

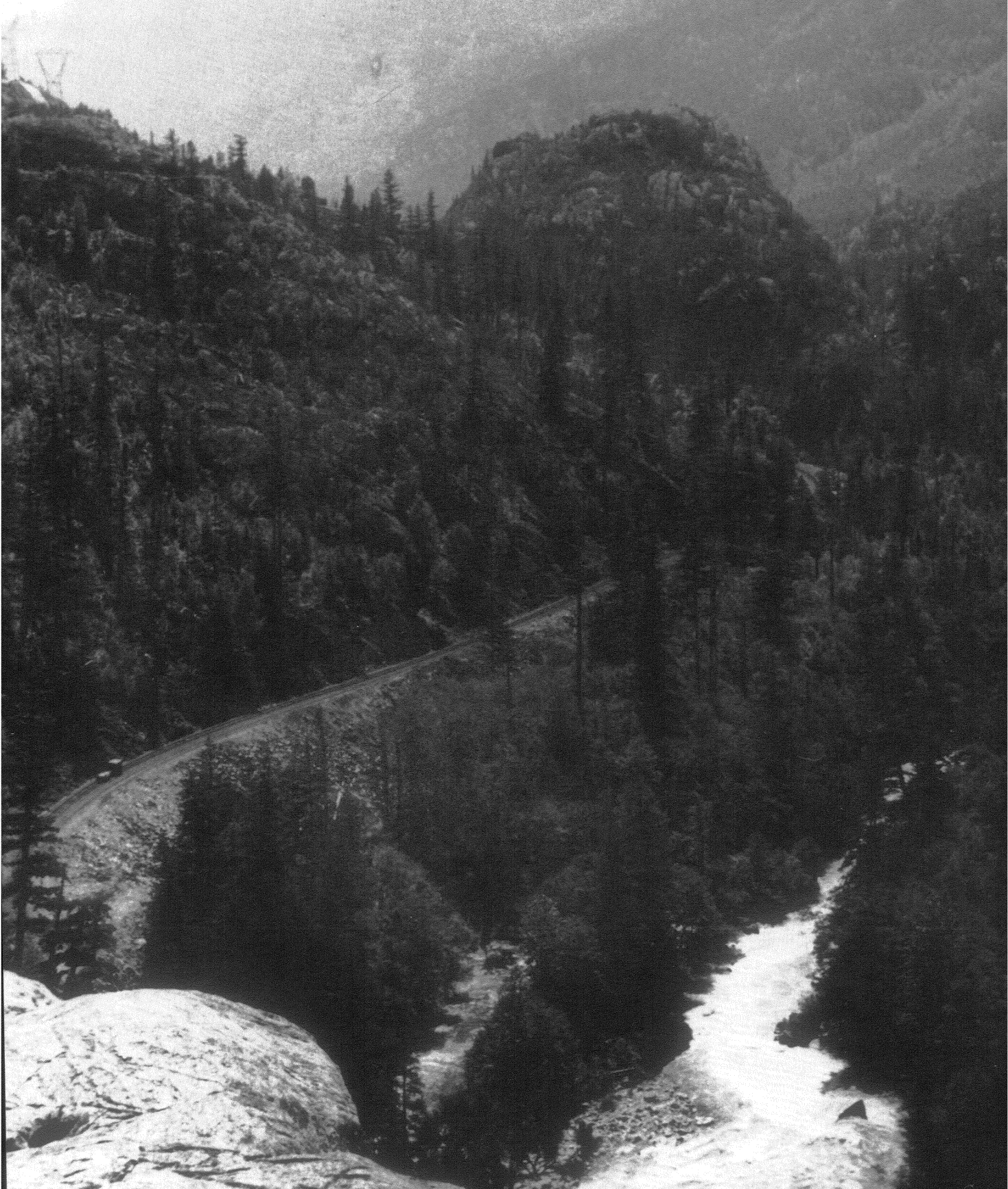


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The Proper Place and Task of Women in the Church

Address delivered to the Conference of Office-bearers of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Ontario, on October 26, 1974, in the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church at Hamilton, Ont. [This printed version is somewhat longer than the spoken version.]

When I contemplated how to set up my speech on "The Proper Place and Task of Women in the Church" my thoughts were directed to the Scriptural teaching regarding the place and task of the sisters in the church and the implications of this teaching in order to find an answer to the question whether or not the sisters should be admitted to the special offices and whether or not they have the right to take part in the election of office-bearers.

If you have followed what has been going on in various denominations in the past decades, you will not be surprised that my thoughts went into the direction which I mentioned.

To give a short survey: The "Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland" (synodical) decided in principle on their Synod of 1965 to open the offices for women. In 1969 a definite decision to do so was taken and has been implemented since that year.

The Christian Reformed Church brought the matter before the Reformed Ecumenical Synod in 1968. At that time the synodical churches in Holland had already taken the first steps on the road to female office-bearers and the Christian Church of Sumba (Geredja Kristen Sumba) had been served by deaconesses since 1962.

The Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1968 appointed a study-committee on the ground that the views and practices of the member-churches differed. The committee submitted its report on the "Office in the New Testament" - part of which is devoted to "The Ministry of Women" - to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1972. The report is not in favour of the admission of women to the ecclesiastical offices.

The report of a study-committee appointed by the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church in the year 1970 comes to a different conclusion. "The examination of the general Reformed practice of excluding women from the various ordained offices in the church", undertaken on the recommendation of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod, resulted in the view of the study-committee that this practice cannot conclusively be defended on Biblical grounds.

The committee which had to advise Synod 1973 of the Christian Reformed Church on the recommendations of the report, had quite some criticism. In agreement with its advice, Synod 1973 decided to appoint a new committee to study a number of specific questions and to report to Synod 1975.

As to *voting rights*, the Canadian Reformed Church at Toronto mentions in her overture to Synod re women-suffrage in the churches the decision of the Synod of Arnhem 1930 of the "Gereformeerde Kerken" and the decisions of a couple of Synods of the "Gereformeerde

Kerken" ("vrijgemaakt") which decided against women suffrage in the churches.

The Synod of Hattem 1972 of the liberated churches responded to a request of the church at Delft and appointed a committee to study the issue. The result of this study is contained in a report which was published recently but did not reach Canada yet at the time of this conference. We know from a summary in *Nederlands Dagblad* of Oct. 3, 1974, that the study-committee is of the opinion that the sisters are not entitled to vote for office-bearers.

The "Gereformeerde Kerken" (synodical) discussed women suffrage in the churches at their Synods of 1949 and 1952. The result was that the decision of Arnhem 1930 was rescinded and the right of the sisters to vote for the ecclesiastical offices was acknowledged.

The first time that a Synod of the Christian Reformed Church dealt with the point of women suffrage was in 1950. At that time no decision could be reached because of lack of agreement. However, in 1957 the right to vote was granted to the female communicant members.

The question whether or not the sisters should vote was time and again discussed among the members of our churches but until this year no overtures were made to any of the major assemblies. The church at Toronto, as mentioned, has now submitted a proposal to the Synod of Toronto "to recognize the right of active participation of women in the life of the churches of our Lord Jesus Christ and to acknowledge their privilege to take part in the election of office-bearers" (overture to General Synod, p. 2).

Considering these contrasting views and decisions, I felt that the best way to serve you would be to present the biblical data regarding the place and task of the sisters in the first place; to show in the second place the reasons which led to such completely different conclusions, drawn from this data, and to give an evaluation of these conclusions.

The question how the office-bearers can stimulate the use of the services of the sisters in the church, which was brought up at the previous conference in connection with our topic, is closely related to the other question of the place and task of the sisters in the church. So I hope in the third place to make some practical suggestions with respect to this use.

The lack of sufficient time to do full justice to all the data which may be discussed, will force me to refrain from elaboration on all the various points. I figure that this is possible since the topic deals with passages and verses with which you are all familiar.

FIRST, THEN, THE SCRIPTURAL DATA.

Genesis 1:26 records one of the words spoken by the LORD God at the creation. "Let us," it reads, "make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air . . ." "So," vs. 27 continues, "God created man in his own

image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

Both, man and woman, according to these texts, were created in the image of God and both were invested with dominion over the created beings and things: "let them have dominion . . ." Compare also vs. 28: "And God blessed them, and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea . . .'" The office of man is not of a completely different nature than the office of woman. It is not of a much more restricted character either. The man is ordained and anointed by God to be a prophet and priest and king before him and in His service; And so is woman chosen to be a prophetess, a priestess, and a queen unto the LORD. The way in which this office is discharged may differ in accordance with the specific tasks of each, but the calling itself does not differ.

That does not mean, however - though this is contended over and over - that man and woman are each other's equals. Genesis 2 teaches us differently when we learn from it that woman was formed out of a rib of man and that she was created for the purpose of being a helper fit for man (Gen. 2:21 and 18). Although the way in which woman was made and the purpose for which she was made are indications of the closest unity between her and man, this way and purpose also determine the place of woman as under man and they qualify the task of woman as consisting in the assistance of man in all things which pertain to the cultural mandate given by God.

The fall of man does not nullify the creation-ordinance for man and woman as stipulated in Genesis 1 and 2. It deprives man and woman of the ability to live up to the creation-ordinance. Moreover, it brings over them God's chastisement of a ground which will turn against man, so that he has to work in the sweat of his face; of the multiplication of the pain of childbearing for the woman; and of the conduct of man, who instead of leading his wife, as the head leads the body, rules over her but to whom nonetheless her desire shall be (Gen. 3:16-19). I spoke of a chastisement and not of an ordinance, as the Form for the Solemnization of Marriages does, in connection with the ruling of man over woman (Gen. 3:16). The ordinance for the married state is not given in Genesis 3 but in Genesis 2. This chastisement of God, as history shows, turned into a judgment of God over a world which did not humble itself under the mighty hand of God. Speaking of history, which shows so, I do not just think of the history of olden times when women were treated as slaves and exploited in the vilest ways by men; I also think of recent history and of our own times. For the position of women in our day and age may have totally changed and, according to worldly standards, women may have become the equals of men, but the unity and harmony in distinction and differentiation, ordained and granted by God in the beginning, has not been restored. On the contrary, this unity and harmony, as the frightening divorce rate and the debacle of countless broken homes shows, is farther than ever.

The initial restoration of that which was in the beginning is realized in that husbands and wives, men and women, moved by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the great restorer, put off in faith the old man, corrupt through deceitful lusts, . . . and, renewed in the spirit of their minds, put on the new man, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness (Eph. 5:22-24).

When one reads what is written on this point in

Reformed circles, one can get the impression that this restoration was not realized up to the time that the Holy Spirit was poured out at Pentecost. It was not until then that a real change came and a true liberation of women took place which wiped out their slavery and inferiority.

I do not believe a word of it!

God's chastisement, which became a judgment for an unbelieving and unrepentant world, turned into a blessing for an Adam and Eve who, by the grace of God, in faith did put off the old and did put on the new man, and who, instead of passing the buck any longer, humbled themselves before God, submitting to His chastisement, and believing his promise concerning the coming and conquering seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15). The alienation of husband and wife, caused by the fall, was stopped and the beginning of a new unity and a new harmony was found. The new name which man gave woman, Eve, "mother of all living", is evidence of it (Gen. 3:20).

I know, it was all far from perfect yet. That's why I spoke of a beginning; however, this beginning of a new unity and harmony is seen all through the Old Testament dispensation.

If we want to find out what the place and task of the sisters is, the New Testament is not our only source. We may start with the Old Testament. We find there many women who, as Sarah, trusted in God and were subject to their husbands (cf. Marriage Form). Proverbs 31 with its song dedicated to the good wife - to mention just that - breathes the spirit of paradise and sounds as the counterpart of the wedding song with which man greeted woman when God brought her to man (Gen. 2:23).

To return now to the position of women, there are, as we found, two aspects to it. There is in the first place the aspect of woman's submission to man, which found expression in Old Testament times in that women were included in the men and in that, in comparison to men, they usually remained in the background. There is in the second place the aspect of woman's assistance of and cooperation with man. To give just a few examples: think of the mentioning of the mother beside the father in the fifth commandment (Ex. 20:5), and think of the women who, according to Exodus 38:8, ministered at the door of the tent of meeting. Deborah was a prophetess and one of the judges of Israel (Judg. 4:4). King Josiah sent, according to 2 Kings 22:13, 14, a deputation to Huldah, the prophetess, to inquire of the LORD for himself and for the people. The important role which Jochebed and Miriam, Moses' mother and sister, played in the history of salvation is well-known (Ex. 2). And these women, whom I mentioned, may have had a very special place, they are not the only ones whom the LORD used for the fulfillment of his purpose. The mothers who, according to the creation-mandate, bore children for the LORD, "continuing in faith and love and holiness" (1 Tim. 2:15), were the instruments of God to keep open the road to Bethlehem and to prepare the way for the coming of the Saviour.

As this was the place of women, their task in Old Testament times was not restricted to taking good care of their households but also extended beyond it whenever and wherever it pleased the LORD to call women to special functions for which He used them.

In the New Testament we again find, in addition to - and the examples of - the submission of woman to man, a great activity of women in various fields. Women were among the followers of the Lord Jesus and were healed

and addressed by Him (John 4:5). He allowed them to provide for Him and for his disciples out of their private means (Lk. 8:1-3). In the whole redemptive history of the fullness of time, women have an outstanding place. Think of Elisabeth, Mary, Anna (Lk. 1 and 2). Women were chosen by the Lord Jesus to be the messengers of the glad tidings of his resurrection (Mt. 28:7). Women were not just in the company of the apostles, who waited for the promise of the Father after Christ's ascension, but the promise fulfilled to them too when on the day of Pentecost the promised Spirit was poured out on them as well (Acts 1:13, (Phil. 4:2, 3).

And it does not stop there. We hear of a Tabitha, "full of good works and acts of charity" (Acts 9:36); of a Priscilla, who, with her husband Aquila, "expounded the way of God more accurately" to Apollos (Acts 18:26); of the four daughters of Philip, who prophesied (Acts 21:9); of the women mentioned in Romans 16: Phoebe, who ministered to the church at Cenchreae (vs. 1); Mary (vs. 6); Tryphaena and Tryphosa; the beloved Persis (vs. 12). Paul calls them "fellow workers" or "workers in the Lord" and writes that they "worked hard" among the Roman Christians or, as it reads concerning Euodia and Syntyche: "They have labored side by side with me in the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my fellow-workers" (Phil. 4: 2,3).

It again shows that women in the new dispensation did not exclusively find their task in looking after their children and loving and obeying their husbands, but were also directly involved in work related to the propagation of the gospel and the edification of the church.

In 1 Corinthians 11:5 we read about women who pray and prophesy, apparently in congregational meetings or worship services. The apostle Paul does not write them that they should stop that. They are allowed to continue to do so for the edification, the encouragement and the consolation of the people of God (cf. 1 Cor. 14:3), but then not without wearing their veil, which was a sign and symbol of their submission to man. Paul speaks of this veil as an "exousia" (vs. 10), an authority, because the obligation of submissiveness should be a responsibility which is willingly and readily accepted and practised by the women.

The whole passage demonstrates how wide the task of women could be, when it pleased the Lord to use them in special functions for the coming or the advancement of his kingdom and the gathering and preservation of his church.

This task which could become so wide, according to the passages mentioned, seems however to be extremely restricted according to two other passages.

I think of 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35 and 1 Timothy 2:11, 12. The first passage contains the order for the women to keep silence in the churches, because they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate. If they want to know anything, the person to ask is their husbands and the place to do so is the home. As to the second passage, Paul states in it that a woman should learn in silence with all submissiveness, because he does not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over men. She is to keep silent.

These texts should not be placed in a more or less sharp contrast to the contents of 1 Corinthians 11 and to all other passages which speak of the activities of women in the church. They should be placed *beside* these other passages.

The Lord, as these different passages show, wants to use woman in church-work, but not in functions which

would be in conflict with her God-ordained position under man. It would be an infringement of the headship of man, if woman took over as a teacher in the church, a function with which, according to Ephesians 4, the pastor was particularly invested.

From the motivation in 1 Corinthians 14:4b: "for they are not permitted to speak but should be subordinate", we may conclude that Paul does not place a ban on all speaking, but on that kind of speaking which would not agree with her position under man, i.e., once more, a speaking with authority, or teaching.

A simple, unbiased reading of these texts leads to the conclusion that whatever activities are permitted to women - and that is quite a number, judging from what Old and New Testament tell us - the sisters should not be admitted to offices which include the teaching of the church, i.e., that they should not be admitted to any of the special offices, be it pastor or overseer or deacon, for each and every one includes one or another form of teaching.

This view, that the sisters should not be admitted to the special offices, is confirmed by what we read in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. These chapters state the requirements for bishops and deacons. The text speaks of them as "husbands of one wife," i.e., as men (1 Tim. 3:2, Tit. 1:6). And when in 1 Timothy 3:11 there is spoken of women as well, as also is the case in 1 Timothy 5:9, it is not of women-bishops or women-deacons but of women who were appointed for auxiliary services in the churches. So the question arises how, in spite of these clear directions, the synodical churches could admit women to the regular ecclesiastical offices and how deputies of the Christian Reformed Church could come to the conclusion in their report that the offices should be opened for the sisters in the church. The only exception among these deputies was Rev. P.M. Jonker, who declared in a postscript to the report, that he did not agree with the conclusions of his fellow-deputies.

REASONS FOR DIFFERENT CONCLUSIONS

That brings me to *the second point*, in which I want to deal briefly with the reasons which are behind the completely different conclusions drawn from the Scriptural data.

These reasons are, as I see it:

1. A wrong interpretation of Genesis 1:26, as if this text implied that not man and woman each separately, but only together, in unison with each other, are the image of God. This is of course derived from the fact that in connection with the creation in the image of God the singular "man" is used: "Then God said: 'Let us make man in our image . . .'", whereas in the immediately following clause the plural: "them" is used: "and let them have dominion . . ." So man who is God's image consists of two: male and female. A very farfetched interpretation, but one which has its consequence, the consequence namely that the image of God cannot be fully manifested in the offices unless woman has her share of it. In this light the statement of the report of the Christian Reformed deputies is understandable: ". . . the Church is shortchanging herself in her exclusion of women from office, especially so at a time when women are no less qualified for leadership than men, and have obtained positions of leadership in almost every sector of life" (Acts of Synod 1973, p. 520). Or as the deputies of the synodical churches expressed it in their report to the Synod of Middleburg 1965: "It must therefore be considered a

thoroughly desirable thing that the sisters function as fellow-members of the consistory. The same thing holds for the co-membership of major assemblies" (Rapport over de Plaats van de Vrouw in de Dienst van de Kerk, p.5 sub 15).

One must come to this conclusion on the basis of the interpretation mentioned, but Genesis 2:24 and the rest of Scripture should have taught that such an exegesis and such a conclusion are not in agreement with the meaning of Scripture as a whole, which cannot be broken.

2. A wrong interpretation of Galatians 3:28, which reads: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus." This text is understood as a proclamation of the end of what is usually called the inferiority and the discrimination of woman. The text however speaks actually not about the relation of the Jew to the Greek, of the slave to the man who is born free, and of man to woman, but about the relation of Jew and Greek, of one who is a slave and one who is free, and of woman and man to *the Lord Jesus*. That appears from verse 27, which reads: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." As to this relation to Christ, baptized in Him, it makes no difference whether one is a man or a woman, etc. He is the Saviour of all. As to the relation man-woman, however, the Lord Jesus did not come to abolish the law in this respect but, as in all respects, to fulfill it.

3. A lack of distinction made between the charismatic gifts, as granted by the Spirit in the early Christian Church, and the institutional office as established in the course of time. The two are seen lying in the same line, so that the possession of the charismatic gifts, which were also granted to women, implies and includes the right to be eligible for the special offices.

Rev. A. Hordijk in his book *Een hulp die bij hem past*, (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1968) - which I can recommend for reading - has pointed out that not the possession of charismatic gifts but the calling of the Lord is decisive for the eligibility to the special offices. Cf. Hebrews 5:4: "And one does not take the honour upon himself, but he is called by God, just as Aaron was."

4. The wrong use of the time-conditioned or time-bound character of the injunctions of the apostle Paul.

The wrong *use*, I say, for it cannot be denied that the mold, the form wherein the injunctions are poured and expressed, is, in various instances, time-determined. To stay close to our subject, take the veil. We do not know the veil anymore as a sign and symbol of the subordination of a woman to man. As a matter of fact, we do not even know the veil any longer in our modern Western society. And while the hat, which women used to wear to church, but which is practically out now as well, may have been considered as a kind of substitute for the veil in its symbolic meaning, it has nothing to do with it but is just part of women's clothing.

So we do not have any visible sign of the position of women any longer. The *form* of Paul's injunction in 1 Corinthians 11 is indeed time-conditioned. However, the content of this injunction and of the ones in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 is not. This content is nothing else but the ordinance of God which will be valid as long as this age lasts and men and women are not yet as the angels of God.

For Paul does not just base his command on what is "disgraceful" (1 Cor. 11:6), what is "proper" (1 Cor. 11:13), what is "degrading" (1 Cor. 11:14), and what is "shameful" (1 Cor. 14:35). i.e., time-determined customs

and proprieties. If that were true, the exegesis which considers Paul's injunctions time-bound would have a case. But it is not so. Paul also bases his demands on the ordinance of God: "that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a woman is her husband, and the head of Christ is God" (1 Cor. 11:3); and he bases them on what "the law says", and that is not what we find in Genesis 3:16, as we saw, but that is the law contained in Genesis 2:18-22 and in Ephesians 5:22 and Colossians 3:18: "Wives be subject to your husbands . . ." And he does not leave it at that. He appeals as well to the creation-order, that "Adam was formed first, then Eve" (1 Tim. 2:13), and to the order of the fall, that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman . . ." (1 Tim. 2:14).

I agree fully with the summary which the advisory committee of the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of 1972 gave of the report submitted to this Synod: "It should be carefully noted that these passages (1 Tim. 2:11-15; 1 Cor. 14:33b-37) are not illustrations but commands, and that the reasons or grounds given are not time-bound historically and culturally relative arguments that grow up out of or apply only to that day and age, but rather the way God created man and woman and the relationship that they should sustain to one another. When we realize that the office of ruling and preaching elders has as its essence the responsibility to teach in the church and to rule or to have dominion in the church . . . and that in reference to men also, we see that these commands of Paul exclude women from this office" (Acts, pp. 56, 57).

Although somewhat more restrained in the way it expresses itself, the conclusion of the advisory committee with respect to the office of deacon for women is that "there is no clear Scriptural evidence for women occupying the office of deacons." Instead of opening the office for them, the committee recommended that the deacons "make full use of the gifts and services of women in the diaconal task in an auxiliary capacity and in appropriate teaching situations" (Acts, p. 58).

The whole theory of time-determined injunctions regarding the position of women, as understood in the reports of deputies of the synodical churches and of the Christian Reformed Church, leads to a devaluation of the apostolic precepts, just as the theory of teaching-models, supposedly presented in various historical passages of Scripture, leads to the undermining of the entire history of salvation and the reliability of the Word of God.

Moreover, that whole concept of time-bound injunctions regarding the place of women in the church is contradicted by the attitude of the Lord Jesus and of his apostles towards women. I gave various examples of this attitude. It is anything but time-conditioned. Just the opposite. In talking with women in public, in admitting them in His company, etc., Jesus' conduct was the opposite of that of the rabbis of that time, who did not address a woman in public, who walked in a wide circle around women lest they should be touched and in that way be contaminated by a woman. And as for Paul, by accepting women as fellow workers in the propagation of the gospel, he acted against the whole spirit of the time both in rabbinism and in paganism.

Time-determined decisions? Valid just for those days, with the exception of some deeper-lying motives, that namely women should remain women and should not discard their femininity and Lord it over the man? That would be all?

The opposite is true: They are time-determining decisions which keep their validity and should be implemented in that women are not admitted to the offices in the church - not because they would be inferior, but because it is the ordinance of man's and woman's God and Father.

The question may arise why the ecclesiastical offices, according to God's ordinance, are closed to women, but why such a prohibition does not exist with respect to high offices in state and society, and e.g. Deborah could be a judge and the queen mother could have a leading position (cf. 2 Chron. 15:16, 2 Kings 11:1 ff.).

The Bible does not give us a straight answer to this question. Scripture however portrays the relation between Christ and his Church as the one between the head and the body (Eph. 1:22, 23), and between the Bridegroom and his Bride (Eph. 5:23 ff., Rev. 19:9, 21:9). In view of this, the answer might be that, in agreement with what was in the beginning, this unique relation should be reflected in the church, God's new creation, in the position of men and women within her.

SHOULD THE SISTERS VOTE?

As to the question whether or not the sisters have the right to vote for office-bearers, I already mentioned the overture of the sister-church of Delft in which she requested the Synod of Hattem to appoint deputies with the mandate to study the matter. The investment of women with the office of the believers, the consideration that women have come of age, as to their ecclesiastical position, in the new dispensation, and the conviction that the well-known passages 1 Corinthians 11:12-16, 1 Corinthians 14:34, 35, and 1 Timothy 2:11-15 refer to the worship services of the church, led the church at Delft to the conclusion that the sisters have the right to vote for office-bearers.

Deputies appointed by the Synod of Hattem do not agree with this view, according to a survey of their recently published report in *Nederlands Dagblad* of Oct. 3, 1974.

The mentioned passages do not exclusively refer to the worship services, in their opinion, but to congregational meetings as well, since these two were not sharply distinguished at that time. The passages teach that the woman has a place behind the man. She is not allowed to exercise any authority over the man in whatever way. That also holds for the meetings of the consistory with the members of the congregation wherein the election of office-bearers takes place. By voting, the woman would exercise authority over the man whom she votes and over the man whom she passes by. Moreover, the right to vote, according to deputies, is not, as Delft stated, based on the investment with the office of the believer and the coming of age of women in the new dispensation.

Voting is an act of leadership. It is also a decisive act and as such an act of ruling, to which women are not entitled in the church.

The crux of the matter is, as appears from what I told about Delft and deputies, the question whether or not voting is indeed an act of leadership and thus of ruling.

The church at Toronto, which, as mentioned, overruled our Synod of Toronto on women suffrage, denies that voting is an act of government. "It is a matter of judging the qualifications and ability of a nominated brother" (overture Can. Ref. Ch. at Tor., p. 3, sub 4). So did the Report submitted to the Reformed Ecumenical Synod of Edinburgh 1953. Women suffrage, according to this report, gives expression to the liberty and independence of women

as full members of the church and does not in any way violate the God-given rule of the submission of women to their husbands (Acts, p.20). Rev. J.F. Heij, who lately wrote on "Vrouwenkiesrecht of Vrouwenstemplicht" in *Nederlands Dagblad* cannot see either that voting would constitute any form of ruling. Writes he in *Nederlands Dagblad* of Sept. 25, 1974: "We have to do in it with a method of cooperation, of giving aid."

As for my view, the right of women to vote for office-bearers does not stand or fall with the answer to the question whether or not voting is an act of ruling.

Personally I feel that it is an act of government or ruling, but then one not exercised independently, but under the supervision of the consistory. The same holds, in my opinion, for the approbation of office-bearers, who have been appointed by the assembly of elders and deacons, an act from which the women are not excluded.

As said, however, the matter does not depend for me on the question: is it or is it not an act of ruling. For the sisters have authority to rule. If that were not the case, they would not have been invested with the complete office of the believer but just with a part of it, the prophetic and the priestly but not the royal part.

You will not find that anywhere in Scripture. The sisters possess, the full office but then in a *qualified* form, qualified by Genesis 2, 1 Corinthians 11, 14, and 1 Timothy 2.

The point for me therefore is whether or not voting is such an act of ruling which would constitute a breach of these ordinances of God and would be an infringement of the authority of man. I cannot see that this is the case. The sisters, far from taking over the helm, assist by voting that such helmsmen may be appointed by the consistory and called by the church, and thus by God, who are qualified and able to steer the ship of the church by the compass of the Word of God.

SISTER-AID

Finally a few suggestions in answer to the question how the office-bearers can stimulate the use of the sisters in the church. I think in the first place of the regular visiting of old people, the sick, widows and widowers with their families. As to widows and widowers, they should not be exclusively visited by sisters or by brothers, but by husbands and wives together, as was done when the husband of the widow or the wife of the widower still lived. And do not forget the single members in the congregation, and not just the older ones. I am pretty sure that also girls or boys who live in an apartment will enjoy it when a married couple drops in - something which reminds them of home. Loneliness is not only a terrible thing, it is also a very common thing and it is becoming worse and worse in our modern society in spite of the whole urban sprawl and the highrise, which brings people so close and yet leaves them so far apart. You feel it when you walk through the hallways of the big apartment buildings.

Something else I think of is the non-medical home-care of the sick and the people who cannot manage by themselves anymore. What a lift if, not haphazardly but regularly, a sister comes in to give a hand for a little while and stays for a cup of coffee or tea. It changes the whole day and gives something to look forward to.

The Lord Jesus has given us such a beautiful guide in Matthew 25:34 ff. where we hear the king say: "Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you

gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me."

It is the small things which count. And how! "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." Unbelievable, yet true! Not just that sick brother, that lonely sister, but "me", the King Himself, our Lord and Saviour. Is that not a tremendous thing? When we see something of the height and depth and width of the love of Christ, we may ask with the author of Psalm 116: "What shall I render to the Lord for all his bounty to me?" (vs. 12). Well, here we have something beside what is mentioned by this Psalmist.

Another thing I think of, for the ones who have the capabilities for it, is the assistance on a regular basis of the pastors and administrators of the church in typing, keeping up of registers, in doing chores for which "dominee" is not the right man: two left hands, etc.

I also think of the care of the property of the church. What do men know of nurseries, kitchens, furnishing, the

cleaning and renewing part of the upkeep of the church-building? It seems to me that it would be a good thing if sisters who are cut out for that kind of thing could become members of the committee of administration or be appointed in subcommittee of this committee.

An activity in which sisters can serve so well is further the club and home-mission work, vacation Bible schools, distribution of literature, follow-up work, etc.

And speaking of home mission, we also think of the work of foreign mission and of the home relief work - if necessary - and the world relief work which becomes more and more necessary.

The service of the sisters is already used in some of these activities. I am sure that this will be done more if it is not a matter of course any longer that men are appointed for various tasks but the question is considered whether sisters have special talents which can be employed in a particular field. The result will be that the manifold grace of God granted to his church will shine forth fuller and richer in the midst of the congregations, and from them into the world.

L. SELLES

Synod Impressions

On Monday night, November 4, 1974, delegates to the General Synod Toronto 1974 arrived and with members of Churches in the neighbourhood joined in a Service of Worship and prayer. The service was conducted by the chairman of the previous Synod, the Reverend G. VANDOOREN, M. Th. The text of his sermon is to appear in the next issue.

After the service there was an hour of fellowship and of introducing the delegates to Synod to their hosts and hostesses.

On Tuesday morning at 9:00 o'clock the pastor of the convening Church opened Synod and chaired the constitutive part of the assembly. The following were elected officers of Synod: Chairman, Rev. J. MULDER; Clerk I, Rev. G. VANRONGEN; Clerk II, Rev. M. VANBEVEREN, and Assessor, Rev. M.C. WERKMAN.

When the provisional agenda was adopted it appeared that the list of Appeals had grown overnight and had reached the number 18! This may give you an impression of the workload of this Synod. Predictions cannot be made, but together with the several Reports on significant matters it can be concluded that the meetings will take more time than just a week or ten days.

The first motion, discussed briefly and adopted, was to invite Rev. D. VANDERBOOM as member of Synod.

In most cases the visitors' gallery is not well occupied during the first hours. This time there was an exception. Apart from Rev. A.B. Roukema, there were visitors from overseas, Rev. S.S. CNOSEN from Spakenburg and Rev. Dr. C. VanderWaal from Pretoria. Rev. Cnossen was officially received as a delegate from the sister churches in the Netherlands and welcomed by the chairman. He will attend Synod in an advisory capacity. Dr. VanderWaal's request to be heard by Synod was briefly discussed. Synod decided that the advisory committee which will study the matter of the Churches in South Africa and the Report of the Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad shall report as soon as possible. Thereafter a decision will be made in this matter.

At this moment no comment has been made on the position of Dr. VanderWaal. That Synod did not make a hasty decision is a sign of wisdom which contains promise for the further proceedings.

Rev. CNOSEN will address Synod Thursday night while Rev. VANDOOREN will reply on behalf of Synod. The full text of their addresses will be published in the next issue.

When the first part of these impressions was written the members of Synod were busy studying the materials assigned to them and preparing

their advisory reports, which will be dealt with in plenary session.

The next day Synod dealt, in plenary session, with the overture of the Church at Hamilton concerning Art. 70 C.O. (Solemnization of Marriages) and the advisory report which was prepared during the day. The matter could not be finalized and was tabled for a later meeting.

The highlight of Thursday night was the Formal Address by Rev. S.S. Cnossen. After having delivered his formal speech he spoke some well-chosen personal words in the Dutch language, telling Synod how much he is enjoying his presence and the opportunity to see and to hear the Synod of the sister Churches at work. He wished the brothers the blessing and the guidance of the Lord in their work. Rev. G. VanDooren replied on behalf of Synod. Both speeches will be published in the next issue.

Thereafter Synod took a decision in the matter of "speaking an edifying word in the Churches". Some objections were made, in an appeal to Synod, against the decision of a previous Synod in this matter. Synod was not convinced that the granting of this privilege to students of theology should be terminated.

With this decision the work of Synod of this first week came to an end. On Friday the Foundation for Superannuation met while, in the evening, the members of Synod attended the "College Evening". Synod decided not to meet on Saturday.

D. VANDERBOOM

Press Review

THE "CHRISTELIJKE GEREFORMEERDE" SYNOD AND THE ICCC

In *Nederlands Dagblad* of September 21 we read the following information about the discussions regarding the ICCC problem at the Synod of the "Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken" in the Netherlands:

After almost a whole day of ample discussions the synod of the "Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken" did not get one step further in determining the synodical stand with respect to the International Council of Christian Churches, the ICCC . . .

Criticism regarding the ICCC has strongly increased during the past years, not in the last place as a result of the report of the delegates to the eighth world congress of the organization in Cape May.

In their extensive report the deputies for matters involving foreign countries concluded that there was still enough reason to continue membership in the ICCC. However, the reporting committee (of Synod, J.G.) expressed as its opinion that membership ought to be discontinued unless the ICCC would meet a number of objections.

Synod, too, was divided. A number of the delegates declared themselves against continuation of membership, but others pleaded in favour of continuation of the bond with the organization of Dr. McIntire.

The objections were particularly directed at the political stand of the ICCC and its fierce anti-communism, whereby one gets the impression that communism is the only anti-godly movement in the world; the triumphalistic attitude of the organization; the way resolutions come about; and the hierarchical structure of the ICCC.

Giving a picture of the discussion at synod, the article mentions the opinion of Rev. P. den Butter, who spoke in favour of the ICCC:

Regarding the much criticized anti-communism he remarked that "we also can take commun-

ism not seriously enough". Moreover, so he felt, "I can understand that attitude of the ICCC. It tries in this way to help its member churches behind the iron curtain" - in this case the so-called underground church.

Overagainst the increasing criticism toward the ICCC in his churches he noticed "a growing trend to rapprochement towards the World Council of Churches". "Leaving the ICCC means an indirect strengthening of the World Council", he stressed.

Against continuation of membership in the ICCC spoke, among others, Rev. Boersma and Rev. Brienens. We read:

Rev. K. Boersma, one of the delegates to the eighth world congress of the organization in Cape May remarked that "the reformed (sound) in the ICCC is only rendered via the filter of American Presbyterianism". . . . According to him, the differences between the member churches are never discussed.

Rev. T. Brienens placed a question mark behind the basis of the organization. "In the basis nothing is said about fundamental truths such as baptism, the covenant, conversion, the relation between the divine and the human initiatives in the area of salvation and election. Are these not fundamental matters?"

As far as I know now, the synod of the "Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken" is not yet finished with the matter of the ICCC. That questions are raised is no wonder. The ICCC gives the impression of being an organization of the "great person" of Dr. McIntire rather than of churches. It also shows a strong anti-communism which hold the danger of one-sidedness. However, this strong anti-communism is understandable when one sees how the U.S. is on the way of giving in to communism and its influence, not in the last place economically. An example here is the recent import into the U.S.A. of thousands of Russian tractors. In the September 12 issue of the *Christian Beacon*, the official organ of Dr. McIntire and the ICCC in the U.S.A., he writes:

Hundreds of tractors are already in the United States. Two large Russian ships have just unloaded another immense supply. The tractors are being hauled on trucks from New Orleans to dealers, many of whom have been marketing U.S. tractors but have now switched to the Russian models. Soviet tractors are now selling for \$3,000 less than a comparable John Deere or International tractor.

In the September 5 issue of the *Christian Beacon* another article appeared about the same matter, besides a printing in full of Psalm 14, while verse 1, the first part, is written above the mentioned article: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God". This article reads:

Russia to corner world tractor market.

This issue of financing the Soviet world confronts the Christian people in the United States. . . . Russian tractors symbolize the entire approach. Now a Pennsylvania "Herman Corp." has a \$34.5 million contract to supply three automatic foundry lines for another USSR tractor plant. They will be as claimed "the largest molding lines in the world." With her slave labor the Soviet Union will monopolize the tractor market of the world to the great detriment of the United States.

Psalm 14 and Psalm 3 both stand out for the Christian. The great atheist power of the twentieth century is Communism. Communists deny God. God says that anyone who does that is a fool, and that American people are now set to finance and multiply the fools and increase their power on the earth. The Psalmist says they are corrupt, and so they are. They do abominable works, and this is what Christians must speak out against.

As far as I can see, the *Christian Beacon* is right when it warns that in the above-described way, and many others, the free world is digging its own grave. Communism abides by its goal of world hegemony: to conquer and rule the whole world. It not only can but also is being taken with too little seriousness today.

However, in their criticism of the ICCC delegates at the "Christelijke Gereformeerde" Synod were not beside the point in speaking of one-

sidedness. There are also great atheist powers at work in the so-called free Western world. Liberalism and Socialism are also forms of Humanism, together with Communism. On the basis of this common Humanism they can find each other.

I will end with a quotation I found in the October 19 issue of *Una Sancta*, the bi-weekly organ of our sister churches in Australia:

Amid the talks and conferences on peaceful co-existence between East and West, the following was reported in a leading Soviet newspaper, *Pravda* (22 August 1973):

"Peaceful co-operation does not mean an end of the struggle between two economic systems. This struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie shall continue because socialism and imperialism cannot be united, and this struggle shall finish in the final victory of Communism on a world scale." J. GEERTSEMA

Vonkenberg Study Aids

Dear Readers,

We receive a fair number of orders for our books at this time of the year, but we try to give prompt service on all orders at all times. This means that anyone who sends in an order should receive the parcel (s) or an acknowledgement of the order within 2 - 3 weeks (barring strikes) from the date the order is mailed.

We recently were asked about an order placed last year. A very thorough search of our records has not unearthed the order and we certainly have not cashed the cheque or money-order. Of course it is so much harder to solve this because of the time lapse.

A year or so back we had a case where we shipped 2 parcels and were informed about 6 - 7 months later that one had not arrived. It was too late then to claim under the insurance!

We would like to urge everyone who does not keep a copy of letters sent, at least to keep a record of the date an order is sent. Then if nothing is received in say 3 - 4 weeks to write us. If we have done something wrong we need to be corrected, if something has gone wrong elsewhere we can go after it.

Please let us be business-like and by all means keep those orders coming.

C. Lindhout Jr. Secretary-Treasurer,
Inter-League Publication Board
(operating Vonkenberg Study Aids)

Salve Doctor Iterumque Salve!

On Friday, November 15, 1974, the degree of Doctor of Philosophy was conferred on Mr. W. Helder, and we wish to congratulate the young doctor from the heart with this result obtained by him. Those who read our *Clarion* are usually not aware of the work that goes into each issue. I refer here not only to the work done at the printing shop, but also to the work which is done especially by Dr. Helder, who sees to it that the various contributors send their articles in time, who decides what goes into each issue, and who scrutinizes the various contributions, correcting them (language-wise) whenever necessary. That is the main reason why in articles by the editor so very few mistakes are found as far as the language is concerned. If you find a wrong construction or something like that, be certain that our co-editor has not seen this article (as he did not see the present one, for obvious reasons!)

Dr. Helder, himself will be the first one to object to my use of the title which was conferred on him at a Convocation of the McMaster University in Hamilton. I was planning to attend the ceremony, and would then have been in a better position to give you more particulars, but was prevented from executing my plans. Something came up unexpectedly, and thus I could not see the ceremony.

I am convinced that I speak on



behalf of the whole assembly of editors and contributors when I thank our brother for all he has done so far. Likewise, I am convinced that I speak on behalf of all our readers when I extend our heartfelt congratulations to him on this occasion. His wife most certainly is included in our best wishes.

I shall not call him Doctor Helder again, for he does not like it. And the personal relationship will not change: we shall continue, by the grace of our God, in the same brotherly and - for the Churches - fruitful manner in which we have been working together now for some years. It would, however, have been a sign of unthankfulness if we had let this opportunity pass by and had not shown that we acknowledge the grace of our God in a brother who has proved that he is heartily willing and ready to use his gifts for the edification of the saints.

vO

To Our Readers

As in all other industries, we also have experienced tremendous inflationary cost increases in paper and other supplies needed in the printing industry. How much we had hoped to maintain our subscription rate for another year at \$13.50. However, due to above mentioned cost increases added to labour cost, we are forced to up our subscription rate to \$15.00 per year as of January 1st, 1975. This will enable us to maintain the quality of magazine you have been receiving.

May we ask all our subscribers to send in their subscription fee of \$15.00 before December 20th, 1974. This cuts our administration cost tremendously. DO IT NOW.

Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

PREMIER PRINTING LTD.

news medley

This will be a lengthy medley. The reason is not that there is so much news from the various Churches, for the bulletins which I received do not contain much information which would be of general interest. There are other matters which are worthy of being mentioned in our medley. These are the matters of our College and the matter of the General Synod. About both we shall say something instead of dedicating a special article to them. Now we can do it more in the manner of a chat, since we are inserting it in our medley. However, I had better start.

For some time we did not have the privilege that we could extend our congratulations to a couple who celebrate(d) their 40th wedding anniversary or even their 45th. Now we may offer our sincere congratulations to a couple who receive from our gracious God the privilege that they may celebrate their 55th wedding anniversary. They are brother and sister P. Kamstra in Burlington, who will remember this fact on the 27th of this month. This is a great privilege which they receive from our heavenly Father, and we are happy with them, with their children, their grandchildren, and their great-grandchild(ren). I know that they have one great-grandchild at least, but maybe there are more. We wish them the nearness of our God also in their further life.

Let us deal with the other news from the various Churches first of all. The Consistory of Ebenezer Church in Burlington mentioned in the brief report on their meeting the following: "The Acts of Classis Pacific were received and filed." I am still wondering how they could receive the Acts of Classis Pacific. Must be in their capacity as the Church that is in charge of the General Archives.

Rehoboth Burlington have set the date for the official opening of their new Church building on December 12th. We expect that in due time you will read a report on that ceremony and festive occasion.

In Lincoln/Smithville there was an action to come to the establishment of an Old Age Home or Rest Home and a Nursing Home. Now the committee which was appointed to investigate the matter came to the conclusion that it would be the best course if everyone joined the Canadian Reformed Resthome Inc. at Hamilton, so that with concerted effort and endeavours such a home may be established here in Ontario. That is good news, although the brethren there will have felt a little bit of disappointment when they came to the conclusion that it would not be feasible to establish such a Home in the Lincoln/Smithville area too. Maybe it is the best when we have one in the East and one in the West: the number of Church members is not that large that we will need quite a few in different parts of the country. We hope, of course, for growth, but even so we should start modestly.

One last thing about Ontario: In the Brampton Church an evening was organized to "entertain" the Rev. D. DeJong, Brampton's former minister, who was here on the occasion of the College evening and of the meeting of the Superannuation Fund. Edmonton's Consistory delegated him to both events, and this is a very kind gesture which

will have been greatly appreciated. Brampton made use of his presence here to have a re-union, so to speak, be it for a short time only.

In Barrhead some seventy colour-slides were received, made by Mr. J. Kuik in Brazil, which were to be shown at the Congregational meeting. Thereby the mission work will have been brought much closer to the people than if you just read something, although it has to be stated that the reports which come from Brazil, concerning the Mission itself as well as concerning the Mission Aid, are always interesting and give a good picture of the activities, of the joys and the disappointments, the progress and the set-backs.

Barrhead also tells us that "a Classis was held on October 22, which lasted less than three hours." That is quite something, well worth mentioning. This Classis decided to bring the remuneration for mileage from 10 to 15c; further it was decided that the Churches at Barrhead and Neerlandia will receive pulpit supply every fourth Sunday. That is not only good for these Churches, it is also good for the ministers: then they have an "easy" weekend, for they do not have to make sermons, and that means a welcome relief, even though they may make their sermons with joy and dedication. A relief is provided also by the pulpit exchange, which this time took place between Calgary and Coaldale.

Speaking of Coaldale: the possibility of having a refresher course for all members of the Congregation in either Reformed doctrine or Bible was discussed. The minister was asked to co-ordinate this with the Men's and Women's Societies. Hopefully, this can begin in the new year, we read.

The elders decided, Coaldale's bulletin informs us, to use the word "us" in the benediction. The opposite is the case in New Westminster, where it was decided that the elders shall uniformly **pronounce** the blessing, and therefore using **you** instead of **us**. Here we see the variety in the Church which will cause no harm.

New Westminster's Consistory received again a request of nineteen families who requested permission to remain as a separate Congregation north of the Fraser as soon as the meeting place is moved to the south of the river. The Consistory stated that, if circumstances warrant it, they remain willing "to entertain this request" at a later date.

The deal involving sale of the present Church building fell through, and thus everyone is held in suspense again, Rev. M. Van Beveren writes.

The Choir planned a 20th anniversary performance on November 29th. My best wishes!! And last, but not least, now that the newest building has been taken possession of by the William of Orange School (their third building), Mr. van der Kamp writes that now they have three times as many pupils, four times as many teachers, and five times as many classrooms as when they started in 1955. Here, too, we see the blessings of the Lord.

That was the news from the Churches here and there which I wished to share with you.

Now let us turn our attention to the **GENERAL SYNOD** for a brief while.

You will read some reports on that Synod from the hand of the Rev. D. VanderBoom, who, as minister of the convening Church, has been asked to serve Synod with his advice. He knows better what is going on from day to day and from week to week than I do, for I am there only one

day a week, to replace the Rev. G. Van Dooren when the latter has to lecture at our College.

I now wish to say something about the service which preceded the beginning of Synod. It was conducted by the Rev. G. Van Dooren, the chairman of the 1971 Synod. It is customary for the convening Church to invite the past-chairman to do this. Toronto followed that custom and Rev. Van Dooren accepted. He was led to the pulpit by the pastor loci. For a change, I had taken a seat on the balcony and thus had a good "oversight" over the flock. Soon I discovered the brethren from the West, who occupied the reserved pews. And after the service I met quite a few, renewing old ties and bonds. I also could hear some of the latest news and you know that I am very much interested in that. There are many bonds with brethren and sisters in many Congregations, and we always like to hear the best of one another.

The two whom I wish to mention by name are the Rev. S. Cnossen and the Rev. Dr. C. van der Waal. The former was delegated by our Netherlands sister Churches, the latter was sent by his Consistory in an apparent effort to obtain recognition by the Canadian Churches. It was a surprise to see them both there and we had quite a few talks together. Dr. van der Waal also visited us at home, and with Rev. Cnossen I had a few very pleasant talks during Synod. Although you live thousands of miles apart, yet when you see each other again after so many years, you feel that the bond has not weakened but has remained and now is strengthened again. All three of us arrived in Kampen in the same year (1938) and we went through the turbulent war years and the years of the liberation of the Church in the Netherlands. It is deplorable that there is no official bond with the Church of Dr. van der Waal, because of the latter's stand in the matter of divorce, etc. Synod discussed this point extensively, but the correspondence was continued with the federation of the South African Churches with whom we did have correspondence: Dr. van der Waal's Church is not one of them. This is the more deplorable since we could benefit so much from the knowledge of Dr. van der Waal. Recently he obtained for the second time the degree of Doctor of Theology, after writing another doctoral thesis. We know him also from the three volumes of **Sola Scriptura**, of which an English translation is planned. This requires money and thus a "Sola Scriptura Fund" has been established to finance the translation and the printing of this study. Just a few weeks ago I received a copy of **Gij Kustlanden**, a book which he wrote as a result of travels through Turkey, Greece, and the Near East. Those who still subscribe to the R.B. series from Oosterbaan & LeCointre in Goes, will have received it. Yet, when we talked, we felt that there was something between us: the relation of sister Churches was not there. This relation we did feel very strongly when talking with the Rev. Cnossen. His presence was one of the blessings of the unity of faith as it is experienced and practised. But enough about this.

During their stay here, the above brethren were also able to attend the **COLLEGE EVENING** which was held on November 8th. It was also something new for the brethren who were delegated to General Synod and come from the West. It is this evening about which I wish to say something.

It was opened by prof. L. Selles, who read from the Scriptures and led in prayer. In his word of welcome he mentioned in the first place the Rev. D. DeJong; then he

55th Wedding Anniversary



Pieter Kamstra, geb. 3 juli 1894. Jantje Bouwsema, geb. 14 feb. 1893. Gehuwd op 27 nov. 1919 te Warffum. Ze vestigden zich in Middelstum [Gron.]. In 1951 emigreerden 3 van hun 5 kinderen met hun gezinnen naar Canada. In 1952 volgde de 4de. In 1955 emigreerden ze zelf met hun jongste dochter. Ze kochten een farm in Caistor Centre, bij Smithville, maar verkochten deze weer na 2 jaar. Ze vestigden zich toen in Burlington, waar ze sindsdien rentenieren te midden van hun kinderen, 32 kleinkinderen, en 2 achterkleinkinderen.

expressed our gratitude for the fact that the Rev. S. Cnossen could be present here; and he said that the visitor who came from farthest away was, in all probability, Dr. C. van der Waal. In his opening statement, prof. Selles also remembered the Rev. H. Stel and expressed the thankfulness of all who are involved in the cause of the College for the work which was done by our late brother.

We have, prof. Selles said, no graduation this evening, but we have good hopes that it will be the only (and the last) time that this is the case. If everything goes well, there will be a graduate next year. As for congratulatory messages, the Church at Smithers sent a letter wishing us and the College the blessing of the Lord.

The speeches which were delivered (or should I say "the lectures"?) will be published and thus I am free to skip them. I would not be able to tell you everything about them anyway, since at the place where I was sitting we could hardly hear what was being said. In any case, we missed quite a bit! This was the case also with those who were sitting in the very center, as I heard some say. Measures will be taken to cure this next time, I have been assured.

The speech by Mrs. Selles reflected the zeal and diligence of our sisters. She began with making the confession that, when the College evening drew closer, she asked, "Please, I do not have to climb the pulpit again, do I? Can I not just give what I may give to our Principal somewhere in private?" But, as you all can see, she said, the answer was "NO"!

Mrs. Selles saw a remarkable difference between the

program for this evening and that for previous evenings. "If you have attended all official college evenings, you will have noticed something different this evening. May I compare the official program to the menu? The Savings Action message always came at the end of the menu as a sort of dessert, something to satisfy the small appetite that was still left. And now, look here; we as ladies are right between the two main courses; we surely have moved up! We now are a dish to keep the appetite going!"

She stated that she had "the honour that I may represent many ladies in East, Mid, and West Canada. I guess that I am not far off by saying that more than one hundred ladies are involved in the faithful collection of the change and the cheques from all our homes. These are the main force behind my standing here tonight. We are very grateful, thankful and happy to recognize all the work done faithfully and regularly behind the scenes. Remember the first cheque I was allowed to hand over: it amounted to \$500.00. We were all surprised, because a lot was done for the building and teaching equipment. The next cheque was for one thousand dollars. As you well know, the prices go up, and so do the prices of theological books. Most letters received mention this fact. Besides the care we took of the library books, we were able to present the Faculty with six gowns in different sizes, to be worn at official meetings. Until now gowns were rented from McMaster University. Our special thanks go to Miss Geraldine Vanderwoude, who made all the gowns in her free time during the summer. She donated her handiwork to the College."

When Mrs. Selles started speaking about the gowns, I saw Rev. G. Van Dooren rise from his place and walk to the front. I did not understand what he was up to, but then Mrs. Selles asked him to stand up and to show one of these gowns, the one he was wearing. He did a very good job of modelling and I can recommend him if you need one for similar occasions.

Mrs. Selles further told her audience, "From the Board of Trustees we received the request to continue our Savings Fund for the building or rebuilding of the library. Plans are in discussion and, quoting the letter from Mr. J. Medemblik, 'Continual support of the Ladies' Savings Action will be more desirable than ever'. A newsletter will be mailed, the Lord willing, in January to all contact addresses, giving detailed information, and asking for advice.

"I am very happy to say that we are able to cover the expenses for the regular acquisitions for the library. Looking at the past year, the amount of money, the regular cheques, the surprises coming in, we can only wonder. The correspondence with Mrs. Lindhout and I had with several ladies all over Canada was very encouraging.

"With me you can draw only one conclusion, namely that the women of our Church are behind you, Board of Trustees, Faculty, Students.

"As I may, I speak on behalf of all the women, far and near, when I say wholeheartedly, 'May God bless you all!' Not only in words but also in deed we show our concern and love. I may present you this evening with a cheque for the library in the amount of \$2,000.00 and with the promise to take care of the regular needs of the library."

Already when Mrs. Selles said that she was allowed to present us with something Dr. Faber hastily rose from his seat, for he must have had some idea what was coming. And yes, the cheque was handed to him.

After the official closing, a social hour was held in the

annex to the Church building when the College evening was held, and many brothers and sisters could meet each other. Among them were also several members of the Superannuation Fund, which had held their annual meeting on that very same day. It was nice that they could attend this gathering. There were also others from Winnipeg who had made the trip for the specific purpose of attending the College evening. Proof of the love which the Church people have for the College. That is gratifying, and we do not doubt that the contributions which will be needed in the year 1975 will be coming in. No less than \$22.00 per communicant member will have to be contributed; but it is necessary. It is also necessary that the contributions be sent monthly, and in advance. Locally, the Churches cannot operate if every member pays his or her contribution at the end of the year or even during the next year. That is unfair towards the other members of the Church. Likewise, it is unfair towards the sister Churches when there are Churches that pay either at the end of the year or even in the new year. We have made commitments and we should be enabled to keep them.

Herewith I have reached the end of this medley.

Next time, come and attend the College Evening if you are able to make it. The date? Friday, September 12, 1975.

See you there, the Lord willing.

vO

Thank You ! !

I should like to thank all who complied with my request and sent me pictures of historical events, buildings, homes, etc. I received so many pictures that I could easily fill a whole book with pictures alone!! Thus a selection had to be made, as everyone will understand. The result will be that the book which is to be printed is, to a great extent, a communal effort.

If there is still someone who feels that a picture he or she has may be of interest, and would give the readers a good impression of "how it was and how it is now", please do send it.

Consultation with Mr. Kuik made it evident that we shall in no way succeed in having it ready before the end of February. Even so, we shall have to work hard in every respect. Pictures are therefore still welcome.

From more than one reader I also received some additional factual information. It is deplorable that this was not received earlier, for the chapters have all been written and there is no time to rework them. Yet, if anyone does have some additional information, please do send that too. It probably will be used in the future and reach our readers in the form of brief articles, maybe illustrated by means of some of the pictures which were sent.

Once more: thank you all right heartily.

vO

The Liberation In The Forties

PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS (7)

PRELUDE

It may be clear - in particular to our young readers who were not born yet when the things concerned happened - that there was a double aspect in what was underlying the Liberation of our sister-Churches in The Netherlands during the forties.

There was a "doctrinal aspect", which circled around the position of the infants in the Church, and the value of God's promise and of holy baptism.

There was also something in the field of Church polity and Church Order, the mainpoint here being the interpretation of Article 31 C.O.

Altogether it was a matter of the Confession of the Churches being at stake. The fundamentals were undermined: Would the Churches remain truly Reformed or not?

Some people stood for their wrong principles and opinions in a very fanatic way.

Usually we ourselves and in particular our brothers and sisters in The Netherlands are branded as "extremists" and "fanatics". But the following story may make it clear where this sort of people were really to be sought.

It is the story of the prelude of the Liberation of the local Church of which I was a minister at that time.

However, first I am going to tell something about a visitor.

VISITOR

Our readers may remember that I had agreed with a committee and with my Consistory to write and publish a little pamphlet on the differences in the Churches, at the invitation of the former and with the full consent of the latter. This pamphlet, then, would be distributed in the congregation to enable the members to prepare for a congregational meeting in which the situation in the Churches would be discussed.

This brought a visitor to the parsonage of Waardhuizen.

This visitor was the same person as the one who presided over the meeting of Classis when I was admitted to the ministry after my last ecclesiastical exam.

The old man had to ask me a

question, as he told me. He had some information that I was going to write and publish a pamphlet on current Church affairs. He strongly urged me not to execute my plans. For this would cause unrest and take away the peace that had been there up till then within our Classis, he said.

Now it was a matter of fact that from both sides the whole country was flooded with all sorts of pamphlets. This even happened in days in which paper was very, very scarce and printing had to take place in secret because the Germans did not give permission to print anything, and even after the liberation of the country it was very hard to lay hands on printing paper. Many people still possess a great number of those pamphlets and little booklets that were printed and distributed in those days. Some time ago - this is interesting - the librarian of Calvin College showed me a couple of boxes full of those pamphlets, which he was cataloguing.

Anyhow, I still know what exactly I answered my older colleague. I pointed to the fact that the Synod of our Churches continued to bind the Churches to its wrong decisions and that as long as that happened there would be no real peace.

And further I referred him to the fact that it was the policy of our Consistory to examine the synodical decisions and actions and inform the Church members about what was going on.

I told him it was my intention to honestly and fairly give a summary of the beliefs of "both sides", so that the people would be able to form their own opinion and make up their mind.

I felt very sorry for him, in particular because I supposed he had the best intentions. But I could not give in to this sort of pressure.

A LETTER

Soon afterwards these intentions appeared to be not so good.

I received a letter from him, in which he asked me: Did you attend the Church services of the "separated" group in Schiedam on a Sunday in the month of May? Did you do the same thing a couple of months later? Is it true what I heard about

this? And have you that way made a clear choice in favour of the "schismatic" Rev. C. Vonk and his followers?

When we read this letter we could draw the conclusion that nobody was "safe". Gossip was doing the job: Someone must have told him!

I answered that I indeed attended the services of this congregation. The first time being when my father-in-law had passed away and was to be buried the next day - he was one of the suspended and deposed elders of the Church of Schiedam.

The second time, however, my choice was much more clear - as I responded. I told my correspondent that the Consistory of Schiedam made a decision to call a fourth minister. But the condition was made that this man had to agree with the decisions of Synod. One who had reservations or objections would not be eligible for call. This was, in my opinion, a very serious decision, a schismatic one, because at that stage nobody had been "condemned" yet. And for me as a "concerned" person, let alone minister, there was no room any more in this Church, according to this decision.

Well, this was my reply.

I never heard anything about it.

However, it was clear, "they" were watching me!

So it was no wonder that on the evening of the thirtieth of August of the year 1945, when I was suspended by the majority of the members of the Consistory, some influence from outside was revealed, in particular from that old minister, the man of that visit and of that letter.

G. VAN RONGEN
[Pro Ecclesia]



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YOUTH COLUMN

FREEDOM AND FRIENDSHIPS (2)

Now we come to that specific aspect of Christian freedom dealing with the forming of friendships. First of all, let us be clear what we mean by friendships. By it we refer to all friendships between human beings: social friendships, boyfriends and girlfriends and all other friendships. Paul uses a very long term in our passage (1 Cor. 5) in verses 9 and 11 which the KJV translates as "not to company with" and the NASB as "to associate with". We could also translate "do not form friendships with". It means both to form and to practise friendships.

Friendships cause joy and happiness. To go to the home of friends means to enter a welcomed atmosphere. You feel relaxed. Talk flows easily. You can trust each other as friends. Ah, you feel at home. And friends are there to help each other. Its ultimate expression is found in Christ's words: "Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends"(John 15:13).

I ask you, where can one find such friendships or fellowship? If one lives in the world one must depend on one's work, neighbours, or some club or other. It can be a pretty lonely world. But as freed Christians one finds a crowd of friends inside the church. They are all your brothers and sisters. It is one Christian family of which Christ is the Head. In 1 Cor. 12 Paul teaches us how to develop friendships and practise them by sharing our God-given talents and by sharing the sorrows and joys of each other. Yes, freedom in Christ leads to friendships with Christians. That is a wonderful thing. We share a common faith, a common salvation, a common freedom.

Christian youth should practise that friendship inside the church with other youth and even with the older members. This camp (Camp CRYPS) has as one purpose: fellowship. Therefore, it is a good place to develop and practise friendships. Not everyone will appeal to you as good friendship material. That is good as far as that special friendship between boy and girl is concerned. However, otherwise we should be and act as "friends of Jesus Christ" to each other. If Christ chose us undesirables, certainly we should not have any qualms about forming and practising friendships with all believers.

However, sometimes "leaven" enters the "lump" of our friendships. Such was the case in Corinth. A case of exceptionally base immorality threatened the church. A man had taken his step-mother as his wife. Paul raged. Even heathens thought this too outrageous - taking your father's wife away as your own wife! Yet these Corinthians behaved as though nothing had happened. They did not like it of course, but the church as a whole was good, even exceptional. Look at the spiritual gifts! So they proudly disregarded the sinful brother. They did not for a moment think of discipline.

Paul cannot stand their shameless pride:

For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your boasting is not good. Do you not

know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough? Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.

Paul had already decided - put him out the next time you come together. Sin is a LEAVEN which leavens the whole body. It spreads. Take out the leaven so that the church can celebrate the feast of *unleavened* bread, eating the unleavened bread of purity and truth.

Does that mean you cannot be friends with excommunicated persons? Does that mean we should not keep company with those who have excommunicated our fathers and mothers (I refer to the people of synodical reformed churches)? Well, Paul uses that big Greek verb meaning "to have friendship with" once more in 2 Thess. 3:14:

And if anyone does not obey our instruction in our letter, take special note of that man and do not be friends/do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame.

That is discipline, though not the extreme remedy. To cut off friendship means that the person receives a fore-taste of the loneliness of hell, of the complete isolation of hell. If Christ calls us to discipline, then we must chase such a person into loneliness, where all friendship ends. He must realize the seriousness of sin. It should become unbearable for the sinner. And we do not do so if we start to dine and wine with him as though nothing had happened. Oh, we must still treat him as a brother, not an enemy, but as a brother under discipline. It should be as with a child who is spanked during supper and sent to the bedroom. There the child feels lonely and starts to rethink his faults. What a silence then hangs over the supper table! So we see that a MISUSE of Christian freedom in the body of the believers BREAKS friendships.

So far we have discussed the friendships which one should cultivate within the family of the friends of Jesus and the breaking of such friendships with the ungodly members inside the church.

But now what of friendships with those OUTSIDE the church? In a letter, which we now no longer possess, Paul had written to the believers in Corinth: "Do not associate with immoral people". But two different conclusions had been taken from that statement. One group said, You may not associate with immoral people OUTSIDE the church. You cannot keep company with drug-users, drunkards, carousers, free-livers, hippies, sex-perverts, and rebellious trouble-makers. You have to stick your nose up at such. Mind you, one can learn something from the decent, sophisticated, and learned outsiders. Yet when it comes to matters of religion, talk hits a dead-end road, but . . . On the other hand, inside the church it is different. Even if a person falls into sin, you may never forget that he is a church-member, a brother, right? You cannot just break your friendship with such a person. That was one group's opinion.

The other group said, Paul meant: do not associate with immoral people INSIDE the church. You must show the immoral brothers the seriousness of sin. Shame them by staying away from them, so that they repent. But

otherwise, concerning outsiders, how do you expect to live in CORINTH (known for its immorality) without associating with the immoral? You can say something critical about nearly everyone in godless Corinth. If you want nothing to do with the immoral, then you must indeed go out of Corinth, even out of the world.

Paul agrees with this second group. Listen:

I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; I did not at all mean with the immoral people OF THIS WORLD, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would have to go out of the world. But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with ANY SO-CALLED BROTHER if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler - not even to eat with such a one. For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves. (vss. 9-13, capitals are ours).

Paul says, Understand well your freedom in the blood of the passover Lamb. Keep the feast of unleavened bread, celebrating your freedom in purity and truth. Then you are prepared to meet the world, the immoral, the impure, and the untruthful. Then you can (even: will) associate not only with the so-called decent citizenry but also with the greedy (money-hungry unionists), with the swindlers (unscrupulous insurance or middlemen), or with the idolaters (those who follow and worship the heroes of today). If you do not do that, you are an ostrich with its head in the sand. You had best leave this world and build a shack deep in the dark woods of the isolated north, or something like that.

On the one hand, no friendships with immoral brothers or sisters in the church. God gave the church the keys of the kingdom of heaven. The church must use the keys to ban such - read 1 Cor. 6:9, 10.

On the other hand, friendships with godless people of the world? Yes! If you refused that you would actually declare a JUDGMENT on the world, isolating her in preparation for the loneliness of hell. THAT you are not allowed to do. Christ gave us no authority to do that. Reread what Paul says in verses 12 and 13.

Do not shortchange the world, says Paul. Do not put it into isolation. Do not walk away. No, go out INTO the world. That is the mission. That does not mean we now have a licence to do as we please in the midst of the world. Oh no. We must keep to Christ's program of the feast of UNleavened bread, remember. Only in that way will the salt stay salted and only then will the lamp burn bright. The feast of purity and truthfulness must reign. A strong, wholesome morality, based on thankful obedience for the freedom by Christ, must "leaven" our friendships with the immoral people of the world. Then we are friends without being friends of their immorality.

Allow me now to sum up. That Christ died as our passover Lamb gives us our FREEDOM to live purely and truthfully. This freedom brings friendships INSIDE the church. The misuse of this freedom breaks the same friendship inside the church. On the other hand this freedom should also bring us into contact and friendship even with the immoral ones of this world.

This is the program of the feast of unleavened bread.

W. HUIZINGA

Press Release

Classis of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Alberta and Manitoba, held on Tuesday evening, October 22, 1974, in Edmonton, Alberta.

This Classis was convened by the Church at Barrhead and was declared officially constituted after all of the credentials were found to be in good order. It was then given into the care of the moderamen, consisting of the brothers: Rev. D. DeJong, chairman; Rev. J. Visscher, vice-chairman, and Rev. J. Geertsema, clerk.

The Chairman welcomed the delegates to the meeting. He noted that the Churches at Barrhead, Neerlandia, and Winnipeg were still vacant. He also congratulated the Rev. R.F. Boersema, who received his Th.M. degree from Westminster Theological Seminary, and the Rev. J. Geertsema, who received a call from Launceston, Tasmania.

The agenda is officially adopted after a few additions are made to it.

Reports:

The Treasurer of the Classis notifies the meeting of the financial situation of the Classis.

The Deputies for Needy Students report that no application for financial assistance was received. The Chairman, in taking note of this re-

port, exhorts the Churches to do their utmost so that there may be more young men to enter into the ministry.

With regard to the Classis Regulations, the proposal of the Church at Barrhead to include air travel as an acceptable means of transportation along with car and train, and to increase the rate per mile travelled by car to 15¢ a mile, was adopted. Classis also gratefully took note of a fine report, drafted by Br. T. VandenBrink, on the state of the Classical Regulations. As a result a committee consisting of the Brothers D. DeJong, T. VandenBrink, and E. Wierenga was appointed to revise the Classical Regulations and to bring them up-to-date.

Proposals and Instructions:

The Churches at Barrhead and Neerlandia requested Classical preaching engagements. The following schedule was adopted: Dec. 1, Rev. J. Visscher; Dec. 29, Rev. R.F. Boersema; Jan. 26, Rev. D. DeJong; Feb. 23, Rev. J. Visscher; March 23, Rev. R.F. Boersema.

Question Period [Art. 41. C.O.] and Correspondence.

No matters were brought forward during the Question Period and no correspondence was received.

Appointments:

The Classis Treasurer, Br. E.C. Koning was re-appointed. The Church at Edmonton was re-appointed to audit the books of the Treasurer. The Church at Edmonton was again made responsible for the upkeep of the Archives, and the Church at Barrhead for the inspection of the Archives.

As for the Church Visitors, the Brothers: Rev. D. DeJong and J. Geertsema were re-appointed and J. Visscher was appointed. The Rev. D. DeJong and the Rev. J. Visscher were re-appointed Deputies for Examination. The examiners themselves were also re-appointed.

The members on the Committee for Financial Aid to Students, the Brs. S. Tuininga, T. VandenBrink, and C. Veltkamp were also re-appointed.

Next Classis:

The Church at Calgary will convene the next Classis on March 11, 1975, at 8:00 p.m. in Calgary. The suggested officers are: the Rev. R.F. Boersema, chairman; the Rev. J. Geertsema, vice-chairman; the Rev. D. DeJong, clerk.

The Acts of the Classis and the Press Release were adopted.

The Chairman closed the meeting with prayer.

On behalf of the Classis,
J. VISSCHER (vice-chairman)

Principal's Statement 1974

Fifth Anniversary Meeting of the Theological College, Friday, November 8, 1974.

1. The Third Convocation and Fourth Anniversary Meeting.

The third convocation of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches was combined with the fourth anniversary meeting on Friday, September 14, 1973. The degree of Bachelor of Divinity was conferred on Mr. J. Van Rietschoten, who after his graduation spoke on the subject, "Preaching to the glory of God." Mr. Van Rietschoten accepted the call of the congregation at Smithers, British Columbia. We are thankful that we could deliver another Bachelor of Divinity to the churches. After four years of operation of our institution six young men labour in the Word of God in the midst of the Canadian Reformed Churches who completely or partially received their training for the ministry at the Theological College in Hamilton. During this fourth anniversary meeting the Rev. H. Scholten, M.Th., addressed the audience on the topic, "Nature and Goal of the Study of Church History and Church Polity."

2. Enrolment.

Mr. J. De Jong, Mr. F. Douwsma, and Mr. B. Tiggelaar, all in possession of a B.A. degree, were admitted as first year students. Mr. S. De Bruin reached the level of second year student. We appreciated the fact that the Rev. R.J. Bernhardt, B.A., B.D., again followed New Testament lectures as an auditor.

At the end of the academic year 1973-1974 Mr. F. Douwsma decided not to continue the study of theology. It is one of the advantages of maintaining the requirement of a B.A. degree for admission to our Theological College that students who become aware of the fact that they do not have the makings of a minister, may easily switch to another field of study or to an appropriate occupation in society.

The fact that three of the four students were *junior* students, while, according to schedule, the lectures were those for *senior* students, rendered this academic year difficult for Faculty and students.

3. Faculty.

For the second time we may thankfully report that all members of the Faculty were able to do their work.

During his stay in Canada, the Rev. H. Knigge, missionary of the Church at Toronto, delivered two lectures about sociological and ecclesi-

astical aspects of the mission work in Irian Jaya.

4. Contact with other institutions.

At the end of September 1973 we received a visit of Prof. and Mrs. H.J. Schilder from Kampen, the Netherlands. Although this was a *personal* visit, Prof. Schilder's being with us and even attending some lectures reminded us of the good relationship with our sister-institution in what for most of us is "the old country."

5. Library and Ladies' Aid.

To give you an idea about the size of established libraries, I mention the fact that, when the Philadelphia Divinity School merged with the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, and put part of its library up for sale, the celebrated Notre Dame University bought approximately half of the 60,000 volumes and now boasts a collection of 130,000 volumes in its theological division.

Sage Theological Library in New Brunswick, belonging to one of the two seminaries of the Reformed Church in America, has 127,000 books.

At this moment, at the beginning of November 1974, the book in which we record our accessions, gives the number of 6,655. Because a number in our accession-book is sometimes comprised of more volumes, it is hard to say how many volumes there are in *our* library. Nevertheless, the number shows that the Ladies' Aid, which already did such an excellent job, can still go a *long* way . . .

We are very thankful for the gift of \$2,000.00 we received from "our" Ladies during the fourth anniversary meeting, and also for the photocopying machine which was a complete surprise for all Faculty-members, except for colleague Selles.

6. Governors and Trustees.

We commemorate with thankfulness the work done by the late Rev. H. Stel, who as governor took good care of our Theological College and its Reformed character. We trust that God made His faithful servant enter into the glory of his Lord.

Mr. A.H. Oosterhoff, LI.M., was compelled, for reasons of health, to terminate his work as Secretary of the Board of Trustees. His function was taken over by Mr. J. Medemblik. It is now the moment to express the heartfelt thanks of the Faculty for the excellent manner in which Mr. Oosterhoff has prepared for Synod Toronto 1974, the revision of the constitutive documents of our institution. It gives us a feeling of "legal security" to know that Mr. Ooster-

hoff, though not as Secretary, still serves as trustee of our College!

Mr. and Mrs. C. Walinga were appointed caretakers of the building. As such they are successors of Mr. and Mrs. W. Schuurman, whom we had learned to know as dependable janitors and whom we as yet thank publicly for a job well done.

Conclusion.

Attentive listeners have possibly sensed that the academic year 1973-1974 was not a year without tensions for Faculty and students. On the one hand we desire to maintain good Reformed academic standards, and e.g. not yield to the pressure of modern times to cut down on, or even completely eliminate, the knowledge of Hebrew and Greek as prerequisite for a proper study of theology. On the other hand we do not want to burden our students by unreasonable demands.

We had a pressing year indeed. The Book of Proverbs says, ". . . pressing milk produces curds, pressing the nose produces blood, and pressing anger produces strife." Let us hope that the pressure of last year might produce no blood or strife, but health-producing butter.

The draft of the Constitution, which is now before Synod Toronto 1974, states in Article 23 the standards of admission to the Theological College as follows:

"A person who is a member of one of the Churches, who presents a good attestation of confession and life, and who has a Bachelor of Arts or equivalent degree from a recognized University, qualifies for admission to the College, provided, however, that he has taken those courses in the programme leading to such a degree as are prescribed by the Senate . . ."

Therefore, admission to our College requires not only a Bachelor of Arts of equivalent degree but what one might even call a *qualified* Bachelor of Arts degree. Students are supposed to have completed courses in Latin (at least Highschool grade 13) and in Greek and Hebrew at a recognized University, though the Senate with the approval of the Board of Governors may waive this requirement in special cases, e.g. when a certain University does not offer courses in Hebrew.

If we maintain this requirement of a so-called *qualified* Bachelor of Arts degree - and I for one am strongly in favour of doing so as long as possible - the question arises whether the significance of study of Hebrew and Greek and the present insufficiency of even some University-study in these subjects do not compel a Reformed Theological College to extend the time of study from

Dirk Jansz Zwart In Edmonton

About two months ago the first letter went overseas to Rotterdam to ask Mr. Zwart if he would play our newly installed older organ. Quite a few letters later the date was set - November 4, 1974. As soon as it was known, the advertising campaign started. Posters to all the Reformed Churches within a 100 mile radius and notices for their weekly bulletin were prepared and sent. Of course no one ever knows how successful advertising is until the product starts selling. Four days before the concert I received a phone call from Red Deer (100 miles south of Edmonton) and was asked: "We rented a bus, please reserve 50 seats." Fantastic! I knew then that it was going to be a sell-out. Mr. Zwart arrived on November 2nd and lodged at the home of another "Rotterdammer", Rev. de Jong. That evening we went to the Church so that the organ could be inspected - before we knew what happened, Mr. Zwart was tuning the trumpet pipes. Then he played a piece from Joh.

Principal's Statement-Cont'd

three to four years. We should not use this extra year for all kinds of fads, e.g. in the so-called "practical theology", but for thorough propaedeutics laying a good foundation for the study of theology.

That the Faculty did not propose such extension as yet, was, beside other reasons, because of the lack of ministers in the Canadian Reformed Churches and the small number of students at our College. The problems we met especially in the past academic year, made us, however, newly aware of the desirability of extending the course of studies.

In a certain manner connected with this suggestion is the question whether our College should follow the trend, set by other Colleges and Seminaries, of replacing the Bachelor of Divinity degree by that of Master of Divinity (M.Div.) for those students who already possess the Bachelor of Arts degree.

Above all, we desire, with God's indispensable blessing, to prepare young men to preach the Word and to fulfill their ministry in the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Theological College in Hamilton has completed its fifth year of operation.

It is clear that it needs the continual attention of the churches that maintain this institution of higher learning. We ask for your unwavering prayers that it might please the Lord God to cause this school to be a good instrument of His Holy Spirit.

J. FABER, principal.

Seb. Bach and the conclusion was reached that nothing rattled in the building. On Sunday morning all the seats in Church were occupied. We found out that as Church organist, Mr. Zwart believes in three things: 1. That an organ should be heard. 2. That the organ leads, instead of the singing congregation. 3. That psalms should be sung so that at the end of each line everyone has a chance to fill their lungs. Mr. Zwart's explanation for number 3 is: "When singing, you praise the Lord; why rush, and because of that some may not even realize what they sing." He is so right, for the sound of the singing was beautiful. After the second service the congregation was asked to sing for another fifteen minutes; these Psalms and hymns were taped for the use of the radio broadcasts.

On Monday morning we went to three Churches - two that had new organs and one that had a 60-year-old organ. The difference between old and new is such that, if Mr. Zwart returns to Edmonton next year, we will try to get the Anglican Church. The organ in that Church was built in 1958. After playing these beautiful organs, I was afraid of what Mr. Zwart would say, comparing those organs with ours. He must have read my thoughts for he said: "Don't worry, your organ will sound beautiful tonight". We also visited Mr. Millson, who showed us the electronic works of a complete carillon. This carillon plays twice daily on the top of the Alberta Legislature Building. This same Mr. Millson advised our Consistory to buy the organ we now have. After the concert I met him again and he said, "I enjoyed the concert and I am glad that my recommendation to purchase this organ was justified, for even with the imperfections it has, the sound is beautiful." Around 4:30 p.m. our organists had a chance to talk to Mr. Zwart and they decided to have another discussion on Tuesday morning. They did and guess what was discussed? The three points I mentioned before. To write about the whole concert is impossible, but what really stood out when the listeners had a chance to sing? A choir of 650 members! that is what I call "Super Choir" and that is what we had. One Psalm was sung like we all did years ago - on whole notes. It sounded beautiful or, as Mr. Zwart said, "deftig". The concert closed with the singing of "A Mighty Fortress". It sounded majestic. Before Rev. de Jong closed the evening he mentioned that Mr. and Mrs. Brandsma were celebrating their 53rd Wedding Anniversary today and also said that Mr. Molenkamp, after being a patient

for 20 years, was in the hospital again. I heard that he was going to hear the taped version of the whole concert. After prayer and singing of Psalm 68 verse 10 we went home.

This evening showed what a pipe organ can do for a congregation. It creates a bond, atmosphere, and above all, Beauty in Sunday services. In Edmonton we have used an electronic organ for 12 years, but now that we have a real organ, I pity the Churches that have to do without. Mr. Zwart was asked, "What is your honest opinion about this organ?" and his answer was, "What you now have can be compared with an antique piece: once you own it, you are proud of it and really start restoring it. Money should not be an obstacle, for you are starting with an organ that has beautiful sound and is constructed well - so it is worth improving".

It was too bad Mr. Zwart could not stay any longer in Edmonton, but we hope he will be back next spring for another performance. R. WINKEL



On Offenses

Now I like that common distinction between an offense given and one received, inasmuch as it has the clear support of Scripture and properly expresses what is meant.

If you do anything with unseemly levity, or wantonness, or rashness, out of its proper order or place, so as to cause the ignorant and the simple to stumble, such will be called an offense given by you, since by your fault it came about that this sort of offense arose. And, to be sure, one speaks of an offense as given in some matter when its fault arises from the doer of the thing itself.

An offense is spoken of as received when something, otherwise not wickedly or unseasonably committed, is by ill will or malicious intent of mind wrenched into occasion for offense. Here is no "given" offense, but those wicked interpreters baselessly so understand it. None but the weak is made to stumble by the first kind of offense, but the second gives offense to persons of bitter disposition and pharisaical pride. Accordingly, we shall call the one the offense of the weak, the other that of the Pharisees. Thus we shall so temper the use of our freedom as to allow for the ignorance of our weak brothers, but for the rigor of the Pharisees, not at all!

John Calvin
Institutes, III, 19 [tr. L.C.C.]

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

Let's first wish the following Busy Beavers a very, very happy December birthday. After all, they are the last ones this year! Hope you all have a wonderful day to start another happy year for you! May the Lord bless and guide you.

Karen Bergsma	Dec. 4	Rita Bouwsema	Dec. 21
Bonita Stiksma	5	Edward Versteeg	21
Alinda Greta Kuik	6	Linda Meliefste	23
Albert Riemersma	6	Johanna Van Dam	23
Loretta Dam	8	Karl Veldkamp	24
Wilma De Vos	8	Corinne Welfing	24
Annie-Lynn Ruggi	9	Corinne Medemblik	25
Sharon Koerselman	11	Pearl De Vries	27
Anna Riemersma	15	Audrey Bultena	28
Denise Van Amerongen	15	BettyAnn VanderMeulen	28
Jacqueline Kobes	17	Christine Van Zandwijk	29
Margaret Eelhart	18	Wilma Bouwman	30
Jack Lodder	18	Louis Dykstra	30
Charles Lodder	19	Jackie Bakker	31
Walter Van Grootheest	19	Theresa Boersema	31



From the Mailbox

Hello *Marian Lof*. Thank you for your poem. Yes, you did very well on the answers to the riddles, Marian. I'll be looking forward to hearing from you again!

Thank you, *Hetty Witteveen*, for your nice quiz. I think the Busy Beavers will really enjoy it! Write again soon, Hetty.

I'm sorry the weather spoiled your holiday this summer, *Ria Hofsink*. But you did have an exciting time with the porcupines, didn't you?

Hello *John Wendt*. It was nice to hear from you again. And thank you for the little story, John! Write again soon.

Thank you for your letter *Cynthia Ludwig*. You've had an exciting time lately, haven't you? Thank you, too, for the poems, Cynthia.

Thanks for your pretty letter and your story, *Marion Van Grootheest*. It was nice to hear from you again. Write again soon, Marion.

I'm glad you tried the Reformation quiz, *Yvonne Bijker*. Did you enjoy the rhyming riddles? You had an exciting summer too, didn't you, Yvonne. How do you like living in your new home?

Hello *Jo-anna Flach*. Thank you for your nice letter. I'm glad you too, had such a good summer holiday. Before you know it we'll be having Christmas holidays! Have you written a Christmas story yet, Jo-anna?

QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Hetty Witteveen* sent in this quiz for us to do.

GUESS MY NAME

- I am Miriam's older brother. (Num. 26:59)
- I am a heavy old man who judged Israel forty years. (1 Sam. 4:16-18)
- I am the only son of Jacob that is mentioned in the roll call of faith. (Heb. 11:22)
- The Lord appeared to me and told me that Eli's house would be judged because of his vile sons. (1 Sam. 3:11-15)
- I am the prophet who smote the Syrian army with blindness. (II Kings 6:18-23)
- My father was a priest named Zacharias, and my mother's name was Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5)
- I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. (Rev. 22:13)
- I am the husband of Elisheba, and father of Nadab and Abihu. (Ex. 6:23)
- I am a hairy man, girt with a leather girdle about my loins. (II Kings 1:8)
- When I was old, I sent my eldest servant after a wife for my son Isaac. (Gen. 24:1-4)

Now let's have some

WORK FUN

Starting with the first word, change one letter in each line so that you end up with another word.

1. BEAR

_____ What stalk did Jack climb?
_____ stingy and nasty

MOAN

2. LAMB

_____ a large branch
_____ a tropical fruit

DIME

3. GOAT

_____ a sailing vessel
_____ to defeat

BEAN

1. BEAR, bean, mean, MOAN
2. LAMB, limb, lime, DIME
3. GOAT, boat, beat, BEAN

Answers

Did you enjoy doing those?

Now let's see how you did on the quiz we had last time.

Here are the answers:

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| 1. Thomas | 3. Joseph |
| 2. Paul | 4. Deborah |

Now, Busy Beavers, before we stop, I would like to say one more little thing. During the month of December we usually send cards to many, many people, don't we? When you send your cards this year will you try to remember someone who you know may be lonely and would just love to receive a card from you?

Bye for now Busy Beavers! Till next time.

Yours,
Aunt Betty