

Clarion

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The College As Study Centre

With our small community we support, to the surprise of bystanders, a Theological College. This year we could not deliver even one candidate. As far as my information goes, only one new student arrives this month.

I have heard several questions (not to use a stronger word) why not our College, instead of benefiting only three or four students in these years (the future seems more promising), can be turned into a study centre for the benefit of many more people.

Although I do not see my way clear at this moment how it all can be done, I list the following possibilities, demands, expectations, or whatever name you wish to give them.

1. OUR COLLEGE AND (FUTURE) TEACHERS.

The number of Reformed schools has grown considerably. The need for well-equipped teachers has kept pace with this growth. A separate teacher's college may be out of sight yet, but can not and should not our College be(come) a centre also for equipping teachers for our Reformed Schools?

Something has been done already. For years one evening per week some subjects were taught to teachers by members of the Faculty, with the support of the Ontario Association of Canadian Reformed Schools. This summer some weeks of full-time instruction for teachers was given by the professors Faber and Ohmann. But should this work not be expanded on a more regular basis? I realize that the College can not provide a complete teachers' training but I am equally convinced that more can be done, and that our School Boards should make it a condition for (future) teachers to have a list of credits from the College.

2. OUR COLLEGE AND OFFICE-BEARERS.

The forthcoming Synod will have to deal with an overture that our College provide a training course for (future) elders and deacons. This idea has been promoted by yours truly in some office-bearers' conferences in the East and the Mid-West. We understand that all elders and deacons cannot come to Hamilton to attend lectures. We also realize the responsibility of the ministers to help their fellows in the other offices in self-training (do I have to prove that such training is a dire need?). But one of our Churches picked up the idea and put it on the synod table. While looking forward to the synod's answer, I would urge everyone involved to think through this important matter. In my opinion the minister, even in our Church Order, gets too prominent a place. He is for preaching and teaching, and he will only be too happy if he is assisted by a team of elders and deacons who know about their office, its implications, etc. This idea of training elders and deacons is no invention of mine. Already the father of the secession, 1834, practiced it. Prof. Lucas Lindeboom was an enthusiastic defender, and some churches in the Netherlands have actively engaged in it, with good results and great enthusiasm.

If our College is to be brought into the picture, it should be by means of correspondence courses, booklists,

advice for a church library, and the like. The subjects (we mention a few at random) should be history and duties of the offices, the practice of family-visitation, christian counselling, diaconal support and government-subsidy, in addition to a course in Reformed doctrine (can all our elders pass an exam in the Canons of Dort, as their brothers in the O.P.C. have to?) and so on.

3. OUR COLLEGE AND MISSION.

I was approached by one of our missionary churches for advice in the matter of some young people who want to give their lives to the work of foreign mission, as helpers and assistants of a fully, academically, qualified missionary. A wonderful thing, isn't it? We came together to the conclusion, first that such assistants need not have college degrees but, second, surely must learn the language, know what Mission is, and have a greater-than-average knowledge of the contents of God's Word and the Reformed doctrine; such in addition to 'practical' abilities in nursing, helping, etc. And again the College was mentioned.

It is my considered opinion that we, finally, be humble enough to learn from other churches who do not demand that only people with a complete theological training be sent out, but that also "lay-people" should be sent out, forming a team under the leadership of the missionary. The Churches in the West have taken the first step on that road, and - as could be expected - it works well.

If this conviction grows among us (we do far too little in foreign mission) we will have to decide, and soon, how these missionary assistants have to be prepared for their work in the mission field. And here again the College comes into view. It is there. Missiology (theory of Missions), teaching in Bible and doctrine, are on its curriculum. It should, in some way, benefit not only the three, four students that we have but become fruitful for many more who want to dedicate themselves to special service in the kingdom (and that is one of the greatest needs and problems of our beloved Canadian Reformed Churches!!).

4. THE COLLEGE AND OUR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS.

I know, something has been done by members of the Faculty (and others) in the way of lectures.

But I also know that our students had hoped that our College should mean more for them, studying as they are in secular surroundings and (more dangerous) being taught in a secular way. Again: a course in philosophy has been given by one of the faculty members (but only to the benefit of those who live close to Hamilton). Can not more be done? No one would dare to deny that here again we have an urgent need. How many young Reformed students are led astray by the godless teaching at universities?

I do not see my way clear, to be honest, but I believe that our well-intentioned students (I just read their recent Newsletter!) would love to have some more regular contact with the College which they, from the start, had hoped would become more meaningful for them. They want from the College more than an invitation to serve as ushers at

public College events. I would love to get some reactions, suggestions, to these lines.

5. THE COLLEGE AND . . . (?)

One who took the trouble to read what yours truly has written in recent years about the training of talents, for congregational purposes as well as for evangelism, realizes that I have more in the back of my mind. But I hardly dare to show up in the next Faculty meeting. My colleagues will

see me coming and jump on me-with-all-my-ideas.

Yet, my reasoning is quite simple and I trust that much of what I wrote will meet with a wide response (considering the reactions during those office-bearers' conferences). I am deeply convinced that our expensive College must be "multiplied" and not only train a handful of ministers, however important that may be for the churches.

G. VANDOOREN

Life Between Death and Resurrection (3)

In my second article I told something about the background of the discussions on life between death and resurrection. I concluded with the statement that physical death is the entrance into an 'Interim'. Its purpose is to assemble all men that in the End they all can stand before the Judgment-seat of Christ.

Now, in recent years some difficulties have arisen around this issue. Here Telder and Vonk are to be mentioned. Naturally, we should bear in mind that very few have done as much as Rev. Vonk for the church-people to understand the Scriptures and the Confession. Nevertheless, I believe that Rev. Vonk as well as Rev. Telder were and are on the wrong way. Telder opposes the false-mystic 'longing for heaven' which is met so often also among us. But, starting from Ps. 115:16; 'The heavens are the LORD'S heavens, but the earth He has given to the sons of men', he came to the teaching that in dying the believers do not go to heaven, neither enjoy a tentative bliss, but only 'rest' in the grave, without any knowledge or consciousness. Vonk starts from his opposition to the so-called 'dichotomy', the teaching that man consists of a mortal body and an immortal soul. But in spite of the many good things he says about this, in my opinion he goes wrong and runs the risk of explaining the words of Scripture according to his system. According to Vonk, dead is dead and between death and resurrection all men are in the 'state of death'. The believers have everlasting life in the promise of the resurrection of the flesh. Till then they are, just as the wicked, only dead and 'know nothing' (Eccl. 9:5).

But both of them are in conflict with Lord's Day 22 of the Catechism, not just read after the scientific ideas

of its authors, but also read after the Scriptures. As a matter of fact it is totally wrong to read the Confession after the ideas of the writers. The well-known A. Janse (his words are quoted by Vonk himself) wrote: 'Science of a century and the Confession of the centuries cannot be identified. . . . then the everlasting Word of God is pulled down into the relativity of human science'.

In my opinion, their mistake is that they sought an answer to the question, the what and how, of the Interim. And doing this they made it a vacuum, a dark intermezzo, in which God's children only exist in God's remembrance. Herewith not only immortality is denied but also continuance.

It stands to reason that we must look for an answer to all questions involved in the Scriptures. Then it is perfectly clear that whoever denies the 'Interim' and even the continued existence after death is in conflict with the Scriptures. Think of the similarity between Christ and the believers who have died as far as their experience is concerned on the road from the beginning. He was born, and so were they. He rises from the dead, and so do they. He ascends into heaven and so will they. He works there, and also their life after the Last Day will be a life of joyful activity.

In other words, the similarity between Christ and His people is this: between His death and His resurrection He was in an 'interim', and so are they. Was this 'interim' for Him a matter of feeling? Was he not conscious when he was in the grave? Or did he have a feeling on the cross: I will die in a moment but then my resurrection comes. What are we to do then with the second word on the cross: 'To-day you will be with Me in paradise' (Luke 23:43). 'To-day', the

Saviour says. The 'criminal' must have understood it, must he not? He knew the word 'paradise' of course; in those days it was used to indicate the residence of the just who had died and also for the everlasting glory after the resurrection of the dead. Anyway, he must have felt something comforting in the Lord's words, something glorious (H.J. Jager, *Opbouw*, Oct. 21, 1961). But if the Lord meant with 'paradise' heaven-after-the-Last-Day, Heaven in perfection, He would say, here on the cross, that also He himself would go this very day to Heaven-after-the-Last-Day. That is impossible. For He knew, also at this moment on the cross, that after three days He would rise again from the dead. Had He not said that this generation would be given the sign of the prophet Jonah and the Son of man would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth as Jonah had been three days and nights in the belly of the fish (Mat. 12)? When He now says to this man on the cross: 'To-day you will be with Me in paradise' it means that 'to-day', on this Friday, before it will be sabbath, we both will be in paradise. 'To-day in paradise', that is not: in so many years, when you will rise from the dead, you will have a feeling that to-day, on this Friday already, you entered paradise, which was not so really, because it was just a feeling and the real entrance into paradise came centuries later. I would like to know what comfort this man could draw from such a 'promise'. I also would like to know whether any man could gather such a complicated chain of reasoning from these simple words 'To-day you will be with Me in paradise'! Therefore I see no way to believe Christ's words to His fellow-man on the cross unless I accept an 'Interim'. Nor do I see a way to explain the words 'with Me' unless I accept consciousness during this 'Interim'. It does not say 'just as I' but 'with Me'. You who will be dead in a few hours, you will be blessed with Me, in paradise.

A.B. ROUKEMA

The Liberation In The Forties

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS (2)

A PROBLEM "SOLVED"

So our candidate at his last ecclesiastical exam clearly stated that he could not agree with an essential part of the "binding doctrinal statements" which the Synod of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland had issued. He could not promise "not to teach anything that is not in full accordance with these statements".

What about the candidate's position? What would happen to him? Were he and his fiancée making all those preparations in their new home for nothing?

For he took the same stand as the three candidates we mentioned in our first article, who were not admitted to the ministry.

As a matter of fact, the chairman was prepared. He perfectly knew that this would be the candidate's answer. The latter was known as having objections against the Synod's declarations.

Apart from that, the chairman had heard the same answer a couple of hours earlier.

According to an old custom in this Classis the candidate concerned was invited to have lunch at the local hotel (later on he rather frequently conducted Church services in one of its rooms!) together with the other guests of Classis. These guests were the deputies of the Particular Synod appointed to oversee this sort of exams. The deputies were the Rev. H. Veltman, then of Bois-le-Duc (or 's Hertogenbosch) - who later on would join the Liberated Churches; he himself had also strong objections against the said doctrinal statements - and the Rev. J.H. Jonker of Werkendam, who was also a member of Classis and even its chairman, acting as deputy-delegate of the P.S. for someone else who could not attend.

During this delicious meal - it was wartime! but in this farmers' district there was plenty of food left at this time - some pressure was put on the candidate. That is to say, by the Rev. Jonker, for the Rev. Veltman strongly supported the young man.

The latter was asked: Could not you declare that you will subscribe to

the statements concerned seeing the fact that you are still young and do not desire to be wiser than the members of Classis and Synod who are all much older?

During lunch no "solution" was found. The candidate's answer to every suggestion made by the Rev. Jonker was: It is a matter of being honest when Synod requires agreement and subscription and one cannot give it, to say: No! I honestly cannot agree with the statement regarding the position of infants.

So the chairman was prepared. He knew what was coming up.

Back to the Classis: After the candidate had given his answer to this crucial question the chairman asked him another question: Could the candidate agree with another formula proposed by the ministers of the congregation of Amersfoort? The answer was: No, I cannot, for Synod has stated that this formula is acceptable only when it is read in the light of our own formula; so it is fundamentally the same.

There was no "solution" of the problem yet.

However, the chairman was a clever man. He himself strongly supported Synod, but was not very enthusiastic about the trouble in the Churches. So he tried to find a way out.

In his opinion he had found such a way. He asked the candidate another question: Could he possibly agree with a letter which Synod had sent to certain people, in which "two lines" in the doctrine of the covenant are emphasized, God's sovereignty and man's responsibility?

Our candidate knew this letter. At that stage he for himself did not see how he could object against its contents, although this could not take away his disagreement with the official statement itself. So he answered: I cannot see anything against that letter.

Then things took place in a great hurry. The chairman asked the meeting: I move that we admit the candidate to the ministry on the ground of this last response; does everybody agree?

Even before someone could raise his voice, the chairman gave the signal with his gavel that the motion was adopted. And he added the words: "Let us sing to the candidate Psalm 134:3".

A truly astonished man heard Classis sing. He was grateful to be able to begin his work as a minister in a couple of weeks' time and continue to prepare the parsonage and get married. On the other hand he was not too happy with this course of things.

It is no wonder that he wrote to his student-friend H.J. Schilder about being treated in these different ways.

Soon afterwards he began his ministry with the feeling: This was no real solution of the problem; the situation in our Churches is still the same. This present writer knows these facts and feelings "from first hand information" since he himself was the candidate concerned!

WARTIME

It is springtime 1945.

We are no longer living in our parsonage at Waardhuizen, our first congregation.

For things have taken a dramatic turn.

It may be useful to tell our readers about the circumstances under which the struggle in the Churches continued. For in spite of all the requests made to Synod on behalf of approximately the majority of the Church members to stop it, Synod went on.

In this northern part of the province of North-Brabant, called "Het Land van Altena", many people had not seen one single German soldier during the first four years of the Second World War!

It was no wonder that many young people had gone "underground" in these regions. That is to say: They could freely move here, unlike in other parts of the country where the persons who were in hiding had to be careful and not show themselves too often on the public road.

I clearly remember the evening on which - after having received the official call from this congregation - we were introduced to its members. Everybody mentioned his or her name and said a few words. However, there were a large number of young men who introduced themselves by their Christian name or first name only: Koen, Kees, Piet, Daan, and so on.

We immediately understood the situation and grinned: "Ah, the people with no surnames!"

Anyway, very soon this quiet time was over.

The trouble started when on a certain Saturday afternoon a couple of English fighter planes came over and we heard the rattat of machine guns. One of the planes dropped its spare tank. It fell just on the wires of the electricity net.

Of course, the gasoline was soon syphoned into a bucket. And the remnants of the tank - priceless metal! - hidden.

But later on in the afternoon a group of Germans came along the road. This was the first patrol we ever saw there. Smelling the gasoline, they started to make inquiries. Of course, nobody knew anything. They threatened us by saying: "If you do not tell us where the stuff has been hidden, we call the S.S., and they will comb your houses out!"

Well, the S.S. had definitely not a good name. On the contrary. So this threat made some impression, although not so deeply that the new owners of the tank and the gasoline reported . . .

I myself got the shock of my life when I was - to put it mildly - addressed in a very unkind way by one of the Germans. For at that moment I just gave a hint to two "onderduikers" - people who went into hiding - to disappear. One of them was the present Dr. O. Akkerman of Chatham, Ontario, a brother-in-law of Professor L. Selles.

Another shock came when the next morning we were awakened by footsteps around the house and soon afterwards we heard: bang, bang!

What was happening?

There were some more German soldiers on the road, even in the garden of the parsonage, and knocking hard on the door of our church which was situated beyond our house.

We first of all thought: There you are, the S.S.!

Fortunately this was not true. These soldiers were the quartermasters of some troops that had been driven out of Belgium (Antwerp!) and the South of North-Brabant, and had to withdraw beyond the great rivers of The Netherlands.

Well, since then we have learnt to know what it means to have soldiers quartered with us!

And the other people of our village would from now on see plenty of Germans!

EVACUATION

This lasted for some months.

During the Christmas period of the year 1944 we had approximately forty soldiers in our house. The only room that was left to us was a bedroom. My study had to act as living-room as well. But we had to share it with an officer and his adjutant.

Apart from that, we had to show hospitality to two families of evacuees, so that our house was more than packed to capacity!

Then we heard the rumour: Waardhuizen will be evacuated and we have to cross the rivers, because the land will be inundated by the Germans! This was confirmed as soon as we went for some official information. We were given two or three days. Then we had to go to a certain place in order to be accompanied by some soldiers to an unknown destination. Of course, before the date concerned we all had disappeared - apart from a few families that first had been given the reassuring message: You will not be evacuated!

We ourselves went to a village close by, Uitwijk, where a large number of our congregation members were living.

My wife and I were given hospitality in a little house, the property of one of our elders. Five people were already living there. Yet a complete room was put at our disposal, which had to be used as a living room for the owners, for ourselves and the casual visitors during the evening hours because fuel was scarce.

The room even became: dining room, bedroom, study, and even lying-in room because our elder son was born there!

My - modest - library was stored in the attic of a nearby farmhouse.

There was not much time for study. Other members of the congregation had been scattered all over the region. Mostly we had to do our visits "per pedes apostolorum", which means: in the way in which the apostles travelled, on foot - this time over muddy roads and during the day, since a curfew had been imposed on us. Many old and sick people had to be seen. We even had some funerals - one of them inbetween two shellings .

We had been cut off from the

South. But also from the North. So that we did not know what was going on at the other side of the great rivers. We even did not know whether the struggle in the Churches was still going on . . .

CHURCH SITUATION

Later on we received some information along a secret way. Indeed, the struggle was still on, as if there was no war, no life danger, no hunger, no evacuation, no bombardments, no executions, no concentration camps, etcetera . . .

Then the frontal activities in our surroundings had more or less come to a standstill. After the heavy bombardments of Christmas 1944 - when a complete division was quartered in "Het Land van Altena", trying to push through the Antwerp at the time of the well-known Ardennen-offensive led by General Von Runstedt, and soon afterwards almost annihilated - we had a rater quiet time. We were waiting for the liberation of the rest of the country and the capitulation of the German troops.

This gave us some reprieve - so that we could deal with the Church affairs again.

A small number of members of a committee that had been established

Church News

Called:

REV. W.W.J. VANOENE

of Fergus, Ontario by the Church of Winnipeg.

* * *

Called:

REV. CL. STAM

of Langeslag, The Netherlands by the Church of Neerlandia (in combination with the Church at Barrhead).

* * *

Declined:

REV. CL. STAM

of Langeslag, The Netherlands, has declined the call from the Church of Burlington-West, Ontario.

* * *

BARRHEAD Worship Services

The worship services at Barrhead are now at 10:00 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. except when there is a classical preaching arrangement. Then the services start at 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

to give the Church members in our Classis information contacted me and asked me to write a little pamphlet.

After some deliberation I promised them to do so. I would give an exposition of both views, that of Synod and its followers and that of the people who objected against its decisions.

During one of the meetings of the Consistory the point of informing the congregation was raised.

I told the other members that I had been contacted by the said committee. They all were of the opinion that something must be done. After the end of the war we had to make a decision, as soon as the connections with the other churches had been restored.

During the ministry of my precursor, the Rev. L. Selles - now Professor of Theology at our College at Hamilton - the Consistory decided to examine the synodical decisions at a later date, in accordance with Article 31 of the Church Order.

This was a very brave statement, for the opinion and even the policy of Synod and the "synodical" groups was that every Church and every individual Church member, let alone special office-bearers, had to submit themselves to the decisions of this major assembly.

Unfortunately this decision had not been followed up by the said examination. The previous minister had left. But we all agreed that this had to be done in the near future.

So I prepared a paper for the Consistory meeting, which was read and discussed. Nobody had any objections against it.

I informed the other members it was my intention to use this at a congregational meeting in order to inform the members so that they could form an opinion on the matters concerned.

At the same time I told them that I would summarize this paper and have it published by the said inter-congregational committee. And I asked: Would it not be wise to give every family a copy of this pamphlet so that our members would come prepared to the proposed congregational meeting and the discussion would be really useful?

This was also agreed upon. One of the members, however, was of the opinion that the expenses had to be paid from the minister's own pocket and not from the Church funds . . .

A PAMPHLET

It took some time to get the pamphlet printed.

I still possess a number of copies, but they are not very attractive. The paper is very rough: it was a war product. However, it has survived more than a quarter of a century.

The pamphlet would be printed and distributed in two parts, the first one being the "doctrinal" aspect, the second the "Church political" side. One may imagine how astonished I was when during my first visit, last year, to the Library of Calvin College, the Librarian of the theological section, Mr. Peter De Klerk, showed me a copy of the second part of this pamphlet!

How it came to this place is a mystery. It could be that a retired minister donated his library to Calvin College, and that my pamphlet was among these writings and books.

It may be unnecessary to tell that this library now possesses also the first part of the pamphlet.

Anyhow, soon after the end of the war this first part was printed and distributed. This happened during the week of 19 - 25 August, 1945. In the evening of Thursday, August 30, I was provisionally suspended by the majority of the Consistory on the ground of being a schismatic!!! But this is a story for our next issue.

G. VAN RONGEN

Alberta Women's Rally



On Wednesday, June 19, 1974, about 60 ladies of our Alberta churches gathered together in the Edmonton church building for their annual rally. Ladies from the churches of Barrhead, Neerlandia, Calgary, and Edmonton attended. Old and new acquaintances were quickly met over coffee and koek in the basement. A few minutes before ten we all tripped upstairs to listen to our speaker Mr. C. Bosch. His speech which was entitled "Weighed Watchers at the Gates of Zion" (on the book of Daniel), we all enjoyed very much. Mr. Bosch emphasized to us all the importance of developing a historical and biblical perspective in the day and age that we live in today. He also showed us how dangerous it is to lose this perspective. God has revealed to us the history of the world in his Word, the Bible; today we must start to prepare ourselves and our children for the Lord's second coming. While we wait we must do our Christian work.

After the speech we sang Hymn

51:1, 3 and 4. The discussion period followed. Next on the programme were Mrs. P. Hoeksema and Mrs. Veldkamp; they sang two lovely duets for us. Since it was now time for our lunch, we all piled into our cars to go to the Coral Inn where luncheon was served smorgasbord style. A visit to our Provincial Museum was next on the agenda. We all saw many beautiful things here and it was enjoyed by us all. At 3:30 p.m. we all met again in the church basement, where the meeting was reopened by singing "O Canada". Mr. Postma had during the time that we were absent put up a table with Christian study books. We could at our leisure look these over now and order them from Mrs. Postma if we so wished. Meanwhile tea, coffee, and cake were served to us all. Mrs. G. Hoeksema surprised us with a quiz yet, after which we sang Hymn 30:1, 2, and 4. A question period was held, whereafter we sang Hymn 48:1 and 2, and closed the day with prayer.

Mrs. P. Selles (Aug. 27, 1974)

A High School for the "Simple"

As you will be aware by now, there are serious plans to open a Regional Reformed High School in Ontario by September 1975, the Lord willing. You may ask: is that really necessary? Is it worth all the troubles and the hardships? Will it not cost too much money? Etc. Etc. All sorts of objections can be brought in and are being brought in. But parents who have promised to instruct their children and cause them to be instructed in the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, should not have to ask these questions. Does our promise apply only to what is least expensive? Does it have consequences only for the first 8 grades of our children's education? Or do we think that after about 8 years of reformed education our children are good and strong enough to go to a secular high school? And what about the high school students of those parents who never did receive reformed education? For as you know, the Regional High School is intended to provide reformed high school education for students from any congregation. We may not limit it to our own children. That would be rather selfish. There might be parents in a congregation where there is no reformed elementary school (yet) who are convinced that it is of the greatest importance that their children attend a reformed high school. Many parents consider the public high schools even more dangerous than the elementary schools.

Are our children at the age of 14 or 15 able to stand all the dangers of secular education? I don't think so. For in the Book of the Proverbs, chapter 1:4, we read about the 'simple'. The Book of Proverbs teaches us the Wisdom of God in the Lord Jesus Christ, also for the 'simple' and the young students of grade 9 and up. The word 'simple' in Hebrew indicates a person who is 'open', whose heart and eyes are wide open. Open to all kinds of impressions and influences, the good as well as the evil. Young people are open to almost every influence and are also easily influenced and easily led astray. Young students are easily influenced by the good teachings but also by the false teachings. They are influenced by the scriptural teaching of their parents and by the teaching of the church. But parents should never think that at the age of 14 and up they are automatically immune to all unscriptural and evil influences. Youth is the learning age. These young boys and girls pick up a lot of knowledge, which often surprises the parents. And they are eager to learn and increase their

knowledge. They pick up a lot of knowledge of the good but also of the bad. Youth receives many impressions and these impressions stay with them. Therefore it is of the greatest consequence what kind of impressions their young minds receive!

There is no doubt that our high school students receive many impressions in the public high schools and universities. Even people of the world often admit that many of these impressions are wicked and leave a lasting mark on them. These teenagers are exposed to all sorts of influences there and some of them have been led astray by them.

Let us as parents not think that our teenagers know it all when they are in the middle of their teens. They don't. They are still inexperienced and immature in many things (even though in some things they are more experienced than their parents). But the Bible calls them 'simple'. They are still so open in their heart, their mind, and their eyes.

Parents who themselves have not gone through the secular high schools are often very ignorant of what is being taught there. Well, they may not be able to help that, but let them not close their eyes to the reality. The spirit in which our children are taught there is not the Spirit of our Redeemer Jesus Christ. The norm for all the teaching there is not the Word of our God, who claims these teenagers as His Covenant children. And the atmosphere there is not a christian atmosphere, although no doubt there will be some christians among the students as well as the teachers. It is not the atmosphere of our homes and the church of the Lord.

Several of God's Covenant children are now or have been using drugs because they learned that from others in these high schools. Some indulge in immorality clearly forbidden by the Lord. And some who repent confess that it all started in school. Can I prove this? No, of course not, for I am not going to publish any names or places. But it is true. And it is a reason to thank the Lord when young people later see how wrong it was. It shows us the faithfulness of the Lord when some students later on see how unscriptural, how unchristian, their life was. And how wonderful when they also analyze their behavior and find out for themselves how and why and where it all started. Are our 14 year olds strong enough in faith? They may be strong in faith but let that not be an excuse for the parents to minimize the strong attacks of the Murderer from the beginning.

Let them not underestimate his strategy.

While our students are still so open-minded, with their eyes wide open in this world (hardly anything escapes their attention), let us as members of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ do our utmost to guide and direct our students into the Wisdom of God. It is the Lord Jesus Christ who has been given to us as the Wisdom of our God, who teaches us that when we train our children in the wisdom and discipline of the Word of God (as the Lord indicates this in Proverbs 1:4, for example), they will receive the subtlety, the prudence, the ability to discern and discriminate between truth and error. Then they will receive the wisdom which guards them from all false teachings. Then they will also be able to rebuke those who contradict the Lord Jesus Christ, the True Wisdom of God. For then their open minds will be influenced the right way with the right impressions and the right influences. That is why a reformed high school is necessary for reformed students, a high school where in every subject and in every classroom the Wisdom of God is heard and taught.

A Reformed High School in 1975? We cannot determine or foresee the future. But let us do our utmost with all the talents and all the gifts the Lord provides us with. Let more and more become members, also those who are not (or not yet) parents, young and old. Let us join in our prayers, join in our efforts, and also join with our gifts for a High School for the 'simple'!

M.C. WERKMAN



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news medley

Let me begin this time with telling you something which gave me great joy. I had already heard it by rumour, but the now received **Family Posts** of the Churches at Lincoln and Smithville confirmed it. Their arrival apparently was delayed by the holidays, otherwise I could have told you earlier. The Consistory of Lincoln rescinded the decision about ministers who have a television set. I wish to express my happiness and gratitude for this decision. It takes Christian courage, especially after all the publicity which was given to the now defunct decision. Yet the Consistory decided to do so. We can only be thankful for such a course of action. Thank you, brethren.

Lincoln's Consistory also remained in the ecclesiastical way when they refused to deal with non-ecclesiastical matters. I shall help you to understand this strange sentence. We hear that the Consistory received a letter from someone who proposed "to look into various aspects of insurance, financing, etc., as found in Mennonite communities." The Consistory decided to take no action on this. I am wondering whether this letter was sent to select addresses, for I do not recall that we received one. On the other hand, the Consistory of Barrhead did receive a similar letter from the same address. The latter Consistory did not take any action on it either.

I think that I understand what the sender of that letter means. The Churches and the Churchmembers pay thousands of dollars every year as premium for all sorts of insurance. Would it, someone may ask, not be good to do this among ourselves and to lend each other a helping hand when disaster strikes, without having to involve others and without losing so much money per year because of all the people that have to live from the premiums and because of all the profit these insurance companies make? When here in the neighbourhood a barn burns down on a Mennonite farm, you can see horses and buggies by the scores for some days after the fire: the debris disappears and a new barn is erected in no time. No insurance premiums, no delays, no squabbling: they help each other!

It may not be as simple as some think it to be. There are already various fields in which it would not work. Automobile insurance would be impossible; a mortgage company would not go for it when lending money for a house, etcetera. Our society has become so complicated in many respects that such a course of action, in my opinion, would be possible only if we lived like a colony. And that's what is indeed in the line of the Mennonite convictions.

I recall that many years ago we had a meeting in New Westminster with an official of a Credit Union. "We", that is: some brethren out of the congregation. We wished to prevent that members would fall into the hands of finance companies, and were seeking a way in which it could be made somewhat easier for the fellow-members. But ultimately we decided against forming such a Credit Union especially for Churchmembers. One question that was asked remained hooked in my memory: "What are you going to do when a Churchmember does not make or is unable to make his payments? Are you then going to

repossess his car?" According to the rules and laws, it should be done. But you would have an appeal on your hands, all the way to a general synod, at least in all likelihood. The Churchmembers should help and assist each other, but we should watch out for becoming a financial institution or a big investor either as a Church (which would be totally wrong!) or as groups of Churchmembers. Every member has the duty towards the others to take all the measures and precautions which he is able to take; and then, if he is unable to meet his obligations, the Lord will provide via His office-bearers, whose hands are filled by His people.

Many of the religious groups and churches have extensive holdings and are justly criticized for having amassed such fortunes. Small wonder that there are many citizens who complain that they have to pay taxes, but that in many respects these churches go free although their investments and income from investments exceeds by far that of ordinary citizens who have invested their moneys.

The whole matter of holdings of ecclesiastical or religious institutions is currently under study in Ontario. The whole Religious Institutions Act is under review, and our brother Albert Oosterhoff, professor of Law at the University of Western Ontario in London, has been approached by the Ontario Law Reform Commission to act as Director of Reference. **The Globe and Mail** of August 26, 1974, contained a brief editorial about this matter in which we are told that professor Oosterhoff is studying the past, present, and future of the "religious legislation" for the Ontario Law Reform Commission. It is deplorable that the Canadian Reformed Churches in Ontario have not received any communication from the Commission, but that apparently the Church at Smithville received something for all the Churches and misunderstood it as being something for her alone. Professor Oosterhoff would deem it advisable to have a central address to which the Government and Government Committees could send their communications. ("Didn't I tell you already years ago," the Rev. G. Van Dooren will say. "Why did you not listen to me?" See Acts of a few Synods about this point.)

Well, we mentioned Smithville a few times: the Consistory decided to increase the monthly allowance to Rev. Kingma for the car considerably, due to the higher costs of fuel and of repairs. How gratifying when the eyes of Consistories are open for the needs of the ministers. On the other hand, it must be said that it is somewhat easier for the Consistories to do what they deem necessary now than it was some ten years ago. But whether it is possible or not to give more, the main point is that attention is paid to the need. That's what counts.

From Smithville to Hamilton is not far. A congregational meeting was planned on which Dr. Faber was going to speak on the matters that are coming up at the forthcoming General Synod. That is a good idea. Meanwhile, we received the first provisional agenda for the Synod. Frankly, I do not know what our Consistories are going to do with that, unless they know from other sources what the contents are, e.g. of proposals sent to Synod. I think that the agenda should have spelled out in a little more detail the substance of various points which now are just mentioned as having been received for discussion. There are, of course, many reports of which copies have already been received by our Consistories, and of some overtures the Consistories have received copies. But let's continue with Hamilton.

The Rev. W. Loopstra was going to tell about his travel experiences after a dinner organized by the Ladies Auxiliary. The activities in Hamilton for the support of Korean orphanages are also lively. That is promoted by the presence of one of the helpers in the Love Home which is being supported by the Ontario Churches: Miss Eui Yun Kim. She can tell from her own observation and experience how the situation is there, what can be used (which is almost anything in the realm of clothing) and what cannot be used. Miss Kim is not in Hamilton all the time; I also met her here in Fergus, and I know that also others talked to her. It is hard for us to understand the condition in which the orphans are living and the difficulties which are encountered by those who take care of them.

From Hamilton we go to Burlington; first to "West". The Churchbuilding is growing all the time, no longer in length, not in width, nor in depths, but in "inner value". And the Consistory is very happy that a \$50,000 mortgage (bond issue) could be placed with their own people (although not only from "West"). The Consistory also received a letter from "East" with the request to appoint a committee which, together with a committee from "East", is to discuss the change of boundary (!\vO) between the two Churches, since the situation will be so different after "West" has begun to use their own building, that it is advisable to move the boundary-line farther West. The departure of "West" from the Churchbuilding on Dynes Road will also have an effect on the Dutch services. Every Sunday, at 7:00 p.m., there is a Dutch service; "West" and "East" take care of it in turn. When "West" moves out, the question has to be faced what to do with these services. We'll hear the result, I presume.

In "East" the brethren are thinking of putting up a new sign in front of the Churchbuilding, a larger one. I have not yet seen the one in Hamilton in front of the building; I saw it before it was installed, but must say that it is worth being taken as a good sample of such signs.

At the Consistory meeting of "East" the suggestion was made again "to let the cost of Mission become part of the Regular Church Budget, and thus of the regular Church contributions. This idea found support and the matter will be decided when Budget time for 1975 arrives." There you have another decision about which I am very happy. It is a step in the good direction. Sometimes the practice of having separate contributions for the Mission or separate collections is defended with the argument that it keeps the matter of the Mission alive in the midst of the Congregation. I don't believe a word of that. The interest in and the love for the work of the Mission is kept alive and burning when we speak about it, when we receive reports from the Mission field, as we receive in the newsletters which Toronto sends out to the Ontario Churches and in the **Mission News** which comes from New Westminster. The more we hear about the joys and the frustrations, the fruits and the disappointments experienced by the Mission workers, the more we shall love the work. But just giving a separate contribution for it does not mean that there is, nor that it does promote, a living bond with the Mission workers and their work.

Now that the study season has started, as we mentioned the other time, it may also be good to listen to what Rev. G. Van Dooren remarks in the bulletin of Ebenezer Church. He stresses the need for study of the Word of God and the need to help one another in this work. Then he makes a worthwhile remark which should be

borne in mind by parents and children alike. "Several parents wrestle with the problem that some of our youngsters pick up the wrong friends, at highschool or in the neighbourhood. Usually those who have been faithful in society life, find their mate among the congregation . . . it starts with the boys and girls . . . Antichrist should find us ready to withstand him!"

Also in this respect it is so important to pursue the goal of having highschool education for all our children, such education which is subject to God's revelation. Children that do not see each other during the week, that feel no communion at school, how will they fully enjoy the communion of saints? The one day that they are together or, in many instances, the few hours that they are together on Sundays are not likely to make up for the lack they feel during the week.

Our students in Ontario are also active again in their Fellowship. Having attended a few of their meetings in the past, I see the importance of this organization. They plan a general membership meeting shortly, where J. DeJong will introduce the teachings of the A.A.C.S. Shortly we may say something about that movement in connection with a booklet we received.

The bulletin of the Fellowship stresses the importance of discussion with highschool students prior to their entering University. "This approach might also encourage more of our young people to enter university, an issue which has become of great concern among our circles because new teachers are now required to have two or three years of university education." Something to bear in mind!

We jump all the way from Ontario to Alberta. That is possible in a News Medley. It is from the bulletin of Barrhead that we gleaned some news. The Young People's Societies decided, we read, to ask the Rev. Boersema to speak on a Youth Rally, scheduled for the Thanksgiving weekend. It is hard to believe that that day is already around the corner! May that corner be just as big as the corner around which spring is in more than one year.

I frowned when reading the following. "The Consistory decided to request the General Synod to do away with the stipulation that the Classis has to approve the acceptance of a call by a minister as is proposed in the Draft Revised Church Order. The consistory is convinced that here is too much authority given to Classis in a matter of the local Church." I shall not defend the report of the committee mentioned in the above decision, but I must say that what Barrhead stated is incorrect: it is not a proposal of the Committee; this provision has been in the Church Order for centuries. The Articles of Wesel 1648 already speak of classical involvement and, unless I misunderstand the information given, I would say that a little more homework would not have been misplaced here.

Smithers is doing their homework: they decided to ask more information about the National Presbyterian Church. Our readers will recall: it was formed by the secession from the (Southern) Presbyterian Church. In this manner the Churches can "serve" Synod with a well-founded, well-considered, well-argued proposal; or they come to the conclusion that no proposal should be made. That is another possibility!

From the Fraser Valley came a familiar-size bulletin, but this time it was not a bulletin from the Churches. It was the bulletin of the Tychonian Society. Here our readers will shrug their shoulders, and say, "What is

God's Word and the Little Ones (2)

[This is the conclusion to the discussion regarding A Child's Storybook of Bible People, by Sheri Dunham Haan.]

Closely connected with the matter of furnishing a story with functional details is the matter of language. The language of the Bible is very often surprisingly simple and beautiful (think of the account of the Creation). Our stories to little children should also be simple, sober (we have to take their passive vocabulary into account) and at the same time dignified and respectful. This does not mean that our language must be childish or 'popular'; it should not be that. When I again quote some examples of misuse of language in the *Child's Storybook of Bible People*, it is not to 'talk down' the book, but to show that and how we may go wrong in approaching children 'at their own level'. In the story about Hannah, Eli addresses the praying women with, "Lady, are you drunk?" and Hannah answers, "Oh, no, sir! Don't think I'm such a bum." In the story of Elijah and Elisha, the latter asks for a double portion of his spirit, and Elijah answers, "Well, Elisha. You asked for a pretty tough thing." In the story about the feeding of the five thousand, Andrew remarks, "I see a boy

here with five loaves and two fish. But that won't help much with a mob like this!" In these instances the language is not simple and dignified, but adults of a different time and age are conversing like teens in the school yard, which causes an anachronism that makes sacred history ludicrous.

Three-year-olds and four-year-olds use almost exclusively simple sentences. They express one thought at a time. The Kindergarten child links thoughts already with 'and', 'but' and 'for': the compound sentence. The school child develops the complex sentence and links thoughts by using connecting words like 'because', 'while', 'until', 'when', etcetera. It is sometimes thought that, when the narrator uses simple sentences only, he speaks at the child's level and the narration must be good. "I went to the Jordan River. It was a gray-brown muddy color. I stepped in. It was mucky. I could feel the slime at the bottom. I dipped in once, twice, three times, then four, five, six, and finally seven times. I came up slowly. Would it work? Could this prophet of God heal me?" It is a mistake to think that, while the child itself uses simple or compound sentences mostly, it also expects the adult to speak that way. Short, simple sentences 'speed up' a

story and may be used successfully in case a climax is to be reached (as in the mentioned example), but are not the ideal pattern for children's stories.

The Bible is a rich book, rich also in the diverse forms in which it recounts the history of God with His people. The most common form is the narration; a relater tells what is happening, but he himself does not play a role in the happenings. Example: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1).

Another form is the monologue or the journal; the relater tells what he experiences. Examples: "I, Nebuchadnezzar, was at ease in my house and prospering in my palace. I had a dream which made me afraid" (Daniel 4), and, "As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. She followed Paul and us . . ." (Luke in Acts 16).

In some places we find dialogues, e.g. in the Song of Solomon, "Whither has your beloved turned, that we may seek him with you?" "My beloved has gone down to his garden" (Chapter 6); in other places letters, lyrics, parables, and even a fable in Judges 9: "The trees once went forth to anoint a king over them; and they said to the olive tree, 'Reign over us.'" The question arises whether we may use all these forms of recounting in our story telling. Mrs. Haan uses most



NEWS MEDLEY - continued

that?" I shall tell you.

Quite a few years ago, Mr. W. van der Kamp, principal of the William of Orange School wrote a brochure in which he defended the viewpoint that the earth is the center of the visible universe and that it is not so that the earth revolves around the sun, but that all the celestial bodies revolve around the earth with a movement imposed upon movement. I hope that I have thus rendered correctly the gist of the matter. This, and such to prevent misunderstanding, has nothing to do with a theory of a flat earth or such nonsense. Mr. van der Kamp takes his starting point in the descriptions as they are found in Scripture. When, e.g. Joshua commands the sun to stand still in Gibeah and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, the theory which Mr. van der Kamp defends acknowledges that it happened just like that. Most times people will say, "That is an old-fashioned way of stating it; of course the earth was halted in its course instead of the sun and all the other celestial bodies." Such an "explanation" will bring him who unconditionally believes the trustworthiness of the Scriptures, into difficulties. It is a fact that the LORD speaks to us in a language which we can understand. But does that mean

that we must assume that the LORD also speaks to us in concepts we may have but which are utterly wrong?

You see, dear reader, that there are many questions around this whole topic. And I must admit that I do not understand all the issues nor the arguments pro and con which are brought to the fore. I do, however, welcome any effort which proves theories that conflict with Holy Writ to be wrong.

For those who study science, geography, and are acquainted with the issues at stake or wish to become acquainted with them, it is good and useful that they read these bulletins. They are sent free of charge, but the cost is borne entirely by the writer, if I am not mistaken, and therefore donations are heartily welcome. The salary of a principal in one of our schools, however good it may be, is not sufficient to bear the cost of publishing and mailing a bulletin every month, and that's what the editor of these bulletins intends to do.

I mention all this to show that within the circle of the membership of the Churches many aspects of our life on earth and our existence in the universe are being considered and their implications studied. Much is beyond my understanding, but there may be others who benefit from it. With this I sign off. vO

of them, most strikingly the monologue, the dialogue, and the rhythm story. She does not tell any of the parables, and that is worth considering also.

Very often we meet the misconception that parables are very easily told and very easily understood; they are pre-eminently suitable for little children. This idea, however, is a variance with what the Lord has revealed about His parables. Our Lord Jesus did not start His administration of the Word with parables; he spoke quite freely and in words that could not be misunderstood or misinterpreted (Sermon on the Mount). Only when the Lord has been rejected by the leaders of His people, when they have accused Him of being a child of Beelzebul, He begins to speak in riddles, in parables. This speaking in parables is part of the execution of judgment on the self-righteous and is therefore closely connected with God's wrath! The parables are not meant to make things simple and clear, but, on the contrary, to make things hard to understand and 'dark' for those who are too 'great' to ask for an explanation. Of them it is said, and the Lord quotes it in Matthew 13, "Hear and hear, but do not understand; see and see, but do not perceive." The parables, as a result, are not 'as easy as pie' or 'childlike in their simplicity'; they belong to the most difficult parts of the Bible that must be narrated to children, along with the explanation the disciples received and in their proper framework of the Covenant struggle.

In the book under review David, Naaman, the boy with the five loaves and the two fish, the nephew of Paul, Michal, and others relate their own experiences in monologue form. "King Saul was furious with me. But I didn't care. I loved David. I knew that somewhere David, dear David, was hiding and safe" (Michal). I have very strong objections to this form. Indeed, in the Bible we find examples (Nebuchadnezzar, Luke) of the monologue, but we must realize that these men to relate their own experiences, while Sheri Dunham Haan or any relater is only PRETENDING. It can not be avoided that extra information, not mentioned in the Bible, is added in order to make the story 'complete': the boy with the five loaves and the two fish must be doing something all day. In order not to go beyond Scripture, one might add fatuous details

that won't do much harm anyway' (in Mrs. Haan's story the boy receives a lunch from his mother, finds a straight stick to carry and some pretty pebbles), but it is a dangerous thing to do. There is also the danger that the relating person attains a more important position than the LORD gives him in His Word. God's people - I said it before - are not heroes or saints that bring about salvation, and the children should not get that impression by an ill-chosen form of narration. Last, but not least, the telling character (David, Naaman, Michal) may not be aware of his or her significance in the history of God with His people, and that which was a struggle of spirits, becomes a "blood-and-flesh-affair" (Michal helping her lover escape).

The same objections hold for the dialogues (Miriam and her mother; Elijah and the woman of Zarephath; Mary and Gabriel(!); Jesus(!) and the Samaritan woman; Jesus(!) and the Officer). Dialogues must be read (if not acted) out by different people (children?) who all take one specific role and identify with the 'embodied' person.

Lady: Oh, well, the Messiah will come. You know who I mean, the Christ. He'll explain all my questions about God.

Jesus: I am the Christ. (The Samaritan Woman.)

May we pretend to be 'Bible people' or even angels or Christ, or force our children to do so? In this connection I would not only speak of lack of respect, but also of disrespect for God's Word. The frightening suspicion materializes that the instructor (parent or teacher) must come off his foot-stool and cease to pass on God's workmanship; he is beyond that stage and can start playing with what he knows. The attitude as such does not surprise us at a time in which the *homo ludens* is subject of psychology and philosophy, but the author served as Bible Consultant for the National Union of Christian Schools and as a member of the Calvin College Education Department; this attitude has gained support in 'the Reformed field' apparently. The exhortation of Hebrew 12, "Let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire," seems to be ignored. It makes me think of the *Notities bij de eredienst* of Reverend Hans Douma, a preacher-poet in the Synodical Churches in the Netherlands. He writes, "The worship ser-

vice is a play. We play that God is with us. We play that this world is a song for God. We play that this world is new. We play that peace and righteousness fill the earth. We create an atmosphere of reconciliation. We share everything, space and time, light and air, God, his kingdom, and at times a little bread and a little wine. We play that there is peace - and indeed. Liturgy is played prophecy" ("God wonend bij mensen", pages 92-93). I realize that Mrs. Haan by writing in dialogue and monologue form does not necessarily agree with Hans Douma's view on the worship service, but in her apparent search for an original and fresh approach of the Bible and the history it recounts, she fails to comply with the LORD's command to TEACH the children 'in the aforesaid doctrine.'

A Child's Storybook of Bible People contains a 'free record demonstrating unique and delightful rhythm stories.' I quote from the book: "The leader first claps his hands on his knees and then claps his hands together. The group repeats the rhythm with the leader and then the leader chants the first line of the story to this rhythm. The group chants the same line back to him. Then the leader chants the second line and the group chants it back to him. The rhythm story continues in this manner." Fourteen such stories are sprinkled throughout the sections. Contrary to the monologue and dialogue form, the rhythm story, when carefully used, is acceptable, although the hand-knee clapping tends to create the 'play atmosphere' and therefore had better be left out. Although the teachers of elementary grades do not use the term 'rhythm stories' and do not practise the form as such, they have used the idea when they taught their students psalms or texts line by line. To recite a good poem this way may prove a good idea. (But why not put that story or poem to a good tune, and sing it with the children?)

Acquainting children with God and with His Word is a beautiful, but difficult task. We can not recommend the reviewed book for family devotional use, not for enrichment material for teachers either. We hope that the publishers will present us with a different book, one that does not seek its strength in freshness and originality, but in the faithful passing on of the LORD's self-revelation.

EWOUDE GOSKER

Press Review

A DISCUSSION IN THE NETHERLANDS ON THE BINDING TO THE CONFESSION.

In *Nederlands Dagblad* of July 3 an article was devoted to a discussion between Rev. M.K. Drost, a minister in our sister churches "within-the-federation", writing in *Gereformeerde Kerkblad voor Overijssel, Gelderland, Utrecht en Noord Holland*, and Rev. Z.G. van Oene, a minister in the Reformed churches, liberated, "outside-the-federation", writing in the church bulletin of Zwolle, *Onder de Lelie*. The discussion is mainly about the binding to the confession and about reformed church government in the churches outside-the-federation. From that article I render the following in a translation:

The discussion was caused by a question which Rev. M.K. Drost in his *Kerkblad* directed to the "concerned" minister (in the synodical churches, J.G.), Rev. J.B. van Mechelen, namely whether he would rather have seen the 52 "concerned" (of the synodical church, J.G.) at Hoogvliet, who recently joined the Reformed Church (liberated) at that place, go to the churches outside-the-federation, to churches where, as Rev. Drost wrote, "they among each other have no consensus with respect to scriptural church government".

In his church bulletin Rev. Z.G. van Oene called this remark of Rev. Drost's a miscalculation. "I am of the opinion that we agree on the binding to the Word of God and to the reformed confession", so he wrote. "There are bottle-necks, but they regard the handling of the confession. And on this there is also no agreement in opinion in the churches of Rev. Drost."

From his article it appears that Rev. Drost is not convinced that those bottle-necks only concern the handling of the confession: "I would like to hear from Rev. van Oene why I miscalculated. Is the confession handled in such a way in the churches outside-the-federation - so goes my question - that in their midst the doctrine of Rev. Telder is tolerated? Do

Rev. Telder and those who have exactly the same opinion have free access to all the pulpits in those churches? Or is this doctrine unanimously rejected as in conflict with the confession? For a good understanding of each other a clear answer is very important. He who handles the confession in a good way - see the subscription form of Dort - will have to teach diligently and to promote faithfully the doctrine contained therein, without openly or secretly, directly or indirectly teaching or writing anything against this doctrine.

As the reader knows, in his book *Sterven en dan . . .* Rev. Telder openly wrote and taught - in conflict with Lord's Day 22 - that when we die, our soul is *not* immediately taken up to Christ; but that when we die, we are nowhere with respect to our body as well as to our soul. Dead is dead. It means that you do not exist anymore until Christ returns. The same opinion appears from the book of Rev. C. Vonk, another minister in the churches outside-the-federation, *De Doden Weten Niets* (The Dead Know Nothing).

The article continues with the reply of Rev. Z.G. van Oene to Rev. Drost's question. We read:

In his article Rev. van Oene admitted that Rev. Drost was not entirely wrong in his remarks about the binding to the confession and scriptural church government:

We have our worries. To deny that would not be honest. And besides, it would be unwise. We have our worries about our churches and the course of things.

-We have those worries also about the forming and functioning of our provisional church federation ("kerkverband-in-voorlopigheid"). Obvious worries.

It is more than five years ago that the churches of Rev. Drost and (? - should perhaps read: in, J.G.) several ecclesiastical assemblies put the one church after the other outside the federation. And still, after five years of working and of exercising patience with those churches, which still had too much to stow away, we have

not come so far and it would seem that there will not be a workable meeting this year because of the way in which Utrecht is proceeding.

-We have the worries that through the defense and confirmation of Utrecht by, among others, the church at Doorn (a reformed, functioning church - federation for all the churches) with clear agreements will be shelved.

I put some words between brackets because the article is mixed up here. For clarification the following. The previous general convent of the churches-outside-the-federation held at Bunschoten-Spakenburg made certain decisions with regard to the next general convent and the way of appointing the delegates. Now the church of Utrecht, convening church for the next general convent, seems to act in conflict with those agreements because it does not agree with the decisions, or is interpreting them in a way differing completely from the way others read them.

We read further that Rev. van Oene continued:

-We have our worries about certain tendencies which are present among us and against which resistance, also nationally, in a christian way and with good arguments, will show to more advantage.

-We have, that's what we would like to say to Rev. Drost, our worries about those congregations and ministers who act as if they are alone in The Netherlands.

So far Rev. van Oene. The article continues with Rev. Drost's reply. We read:

Rev. Drost declares himself thankful that "Rev. van Oene recognizes the independentism which appears here, and that he desires a national reformed functioning church federation." Nevertheless, with him a number of questions remain. The more so because Rev. van Oene asked the question, later on in his article (I give this question in my own way, because the article is again entirely mixed up, J.G.). "Would there now never be any doubt, would there never be the question among the brothers and sisters of the churches of Rev. Drost: Was all that happened

good? A question which keeps me busy and sometimes worries me."

Rev. Drost: "That it was all good what we have done was never said by us. During the period of struggle bitter words and expressions were used which we should not have voiced. There could be mentioned more of which we now - now that that situation lies behind us - say: that never should have happened.

But at the same time I want to remark on something else and that's this: your worries of today, Rev. van Oene, were our worries around 1967 and thereafter. It is for that reason that in certain situations we plainly and clearly had to say "no", e.g. to certain instructions.

In these things we did not want to seek ourselves, but only the preservation of the churches which were liberated through the grace of God and by God Himself were placed on the good reformed path.

Well then, it is also for that reason that in that time we have clearly stated, that an attack on the confessional bond which binds the churches together in the unity of the true faith, must lead to an attack on reformed church government.

Now Rev. van Oene says that others and I have warped things, even that the situation in his churches has become so also through us. But - and this I would like to ask now in all seriousness - is it really fair that you state it this way? Were things - to take over this expression - not already warped before 1967? . . . We in fact opposed the warping of the situation when the binding to the reformed confession and the functioning of a good reformed church government were at issue.

I would like to make a remark here. Rev. Z.G. van Oene asserts that the situation in his churches, namely the deviation from the confession and the lack of and even resistance against a reformed functioning church government, is caused by the actions of our sister churches. Now I think one can say that this situation is partly there as a reaction against the decisions of the churches during the struggle. But we may not forget that a

reaction almost always goes in the direction in which the person who reacts went already before. A person or group of persons will not react soon in a direction opposed to the way in which they were thinking and going already before. So reaction many times brings more clearly into the open thoughts and intentions which latently were present. It is for that reason, according to me, that the struggle of Rev. Z.G. van Oene and others to lead the churches outside-the-federation as a whole back into the reformed track will be in vain, humanly speaking. This in line with what Rev. Drost writes further:

I believe that the cause of the worries of Rev. van Oene lies in the fact that he, and many with him, did not recognize the actual situation in those years. Now that the consequences are being revealed, the worries come. And for those worries we fully have an ear and eye, precisely because they were and are our worries. And we really want to pray with Rev. van Oene that these worries may be taken away.

For it is to be hoped fervently that we find each other again in true unity. But - and that I want to add in all clearness - then

some things have to change in the churches outside-the-federation. When I read the church bulletins of those churches, then I notice with a heavy heart that with respect to matters of church order they so often are off the right track. Many times one cannot speak at all of a living together according to the reformed church order.

There is but one way here: a return to the binding to the confession and a practising again of what art. 32 B.C. says about the profit and blessing of a true reformed church federation.

And in conclusion, Rev. van Oene, I, too, long for the unity with all the saints - with all those who, in this in many respects awful time, want to stand with us on the foundation of God's Word and who want to bind themselves to and want to stand for the unabridged maintenance of the Reformed Confession.

For - to say it with the words of Dr. K. Schilder in this connection: "Also the Church Order works out principles; also the church polity is a matter of doctrine", so Rev. Drost writes.

J. GEERTSEMA

Important Announcement!!!

**The Board of the Canadian Reformed High School Association
of Ontario**

courteously requests your presence
at the occasion of the

FIRST GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

of the Canadian Reformed High School Association

GUEST SPEAKER: **Rev. G. Van Rongen**
TOPIC: **"Look Well After This Child"**
DATE: **September 27, 1974**
PLACE: **Can. Ref. Cornerstone Church**
353 Stone Church Rd. E. Hamilton
TIME: **8:00 p.m.**

This promises to be a historic meeting with the Federation of the Canadian Reformed Churches, marking a milestone for the advancement of Reformed Education.

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

I think I know what you are looking for today. You are all curious WHO won the Quiz Contest! Well, I'm sorry, but please be patient till next time - there may be a few answering letters in the mail yet, and we don't want anyone left out, do we? Next time, Busy Beavers, you will see who the winners are!

In the meantime let's wish all the Busy Beavers with October birthdays a very, very happy day to start off a very happy year. May the Lord guide and keep you this year again.

Marcia Boersema	Oct. 2	Geraldine Heemskerk	Oct. 16
Michael Krabbendam	2	Carl Oosterhoff	18
Cathy DeJong	7	Clarence Oosterhoff	19
Anita Tenhage	7	Carolyn Paize	23
Irene Vande Burgt	8	Catherine De Vos	24
Marian Van Dyk	8	Jeanette Bikker	28
Diane Beukema	10	Henny Krabbendam	28
Harriet De Jonge	10	Melanie De Gelder	29
Johnny Gansekoele	11	Patsy Linde	29
Kathy Stol	12	Grace Bosscher	30
Bernice Louwerse	14	Joyce Welfing	31
Hendrika Plug	15		



From the mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Judy Peet*. We hope you'll really enjoy being a Busy Beaver and joining in all our activities! Hope you soon get a pen-pal too, Judy!

Hello *Kathy Stol*, a big welcome to you too! Thank you for your letter and your story. We hope you will like Our Little Magazine, and being a Busy Beaver, too, Kathy.

Hello, *Rosemary De Gelder*. We are happy to have you join the Club. What an exciting holiday you had, Rosemary! Which of the parks you saw did you like best?

Thank you for the poem, *Sandra Veenema*. It was nice to hear from you again. How are your cousins doing? Are you happy to be back at school?

Glad you had such a nice trip to Victoria, *Hilda Tams*. Did the Parliament Buildings impress you? I hope your second calf is doing all right, Hilda. Thank you for your contribution to the Birthday Fund.

Congratulations on your new baby sister, *Greta Paize*. How did your brother do in the hospital? Did you get to go to Barkerville? You must keep busy reading, Greta! Thank you for your nice letter. I hope you'll write again soon.

How did your initiation go, *Betty Ann Vander Meulen*? And are you getting used to your new school? I'm curious to hear how you are doing! Thank you for your card too, Betty Ann.

Such an interesting holiday you had, *Melanie De Gelder*! Were you afraid of the bear that raided your cooler? And are you happy you're home again, and going to school?

Thank you for the beautiful post-cards of your holidays, *Joanne Hulst*, *Patsy Linde*, and *Rose Barendregt*. Seeing such nice scenes is a little like being there with you for a minute!

Thank you for your letter, *Patricia Van Raalte*. It's always nice to hear from you Busy Beavers. I'm glad you had such a good birthday and holiday. Did you enjoy doing the quizzes?

Hello *Jenny Bosscher*. Thank you for a nice chatty letter! It sounds to me as if you had a really nice holiday, too. And thank you, too, Jenny, for the puzzles.

So you are happy to be back at school, *Clara Barendregt*? Are you enjoying the use of your new gym at school? I'm glad you're so pleased with your new house, Clara.

I'm sorry to hear about your swimming lessons, *Nellie Knol*. But if you try again next year you're sure to make it, right or not? Sounds like your holiday was fun, too, Nellie!

Did you like doing the quizzes, *Audrey Kno*? I'm glad you had such nice weather while at your cottage. How did your mother like her holiday birthday?

Congratulations, still, *Debbie Knol*, on a good report card! And you're doing really well in music too, aren't you? I'm glad you liked the quizzes. You'd hardly be a Busy Beaver if you didn't, right?

Thank you for your letter, *Ann Vandenbos*. It was nice to hear from you again. I'm glad that you too, had such a nice holiday. And now you're happy to be back at school?

Did you get the fish for your aquarium yet, *Diane Holtvluwer*? Are you happy to be back at school too, Diane, after a good holiday? Well, you'll soon hear who won our Contest - just a little more patience.

Thank you for your contribution to our Birthday Fund, *Irene Van Oene*. I admire your ability to save pennies! Whenever I get some together, I spend them! Glad to hear you had such a nice holiday out west, Irene.

QUIZ TIME

Here are some puzzles for you from Busy Beaver *Jenny Bosscher*.

1. Brain Teaser

What is the beginning of eternity, the end of time and space, the beginning of every end, and the end of every race?

2. Make it work

All you have to do is add punctuation to this sentence, and it will make sense.

Time flies you can't they fly too quickly.

Answers: 1. the letter e; 2. Time flies? You can't! They fly too quickly.

And now a quiz from Busy Beaver *Patricia Van Raalte*.

"Unscramble" Quiz

Clue: names of people in I and II Kings.

hazaaih	aesilh	iaghez	lebejez
hei ajl	ddaahenb	aohbnt	aahheostpj

Answers next time!

* * * * *

Now for something for you to do. What did you enjoy most this past summer? Aunt Betty will send you a book mark in exchange for your story about something you experienced this summer! Hope I receive lots of them.

Bye for now Busy Beavers. Till next time!

Yours, Aunt Betty