only (Sola Fide), Who cannot be paid for His services but Who shows His love through grace only (Sola Gratia)? The uniqueness and majesty of the LORD is revealed again and maybe especially in the (hi)story of Gehazi! If this narration is to be a Bible story, that part cannot be missed.

Very often we find that, when an author of Bible stories for children takes the stories out of their historical background and thereby causes them to be lifeless, cut off as they are from their roots, he tries to breathe new life into them by putting them into self-made frames that may sound very biblical or pious. Mrs. Haan does not fall into that pit; only occasionally we come across such 'frames'.

A rather common 'frame' we may encounter in Children's bibles is the 'God rewards the good' frame. In the narration of Hannah, praying for a baby-boy, Mrs. Haan shows clearly an inclination towards the mentioned frame. After she has told about the priest who prophesied about the birth of Samuel, she writes, "Hannah turned and hurried home. She was hungry again. The lines and puffiness around her eyes disappeared. She didn't need to carry her hanky with her. She wasn't afraid of the teasing. The LORD would give her what she wanted.

"About a year later, Hannah had a son. No more teasing. No more sobbing. No more cold food. The Lord gave her a baby boy. She named him

Samuel and praised the Lord!" There is nothing left but a feeling of pity for that miserable Hannah because the appalling corruption of the temple service and the deplorable unfaithfulness of Israel toward its God are left out completely.

Another frame that is often handled, is the one of 'God can do everything'. God or the Lord Jesus becomes a magician, doing miracles at random. The following account of the resurrection of Jairus' daughter shows this frame: "Walking close to her, Jesus took her hand. 'Young lady, get up.' Open came her eyes. Blink! Breathing started! She glanced around the room. She sat up. Then she got up . . . and walked! She even had supper. So quickly, in only a minute, Jesus brought her from death to life." The Lord Himself in the New Testament speaks of miracles as SIGNS. When the disciples of John the Baptist come to the Lord Jesus with the question, "Are you he who is to come, or shall we look for another?" the Lord answers, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. These miraculous happenings are all SIGNS of the coming of the Messiah. The whole notion of magic, suggested by that little word 'Blink!' or by the phrase 'in only one minute' is out of order and harmful.

To narrate a Bible story to very young children is a skill; to narrate well, an art. We are afraid that both in school and home Children's Bibles are used too often for convenience's sake; it is so easy to take the book from the shelf and read the story to the children. It does not require any study or preparation, but - and that holds for the parent and teacher - it is a cheap substitute. It is of far greater benefit to the children when the mother takes her little ones in her lap and tells herself, or when the teacher stands or sits in front of the class and recounts the works of the LORD. It is not an easy matter; it requires much exercise. Teachers, when they start teaching, discover to their dismay that their most vivid narrations last only four to seven minutes, while they intended and tried to tell for twenty minutes. Only daily practice teaches them how to hold the attention of their students for a longer period of time, how to modulate their voices

and how to make the fullest of the expression of face and hands. There are 'born tellers', but they are very few; God's command to 'tell the forthcoming generation of His mighty deeds' does not pertain to them only.

Narrating is a matter of selection. On the one hand it may be necessary to condense a story (without mutilating it), to limit the number of characters involved or to leave out names; on the other hand details must be added in order to give a good and colorful picture. The Bible itself gives some beautiful examples of good narrating. We find a striking example in Genesis 22: "And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took in his hand the fire and the knife. So they went both of them together. And Isaac said to his father Abraham, 'My father!' And he said, 'Here am I, my son.' He said, 'Behold, the fire and the wood; but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?' Abraham said, 'God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering, my son.' So they went both of them together."

Note the 'slowed-down' conversation and the repetition of "So they went both of them together", which is not strictly necessary, but makes the picture complete. Sheri Dunham Haan, in the book under review, at times gives fine samples of functional

details. The following quotation will show that. "Elijah was anxious. He had so little time left. But there was one more thing he wanted to ask Elisha. 'Before I go, is there anything you want from me?' 'Yes, please. Treat me as your firstborn son. Give me a double portion of your spirit.' " The statement "Treat me as your firstborn son" is an addition to what the Bible relates, but it is a clarifying and functional detail. More often, however, the author violates the story and lets her imagination 'go wild'. When she, in her story about Moses (a dialogue) has Jochebed say about the basket, "Well, Miriam. It's dry now. And it doesn't leak. I just tried it out in a big pot of water. All I have to do is put some soft blankets in it," then this detail is not only hilarious, but mocks all respect for God's Word. In the already mentioned story about Hannah, we hear Elkanah say, "Now listen to me. Why make such a fuss over that? You've got me. Isn't that enough? Why, that's even better than ten boys, right?" He waited. She did not laugh, not even a smile. He could tell that she wasn't in the mood for joking." In my opinion that last statement again shows lack of respect, if not an entirely wrong interpretation of Elkanah's words of comfort.

EWOUND GOSKER
[To be continued]



ROARING SEWING MACHINES

Ladies Aid of Winnipeg busy sewing and mending clothes for Brasil and Korea. [see Clarion Volume 23 - No. 11, June 1, 1974 issue.]

news medley

Everywhere the preparations for the harvest are made. Here and there the oats has already been harvested as well as other products of the soil. Across the road which runs some distance from my study, the crop is yellow-golden or golden-yellow, whichever way it should be put. Thus we see the ever-returning miracle that the earth brings forth its fruits to feed man and beast, giving back a hundredfold what man has sown some months ago. In some areas there is a bumper crop of corn or other food, in other areas the yield is poor due to lack of rain when it was needed so badly. And yet we are surprised every year anew that our gracious God gives us so much and blesses us so richly.

The gathering in of the crops is also a sign of resumed activity in the midst of the Churches and Church-life, although not much can be noticed of it as yet in the bulletins which I received thus far. Maybe this is the opportunity then to elaborate on a few points. We'll see.

Let us start our journey this time in the far West: the Valley **Church News** tells us that in Chilliwack the congregation was to view a churchbuilding which was reported to be for sale. The Church at Chilliwack saw some growth recently, and things have been progressing gradually. I would not be surprised if they start thinking about calling a minister within the foreseeable future. We are eager to know the results of viewing and (possible) offer to purchase.

That was all the news from British Columbia: it was one of the thinnest issues of **Church News** I have seen for years. Which does not mean that activity is lacking there.

Going to Alberta, we have something only from the bulletin of Calgary. There we find the following reminder: "The Congregation is reminded that we rent the church building from people who are offended by smoking. Please do not smoke on the church property." That is a reminder which was given more often in the past. It should become a rule not only when a building is rented but also when the Church comes together in their own building. Preferably, smoking should be abolished altogether. Recently I read in a report of a life insurance company the following passage.

Cancer, unlike heart disease is, to a large extent, more controllable than preventable. The major preventative step that can be taken is not to smoke. Smoking is **clearly** and **irrefutably** linked to cancer of the lung, and to the less-common cancers of the throat, nose, mouth and even of the bladder (emphasis mine, vO). The major control step is simply early diagnosis and treatment. Hence, regular medical check-ups are most important.

Right now the windows of our meeting rooms can still be open and the smoke can be removed by the draft which is welcomed in this time of the year, though not in other seasons, as Winnipeg's bulletin reminds us. But with the approach of the colder season, when doors and windows have to be kept closed, those who smoke and oftentimes do so abundantly, should be aware of it that they not only endanger their own health but also that of their brethren

and sisters who are forced to meet with them in the same room, oftentimes till the wee hours of the morning. At least, that's what we learned from Burlington West's bulletin: "The deacons left the meeting at 11:00 o'clock, after which the tired elders continued. A considerable amount of time was spent on . . ." I sincerely hope that it becomes more and more customary that there is no smoking during our meetings, or at all for that matter. Oftentimes we regret having done something when it is too late . . .

From Calgary we go to Winnipeg. In their bulletin we are told that someone visiting the grave of the late Rev. H. Stel, noted that a stone had been placed on the grave, bearing the inscription I Cor. 15:43. There we read, "It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power." Yes, that also applies to our late brother as to all those who preceded him and us.

Winnipeg expected the building permit to be issued a week or two after the bulletin was issued, so that the contractor could start purchasing the materials needed for the work. It is about time, we understand, that they vacate their present building and move to more hospitable surroundings. Above I already referred to draft. Winnipeg remarks about that: "During the past months the neighbourhood youth appears to try to tell us something. You undoubtedly noticed the increase of holes in windows. So far the mosquitoes and flies have not used these extra opportunities to enter, and let us hope that when the snow arrives it does not twirl slowly down on **our** heads. For the time being a little extra draft is usually welcome." Yes, I saw some of those holes when I was there this past summer, and I wish the Winnipeg Congregation that they may sell their present building soon.

That leaves us no worthwhile events to be mentioned west of the Manitoba/Ontario border. Thus we go to Ottawa. The Consistory was in touch with the Seventh Day Adventist church concerning the use of their new building. As you will know, the Ottawa Church did meet in their building until it was sold some time ago. Since then the Ottawa Christian School has provided the opportunity to meet, but that opportunity is good for emergencies: it does not contribute towards the atmosphere of a service which we all like to feel and enjoy. Therefore the Consistory decided to contact their previous "landlords" whose new building, incidentally, is being erected right across from the Christian School. The conclusion was, however, that it would be best to have the services in the school for another three months. That caused some problems, as we are told, since it seems that "more and more people are holidaying in the Ottawa region every year. Would it not be wonderful if some of them would decide to come to Ottawa permanently and join our congregation?" Yes, indeed, that would be wonderful and desirable. Ottawa is a beautiful city and in a city of more than a quarter of a million there must be opportunities galore for those who seek for a place where to settle. It would also greatly encourage the Ottawa brethren and sisters.

On our way south we stop again in Burlington. The last time I saw the Churchbuilding of "West", the roof was on, although the shingles still had to be put on. "West" also informed the Consistory of "East" that, since they had a new building, were a new Church, and expected to have a new minister, they also preferred a new communion-ware set which, as you will recall, was offered to them by "East".

In the bulletin congratulations were offered to br. and sr. J. Zietsma, who celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary, and we gladly add our congratulations to those expressed by the Burlington-West Church. It is a real blessing when husband and wife are spared for one another for such a long time in these days of divorce and separation.

We already mentioned Burlington-East. It was from their bulletin that I gathered the news about the communion-ware set. I also pass on to you the reaction of this Consistory to a request from the Netherlands. We read: "From a church in the Netherlands request for financial assistance for their church building. The consistory, considering that our sister churches receive ample subsidy from the Government, and 100% subsidy for their schools, is of the opinion that such a request should be laid aside, unless there are very special circumstances. The load which our churches bear is much heavier."

I fully agree with these remarks. Oftentimes I wonder **what** our foreign sister Churches actually know about us and about our Church-life. Years ago we received a request for financial support for a regional highschool in the Netherlands. I wrote that committee a letter, explaining the situation here and telling them that they at least could look forward to the time when the Government would pay almost all their expenses. I also requested them, in case their action resulted in a slight surplus, to send that to us, since we needed it more than they did. I am still waiting for an answer . . .

Speaking of letters, sometimes I read in brief reports on Consistory meetings that departing members sent a letter to the Consistory thanking them for everything enjoyed in the communion of saints. That makes a very favourable impression and I think that it attests to a right

Christian attitude. Consistories sometimes receive less pleasant communications.

We go south, but not before having mentioned that the chairman of Orangeville's consistory granted a brother the right to celebrate his birthday at least twice a year because of his generous treat during that particular meeting. Understandable.

Chatham is the only Church left of which we are to make mention. They may have selected a name for their Churchbuilding by now. Nine names had been suggested by the time the latest bulletin was printed. But there is more. There is an "Apartment Cleaning Committee" which took care of the cleaning of no less than 58 apartments. I gather that these are newly-built apartments which need to be cleaned before the first occupants take possession of them. "A cheque for \$1,450.00 will soon be ours", the ladies announced proudly. Approximately seventy people were involved (!!) "men, women, young adults, boys and girls all did their thing, some in cleaning, some in supplying the refreshments, some in babysitting and some in delivering the workers to the premises." Small wonder that the benefit of a good cooperation is also demonstrated: "And so you see that in good cooperation a major undertaking becomes a cinch. Figure 4 hours per unit: that would come to 232 labour hours. Most of us were there 3 times at 3 hours: is 9 hours and it paid over \$6.00 per hour."

It appears that the Committee sees a golden future ahead: "We hope to line us up the new over-100 unit building on Mary St. for next spring. It was a lot of fun and we hope that everyone will be interested in doing it again next year."

Success!
And "sterkte".

vO

Who Limits Christ's Atonement?

We are often told that we limit the atonement of Christ, because we say that Christ has not made a satisfaction for all men, or all men would be saved. Now, our reply to this is, that, on the other hand, our opponents limit it: we do not. The Arminians say, Christ died for all men. Ask them what they mean by it. Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of all men? They say, "No, certainly not." We ask them the next question: Did Christ die so as to secure the salvation of any man in particular? They answer: "No, Christ has died that any man may be saved if" - and then follow certain conditions of salvation. Now, who is it that limits the death of Christ? Why, you. You say that Christ did not die so as infallibly to secure the salvation of anybody. We beg your pardon, when you say we limit Christ's death; we say, "No, my dear sir, it is you that does it." We say Christ so died that He infallibly secured the salvation of a multitude that no man can number, who through Christ's death not only may be saved, but are saved, must be saved and cannot by possibility run the hazard of being anything but saved. You are welcome to your atonement; you may keep it. We will never renounce ours for the sake of it.

*Charles Haddon Spurgeon
[quoted via Pro Ecclesia, Grand Rapids]*

Press Review

ONCE MORE ABOUT THE NEW PENTECOSTALISM

In the previous Review I quoted: "Also, many of the Roman Catholics involved in the 'charismatic movement' still go to Mass and pray to the Virgin Mary . . ." In the *Christianity Today* issue of July 5th more news is given about the Roman Catholic branch of the Neo-Pentecostals. We read:

Next year, Rome.

The announcement that the 1975 international Catholic charismatic conference will be held in Rome during Pentecost week in May elicited applause and cheers from the 30,000 gathered in the Notre Dame stadium at South Bend, Indiana, for this year's conference. Significantly, the conference will be held at the nerve centre of Catholicism in the midst of the Vatican-decreed year of evangelism.

Further we are informed:

Reports of rapid growth globally and an emphasis on healing, "community", and social involvement highlighted last month's meetings at Notre Dame.

Leaders estimate 600,000 are now involved in the renewal (the word the Roman Catholics prefer to use for the pentecostal movement, J.G.). About 3,000 Catholic Pentecostal prayer groups in sixty countries are registered with South Bend headquarters, and there are scores, perhaps hundreds, not yet recorded. The movement in France, for example, is growing so fast leaders can't keep records current; some 10,000 French Catholics are involved, and leaders there say they expect that figure to quadruple within the year.

A highlight was the Friday night healing service. And then we are informed:

Another highlight was the Saturday night mass. To the strains of "For You are My God" 700 robed priests, a dozen bishops, and Cardinal Leo-Josef Suenens of Belgium marched onto the field; the music gave way to sustained applause, and candles later were lit throughout the stadium.

Further:

Suenens drew light applause when in a brief talk at the Sunday rally he urged the movement to keep intact Catholic allegiance to Mary and Peter (the pope).

About the same Pentecostal movement an informative article also appeared in *Nederlands Dagblad* of June 22. The article was written by P.A.B., who interviewed Mr. Du

Plessis. It had as heading: "Oppassen voor meneer Pinksteren" (Watch out for Mr. Pentecost). That "Mr. Pentecost" is the nickname for David du Plessis. Already for 25 years he has seen himself as the contact man between the churches and the Pentecost movement. He was an important man at the sixth charismatic theological conference at Utrecht in the Netherlands some time ago. In that article we read (I have translated it):

"He (Mr. Du Plessis) proclaimed there among other things that there is almost no church left anymore without members who speak in tongues; (and) that the charismatic movement grows faster and faster and that it does not bother about church borders (Zij stoort zich niet aan kerkelijke grenzen). His great goal is: a total reconciliation between the churches on the basis of the work of the Holy Spirit . . . Du Plessis c.s. stress the "Communion of the Spirit" and therefore want emphatically to continue to operate within the ecclesiastical structures (kerkelijke structuren).

The article goes on:

To say it in Du Plessis' own words: "The theology of the Spirit has always been underestimated. That is the reason why the churches never could reach unity". Doctrinal differences cannot be overcome by a consensus but only by the reality of the Holy Spirit. Also not by an organization, but by recognizing each other on the basis of experience of the Spirit. That takes time, of course, but Du Plessis is certain that the reconciliation will come. Not through reformation of the church, "whereby always only doctrinal matters are at stake", but by a revival on the basis of experience.

The article continues with information about the contact between the charismatic movement and the World Council of Churches, and about the many adherents within the Roman Catholic church. We can leave that out now. But important it is to see that we have here oecumenism instead of the true oecumene, as the article states. It is unity whereby the truth, the true doctrine of the Word of God and so the true faith are not the binding powers, but the inner religious experience of man, which experience is called the experience of the Holy Spirit.

However, the Spirit of God is the Spirit of the Truth. He cannot bind together the truth and what is built upon the truth with what is deviating

from the truth, the lie. Basis for unity never can be our experience. Basis is only, also here, the Word of God. It is for sure: Watch out for Mr. Pentecost. May the eyes of many who are under the spell of the "charismatic movement" be opened so that they see that they are led astray: away from the true doctrine of the Word of God. Let us maintain "no" against "Mr. Pentecost" for our own Spiritual health. And for others, maybe.

A NOMINATION (Continued).

In the issue of July 27, the Press Review was about the nomination of Lewis B. Smedes as professor at Calvin Seminary. Dr. Smedes was not appointed by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Churches. Rev. John Piersma, member of the said Synod himself, gives "A Delegates' Review and Reflections" in *The Outlook*, July 1974 issue. He informs his readers that Synod decided that the strong negative criticism against the nomination of Dr. Smedes required his personal appearance to answer the criticism. He came but was not elected. Rev. Piersma writes:

As most now know, Smedes was not elected by Synod to the chair of Moral and Philosophical Theology (Dr. Theodore Minnema received Synod's majority of votes). Why? It seems to me that two features of Smedes' interview were damaging. The first was his opinion that Romans 5:12 does not necessarily teach that Adam was an historical figure. Paul, he suggested, could have been using a rabbinical tradition in that passage to make the point that there was a given moment in which a good man turned from friendship with God to rebellion.

It is remarkable that the very same way of speaking about that text as "a rabbinical tradition" and no proof at all "that Adam was an historical figure" caused much excitement and concern in reformed circles in The Netherlands some years ago. It then came from the pen of the well-known professor of the Free University in Amsterdam, Dr. H.M. Kuitert.

Rev. Piersma goes on:

A second (feature, J.G.) was his response to an elder's query concerning his view of hell. The professor from Fuller Theological Seminary (= Dr. Smedes, J.G.) chose what might have seemed to many to be rather flippant figures of speech to illustrate his concept of eternal punishment, comparing it to an airplane in a holding pattern above O'Hare airport unable to land, etc.

It is our hope for the Christian Reformed Churches that the election of Dr. Minnema will prove to be a good one with respect to their reformed character and course.

J. GEERTSEMA

school X crossing

By the time this column is published the doors of the various schools will have swung open wide, much to the relief of the busy mothers. Perhaps it was also a relief to some students, who during the long holiday season do not know what to do anymore after they have tried almost everything. To some parents the relief will be different and new, as for instance in COALDALE, Alberta. The School Society there issued a worthwhile bulletin some time ago. I was not aware of this until I received issue no. 3, which was the first one I received. Perhaps they will still send the first two numbers. Anyhow, the content of no. 3 is good and interesting to read. We can understand the joy they have in Coaldale in announcing to the membership and the congregation that the doors would open for our children to a school operated by the Canadian Reformed School Society. Many parents will be relieved that their children do not have to attend the public schools any longer but may now be entrusted to teachers with whom they and their children are one in faith. It often happens that children are then surprised to see their school teachers in Church on Sundays! Then the parents have a beautiful opportunity to explain to the children why we want a reformed school. In the classrooms, too, the communion of saints will be experienced between the children and the teacher. How wonderful when the teacher can ask on Monday mornings: what did the minister preach about yesterday? That this cannot be done in a public or mixed christian school is clear.

Parents may indeed feel relieved to send their children to a reformed school. But they should never think that their duty is now done. They are still the first ones responsible for the education of the children. They may be thankful that the Lord gives them a tremendous help in reformed teachers. We hope that the Lord may give the necessary wisdom and strength to the new teachers in Coaldale: the principal Mr. D. Boersema, who used to be the principal in Orangeville,

Ont.; and Mrs. Meliefste, who with her experience and education will also be a great help to the school. We also hope that a third teacher may soon be hired so that the staff will be complete. The bulletin does not mention where the school operates, but if I am not mistaken, the classes are held in the new church building. They have no name yet for the school and so are asking for suggestions.

Brother VanOene has already mentioned the May Day in Coaldale. We hope that the sugarbeet "hoe-in" was successful as well as the other activities planned, such as a car rally to raise funds for the building drive and a smorgasbord and a carwash later on. A lot of activity for the sake of the 48 children enrolled so far. It is interesting to note that Coaldale starts with 9 grades, divided as follows: grades 1-3, 4-6, and 7-9 - 16 students each. Sounds ideal. As they write: "We can hardly wish for improvement in this respect beside hoping that the numbers will increase". At the moment there are 34 members.

EDMONTON has finished another year of "Saturday School". The School Society has gained another 17 members during the past year, to make a total of 35, or about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the wage-earning members. Membership fees are now \$25.00 per month. Hopefully not only the number of members will increase, but also the membership fees. For we must be realistic in faith and therefore also count the costs. To operate a school will cost much more than \$25.00 a month. However, this membership fee at this moment may well be realistic in a given situation. In another congregation it was started for example with \$10.00 a week, which was later increased to \$15.00 and again to \$20.00. And this happened fairly soon after! In other words: we have to *learn* to give. When we get used to missing \$25.00 a month we will soon get used to not missing twice that amount! May the Lord bless the efforts for reformed education in Edmonton also.

In LONDON the fees will be \$15.00 per week effective July 1, 1974 and \$17.50 effective January 1, 1975.

In their newsletter *Maranathá* the Board also informs the membership about the dangers of the so-called AACCS by quoting from a publication of Prof. J.G. Vos of Geneva College. I quote: "What is really good and true to the historic Christian Faith in the 'Reformational' movement is older than the movement. The erroneous and doubtful features are new and are distinctly their own. Thus some (not all) of their men say that man does not have a soul; some say that the Ten Commandments are not applicable today; some say that the Bible does not contain moral teachings; all say that the Bible is only one of various forms of the Word of God." Since our people too are being approached time and again by the AACCS in Toronto, we should be aware of what they really teach. We must discern to see whether these spirits are of God. This movement is more dangerous that we at first glance may assume. Let the Boards of our Societies and the members keep themselves informed about this organization. The better we know the Scriptures and our Reformed Creeds, the better we will be equipped to evaluate all sorts of movements, even within "reformed" circles. May our school teachers especially know the reformed stand.

M.C. WERKMAN



Church News

THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

The Annual Convocation and College Evening will this year not be held before the opening of the new course in September but on Friday, November 1, 1974.

This decision was taken because it saves the governors from the West one trip since they will be in Ontario the first week in November with a view to the General Synod. Particulars about the College Evening will be published in due time.

For the organizing committee,
L. Selles

A Letter

[The following was sent as a circular letter to the members of the Christian Reformed Church of Neerlandia, Alberta.]

Brothers and Sisters of the Christian Reformed Church,

You may be wondering why you are receiving this letter. It is because we are deeply concerned about the direction in which the Christian Reformed Church has been moving these last years. As we see it, the Christian Reformed Church is deviating fast, from the Word of God and the Reformed Creeds, the three forms of unity, and also in Church polity. Don't you think it is the result of the wrong stand your churches took in 1946, right after the war, concerning the church schism in the "Gereformeerde Kerken" in the Netherlands (your sister churches)?

It should not be unknown to you what happened in the Netherlands in the years 1942 - 1945 in the "Gereformeerde Kerken," namely that the faithful office-bearers were put out of the church, on grounds of Art. 79 - 80 of the Church-order.

Now, the Christian Reformed Church of America, who call themselves the true church of Jesus Christ, said, that they wanted to be neutral in this matter, although this is quite impossible. The Church of Jesus Christ can never be neutral, nowhere, and over-against no one.

The attitude of the Christian Reformed Church is very clear in this respect. They chose completely the side of the unfaithful majority. The Synod of 1949 has said "that in the Churches in the Netherlands nothing has changed, not in doctrine, nor in life, which would warrant a change in correspondance" (Acts of Synod, 1949). And the Christian Reformed Church closed her doors and pulpits for faithful office-bearers from the Netherlands.

Is that being neutral?

Not being satisfied with the sad course and direction of these things in the Christian Reformed Church, some brothers went with their complaints to the council of the Christian Reformed Church at Neerlandia (1950), but without result. Then, according to the church-order, they went to the classis

with their objections, only asking to investigate the church schism in the Netherlands, as to which side was the continuation of the true Church of Jesus Christ, according to the Word of God. But the classis sent them to Synod.

In that year then, in 1950, these brethren presented their request concerning the investigation of the church schism in the Netherlands, before Synod. But again to no avail. The answer of the Synod was: "It is not in our province to sit in judgement over these churches."

Whereas the Synod of 1949 said in answer to brother J. De Haas from Lethbridge, that nothing has changed in the "Gereformeerde Kerken", neither in doctrine, nor in life (as stated above), now in 1950, Synod says: "It is not in our province to judge." Is this not a contradiction? For Synod had judged already in 1949. And even the Synod of 1946, right after the war, had already judged, after hearing only one side: the side of the majority (that of Prof. V. Hepp. and Dr. J. H. Bavink, etc.).

And now we put this question to you: Has not the Christian Reformed Church here a task overagainst her sister-churches in the Netherlands? And have you, as members of the church, and according to the office all believers, no mandate from the King of the church, to try to put away all sin, all the injustice and revilement done against many Ministers of the Word, as well as many office-bearers and members of the church; to try to get this all out of the church?

And what course did the synodical churches in the Netherlands take ever since 1944? In 1944, faithful ministers had to be put out, because they did not *obey synod*. Today plain liberalism is being taught in theological schools and churches. It is being denied by Prof. Kuitert that the whole Scripture is the Word of God. Prof. Augustijn, Dr. Wiersinga, and many others aid him in his liberal teachings. But they are left alone - they may teach and preach.

If you think that this does not affect you, then just remember that Prof. Kuitert has been admitted to speak in your churches and preach on

your pulpits. How terrible it must be in the eyes of the Lord to refuse faithful ministers and accept these liberal professors to speak and teach in the churches.

The Synod in the Netherlands does no longer dare to tackle them, scared as they are for another schism. Instead of standing up for the truth of the Word of God, they let these men go their way.

Brothers and sisters of the Christian Reformed Church, the Lord requires of you to think this matter over seriously, and to be active and obedient. One of your own ministers, the Rev. J. Tuininga of Smithers, B.C., also points to the lack of truth in the statement of Synod of 1950, where it says: "It is not in our province to sit in judgement over these churches." He says: "Synod had already judged the case and taken the side of the so-called 'synodical' churches. While pretending to be neutral, Synod actually condemned the Schilder group (although this was not a Schilder group, but the continuation of the true church. E.W.). *And it is this action which precipitated the formation of the Canadian Reformed Churches.* Had the Synod in fact been neutral, quite possibly there would today be no Canadian Reformed Churches.

"How unecumenical the Gereformeerde Kerken were at that time. Today however, a false ecumenicity is opening the doors wide on all sides. Are we following their example? It would seem to me that the Christian Reformed Church could take a genuine ecumenical step today by admitting guilt here, and rescinding these wrong decision. An official act of repentance even at this late date would be wholly in order." So far Rev. J. Tuininga, in *The Outlook*.

Of course, no one can be neutral. Certainly not the Church of Jesus Christ. It is either for, or against. It is either going ahead or backwards. And is not the Christian Reformed Church going backwards, deviating from the Word of God at many, many points, in doctrine and in life?

Your Synod of 1972 affirmed that the whole Bible is the Word of God. But at the same time it did *not* reject, but *officially approved* the view which is being widely promoted by those who *deny* this plenary and infallible authority of the Bible, (namely) that the authority of the Bible is conditional (and limited) but its "content and purpose" as saving revelation of God

in Jesus Christ. The Synod of 1973 refused to reconsider the matter although *urged* to do so and committed the churches more firmly than ever to this course of compromise, regarding the nature of the Bible's authority as God's Word (Acts of Synod, 1973 pages 33-34).

The doctrine of God's creation as taught in the Bible is increasingly being compromised or denied by accommodation to the theory of evolution in educational institutions which your churches own or support.

When in 1963 the biblical doctrine regarding the extent of the atonement (limited atonement) came under attack by the claims that "God loves all men with a redemptive love," and that Christ's atonement is "inherently universal" so that "one may say to any man . . . Christ died for you," a long controversy ensued.

The outcome of that controversy 1967 (Acts, pages 735-736) was not a strong affirmation of the biblical doctrine confessed in the creeds and corresponding discipline of the attack of that doctrine, but a weak admonition against "ambiguous and abstract" statements which create confusion in the church.

Since that time these objectionable doctrines have become increasingly evident in the missionary materials and activity of the churches.

Regarding homosexuality, your Synod of 1973 decided to adopt the

unbiblical views of psychologists who deny the responsibility of homosexuals for their "condition", thereby explicitly setting aside the teachings of both Old and New Testaments as not normative for us in this matter (Acts 1973, pages 619-621).

Although every officer in the denomination signs the form of subscription, thereby expressing agreement with all of its confessions and promising to exert himself to keep the church free from all opposing doctrines, your Synods have helped to establish and, especially since 1968, committed the churches to full participation in and support of an ecumenical seminary in your African mission field, which teaches among other doctrines, precisely those which your confessions and form of subscription condemn.

The Synod of 1973 has endorsed weakening the form of subscription so that an officer who disagrees with the Church doctrines, after he has expressed his disagreement to a church assembly, may be given a measure of freedom to promote his diverging views (Acts 1973, pages 98-100).

Your Synod in 1972 also broke off the extended discussions looking toward church union with such orthodox reformed denominations as the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (Acts 1972, page 36) and the Canadian Reformed Churches (Acts 1972, page 62), resolved on a broad policy of

closer cooperation with the Reformed Church of America and decided to maintain close relations with the increasingly liberal Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. These rebuffs to the conservative Reformed Churches and making common cause with others who are more liberal indicates a course away from loyalty to our Reformed confessions.

These last statements and deviations in doctrine and life, have been taken from a letter of the Association of Christian Reformed Layman, which has been sent to all your consistories and office-bearers.

Is your consistory doing something about it? Are you, members, standing in the office of all believers, doing something about it?

Brothers and Sisters of the Christian Reformed Church, think this over seriously. That is what the Lord, the Head and the King of His Church, requires of you. And if obedience to the Lord requires of you to seek a new church home, then remember that there is (not a pure but) a true church of Jesus Christ in your neighbourhood, the Canadian Reformed Church, which is based on the Word of God, the three forms of unity, and the Church-order of Dordt.

May the Lord lead and guide you by His Word and Spirit in your deliberations, and give you wisdom from above.

Sincerely yours,

E. WIERENGA S. TUININGA

O Light Of Light

O Light of light, O Dayspring Bright,
Co-equal in thy Father's light:
Assist us, as with prayer and psalm
Thy servants break the nightly calm.

All darkness from our minds dispel,
And turn to flight the hosts of hell:
Bid sleepfulness our eyelids fly,
Lest overwhelmed in sloth we lie.

Jesu, thy pardon, kind and free,
Bestow on us who trust in thee:
And as thy praises we declare,
O with acceptance hear our prayer.

O Father, that we ask be done,
Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son,
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,
Doth live and reign eternally.

AMBROSE (340-397)
Trans. J.W. Chadwick
and J.D. Chambers

Dirk Jansz Zwart

Last year Dirk Jansz. Zwart gave a few organ concerts in Canada. *Clarion* then published a brief statement that it would be tried to have Mr. Zwart come to Canada again to conduct a more extensive tour so that more people would be able to enjoy his talents.

We repeat the notice as it appeared in *Clarion* of December 1, 1973.

Mr. Zwart has expressed great interest in making a cross-country tour some time next year. Persons interested in organizing a concert in their particular congregation are asked to contact Mr. S. VanderPloeg, 809-14th Street, New Westminster, B.C.

Not much time is left. We have been informed that the project tour is planned for the month of October.

For *ONTARIO* we received the following notice:

Any Church or person interested in organizing a local Organ



Dirk Jansz. Zwart at the Console of the Organ of the New Westminster Church.

Concert during the month of October, should contact the undersigned IMMEDIATELY. Please indicate Church address and further particulars, including a clear specification of the organ. To avoid disappointment, ACT NOW!! For further news regard-

ing the planned concert tour see the next issues of *Clarion*

John J. Knegt
254 Alma Street
Rockwood, Ontario
NOB 2KO

For the other provinces, contact Mr. VanderPloeg.

An Introduction To

CHRISTIAN LITERATURE (19)

GALATIANS

- Burton, E. deW. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. (ICC) (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark) 1921, 541 pp.
A critical classic of long standing, ranking with the best. It is made especially valuable for its lengthy notes on the Pauline vocabulary. Recommended for pastors.
- Cole, R.A. *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*. (TNTC) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1965, 192 pp., \$2.25. (***)
The best modern short commentary.
- Hendriksen, W. *Exposition of Galatians*. (Grand Rapids: Baker) 1968, 260 pp., \$6.95. (**)
An excellent, full-length, Reformed commentary.
- Lightfoot, J.B. *Galatians*. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan) 1957, 384 pp., \$5.95.
Exegetically superb, with a full discussion of critical and interpretive questions.
- Ridderbos, H.N. *The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia*. (NICNT) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1953, 240 pp., \$5.50. (**)
Another excellent Reformed commentary. It is difficult to choose between this and Hendriksen. Although leaning toward the latter, I feel either one is a good choice here.

EPHESIANS

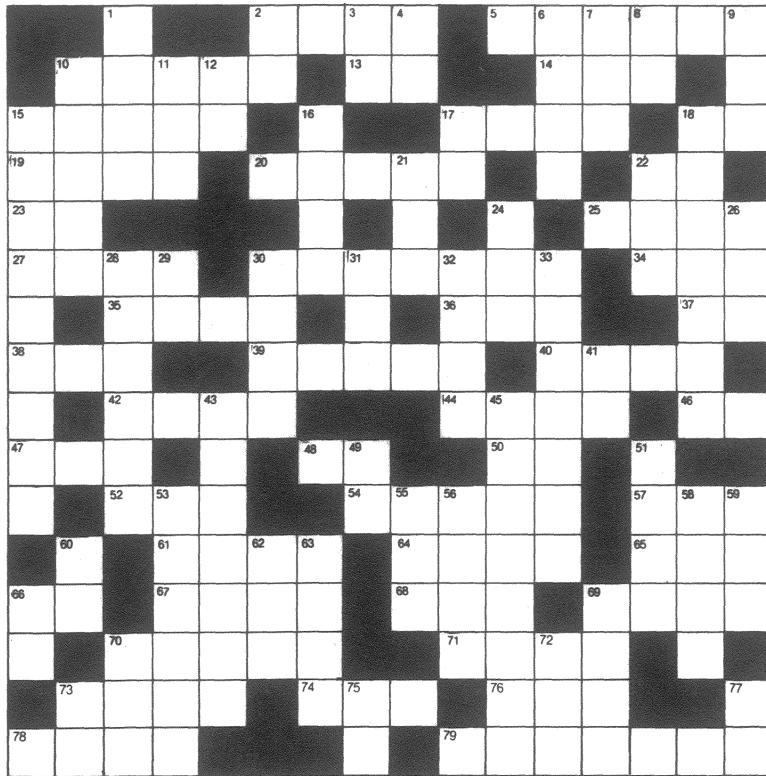
- Abbott, T.K. *The Epistles of Paul to the Ephesians and to the Colossians*. (ICC) (Edinburgh: T.&T. Clark) 1897, 315 pp.
A good example of the ICC's standard of critical excellence. It contains much grammatical and philological material. Recommended for the pastor.
- Foulkes, F. *The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians*. (TNTC) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1963, 176 pp., \$2.25. (***)
A perceptive and convincing short commentary.
- Hendriksen, W. *Exposition of Ephesians*. (Grand Rapids: Baker) 1967, 290 pp., \$6.95. (**)
The best, in-depth Reformed commentary on Ephesians.
- Simpson, E.K., and F.F. Bruce, *Commentary on the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians*. (NICNT) (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 1957, 328 pp., \$5.50.
Some very edifying and worthwhile expositions. The difference in literary style between Simpson, who does Ephesians, and Bruce, who does Colossians, is rather noteworthy.

(*) Recommended for individual purchase.

(**) Recommended for societies or church libraries.

(***) Recommended for both.

Puzzle (3)



ACROSS

- 2. year
- 5. roadshow
- 10. part of chairs
- 13. upon
- 14. colour
- 15. old
- 17. heavenly body
- 18. verb
- 19. give and
- 20. world
- 22. musical note
- 23. elevated railroad
- 25. clothing acces.
- 27. too
- 30. province in Canada
- 34. drink
- 35. biblical name
- 36. pronoun
- 37. verb
- 38. a tree
- 39. parts of a plant
- 40. container
- 42. practical applications
- 44. animals
- 46. pronoun, early English
- 47. part of the human body
- 48. musical note
- 50. see 48 across
- 52. untruth
- 54. measurement (decimal)

- 57. not even
- 61. perfect fit
- 64. stops
- 65. boy's name
- 66. upon
- 67. auction
- 68. storage space
- 69. to be eaten
- 70. chimes
- 71. fruit
- 73. kept
- 74. feed
- 76. see 47 across
- 78. rock formation in water
- 79. see 9 down (pl.)
- 17. pronoun
- 18. hotel employee
- 21. reptile
- 22. drink
- 24. metal
- 26. sports equip.
- 28. biblical name
- 29. upon
- 30. boat equip.
- 31. number
- 32. scrape roughly
- 33. shellfish (pl.)
- 41. present tense of "to be"
- 43. precious stone
- 45. forever
- 49. see 41 down
- 51. part in music
- 53. stands on its own
- 55. tide
- 56. belonging to an animal
- 58. part of house
- 59. failure
- 60. not out
- 62. sick
- 63. wire netting
- 66. proceeding from
- 69. use sense of touch
- 70. insect
- 72. tired (Dutch)
- 73. pronoun
- 75. see 41 down
- 77. see 75 down

DOWN

- 1. wood
- 2. likewise
- 3. negative answer
- 4. during
- 6. minute particle
- 7. walked fast
- 8. indefinite article
- 9. part of face
- 10. stand
- 11. drink
- 12. musical note
- 15. small cut of meat
- 16. family group

G. DEBOER

With thankfulness to the Lord Who has made all things well, we wish to announce the birth of our son:

DAVID PAUL

a brother for *Jonathan*
John and Jacqueline Malda
(nee Vanegmond)

August 26, 1974
641 Dynes Rd., Burlington, Ont.

With thankfulness to the LORD and great joy we announce the birth of our son:

EDWARD DANIEL

on August 9th, 1974.
Rev. and Mrs. M.C. Werkman
John, Theresa, David, Robert, Leonard, Joyce, Elizabeth.
103 Chippewa Dr.,
Chatham, Ontario

We give thanks to our Creator for the precious gift of a new son:

JEFFERY AREND

born August 9, 1974.
A brother for *Martin* and *Lisa*.
Joe and Ena Boersema
(nee Pieterman)
9 Front St. W., Strathroy, Ont.

With joy and gratitude to our Heavenly Father, who is guiding all our paths, we announce our engagement:

MARIJKE (MARG) VEENMAN

and

KLAAS JACOB SPITHOFF

August 14, 1974
Burlington, Ontario

KUNT U HELPEN

Weduwe zoekt woongelegenheden in Ontario dicht bij een van onze kerken waar nog regelmatig Hollandse diensten gehouden worden. Brieven te zenden naar:

Mrs. L. Pantjes
c/o Premier Printing Ltd.
1249 Plessis Road
Winnipeg, Man. R2C 3L9