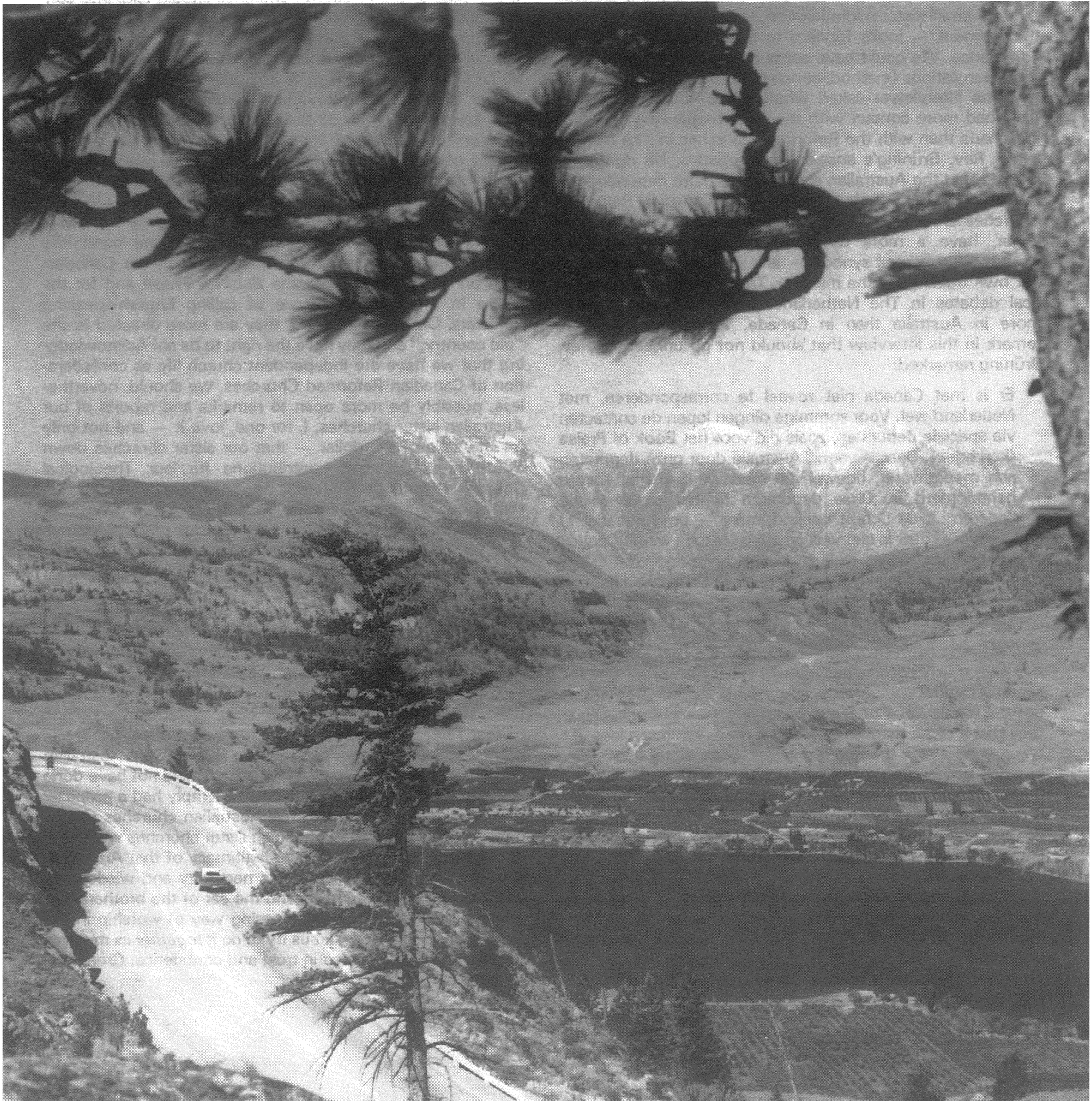


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Australian Cooperation

Nederlands Dagblad of June 21, 1980, published an interesting interview with two Australian Free Reformed ministers, the Rev. Dr. S.G. Huh and the Rev. K. Brüning. We recognized the similarities with our situation as Canadian emigrant churches and again became aware of the many things we have in common with our sister churches deep down South. Remarks made by the Rev. Brüning showed that our small sister confederation — three congregations at the moment — looks forward to a Reformed international conference. We could have some consultations about, e.g., Bible translations (method; concrete versions).

The interviewer asked whether the churches in Australia had more contact with the English-speaking churches in Canada than with the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands. Rev. Brüning's answer was negative. He rightly remarked that the Australian churches are more dependent on the Dutch "mother" churches than the Canadian Reformed Churches are. We, on the North American Continent, are larger, have a more developed church organization — classes and regional synods — and may enjoy the fruits of our own training for the ministry. Theological and ecclesiastical debates in The Netherlands find their repercussions more in Australia than in Canada. There is one candid remark in this interview that should not go unheeded. Rev. Brüning remarked:

Er is met Canada niet zoveel te corresponderen, met Nederland wel. Voor sommige dingen lopen de contacten via speciale deputaten, zoals die voor het *Book of Praise* (kerkboek). Daar is vanuit Australië door onze deputaten aan meegewerkt, hoewel die medewerking niet zo erg gehonoreerd is. Onze deputaten hebben zelfs enkele liederen uit de Schrift berijmd, maar — om het zacht te zeggen — daar is niet veel positieve reactie vanuit Canada op gekomen. Dat stelt ons wel enigszins teleur. Wij gebruiken ook niet het gehele *Book of Praise*. We hebben geselecteerd. Sommige gezangen achten wij niet geschikt.

Rev. Brüning expresses his disappointment that Canada did not give much positive reaction to Australian proposals for some Scriptural paraphrases. The Australian churches do not use the whole *Book of Praise* but made a selection, because they deem some hymns not suitable for worship services. If I were a deputy for the *Book of Praise*, I could probably show in detail why certain paraphrases proposed by the Australian deputies have not been selected for the report of the Hymn Section 1979. Now I am a mere interested church member who is eager to alleviate some tension between sister churches. May I too, then, make some remarks, from the Canadian side?

The Australian churches *had* their impact. This impact is first to be seen in a negative way. If someone would compare the Hymn Section 1979 with the 1972 edition, he would undoubtedly find some hymns eliminated which the Australian deputies — and not only they! — had criticized. Rev. Brüning does not mention that there are at least two dif-

ferent editions of the Hymn Section and he does not elaborate about the differences. I, for one, regard the 1979 proposal a remarkable improvement. In this new Hymn Section we find a paraphrase of II Tim. 2: 11-13 ("O faithful is this well-known word") that according to the list of authors is due to the Free Reformed Churches of Australia. An evaluation of the impact of the Australian churches should take into consideration that the Hymn Section 1979 has several new Scriptural songs and paraphrases — mostly the fruit of the faithful labour of our brother Dr. W. Helder — among others about Deut. 32, Is. 40, Hab. 3, Phil. 2:6-11, I Tim. 3:16, Is. 53, I Peter 1:3-5 and some Scriptural summaries of the work of the Holy Spirit (Hymns 37 and 38). Only if we would compare in detail the choice of these Scriptural passages and the choice of the respective versifications, could we weigh the judgment of the Canadian deputies. To me it is clear that the Australian report has played its significant role.

The relations between Australia and Canada have their sometimes-touchy characteristics. On the one hand, the Australian churches are more dependent on the Canadian than on the Dutch, e.g. in the *Book of Praise* and for the future in the important issue of calling English-speaking ministers. On the other hand, they are more directed to the "old country," and they have the right to be so! Acknowledging that we have our independent church life as confederation of Canadian Reformed Churches, we should, nevertheless, possibly be more open to remarks and reports of our Australian sister churches. I, for one, love it — and not only for the sake of the dollar — that our sister churches down South regularly send contributions for our Theological College in Hamilton. Would it not be a good standing rule that all our committees for the *Book of Praise*, for revision of confessional and liturgical forms, for revision of Church Order, etc., send their reports also to the three Australian churches for information? We ourselves could strengthen the bonds!

Having said this, may I make a last candid remark? The Hymn Section 1972 was a *proposal*, open for revision, even as Hymn Section 1979 still is a provisional report. Was it, then, really necessary that a Synod of the Australian churches published an official decision that certain hymns of the edition 1972 were not allowed in the Australian churches? I never used the Hymn Section 1972 completely; some hymns neither I nor "my" congregation have ever sung, because I had objections identical or similar to those of the Australian deputies. Could the three Australian ministers not have done the same? Given the fact that we still simply had a *proposal* that was open for revision, the Australian churches should not have acted as if their Canadian sister churches were on a deviant way. I do not deny the legitimacy of that Australian synodical action, but I doubt its necessity and wisdom. In wisdom you reach the heart and the ear of the brothers. Let us now try to find the God-pleasing way of worship in the English-speaking world; let us try to do it *together* as much as possible, and let us do so in trust and confidence. Greetings, Australian brothers!

J. FABER

The Beauty of Reformed Liturgy¹⁰

(Conclusion)

THE CLIMAX

The conclusion of the covenantal liturgy or "worth-ship" should not be, "finished," "period," but instead form a climax in which the climax of the sermon is actualized and underlined. The two final elements, closing song (a "B") and benediction (an "A") offer full opportunity for this.

CLOSING SONG

The minister selects a Psalm or Hymn in which our worshipping the holy and gracious God is expressed to the full. As already indicated, the contents of this song should be related to the main message of the text. Personally, I often choose a New Testament "Psalm or Hymn or Spiritual Song," cf. Ephesians 5:15-20 and Colossians 3:12-17. Our praise to God lifts up our hearts to Him. Now we can face life and the world again. This closing song sings of the destruction of Christ's enemies as well as of His victory and our being "more than conquerors in Him," Romans 8.

The organist (whose name and function has not been mentioned yet) has prepared us for this final song by the prelude which he played during the offertory.

THE BENEDICTION

The service started with a blessing or salutation which "covers" the whole service.¹ The closing benediction "covers" our whole life till the next Lord's Day and is no less than the divine assertion and promise that His blessing and peace and grace and fellowship will accompany us through all our days. It is more than a pious wish or a bang with the gavel: the meeting is finished. All the elements of the whole liturgy now come to a head and are summarized in the solemn words of Numbers 6:24-26 and II Corinthians 13:14. It would be an insult to the LORD if we, during this benediction, already prepare to leave, start putting on our coat, or fumble for the cigarette for which our lungs cry. Eyes and ears and hearts and minds should be wide

open to "drink in" every single word of it.

In Enschede I had for years a group of deaf-mute people on Saturday afternoons, to bring them the message, to sing and pray with them (don't ask how!). Some of them did not attend church regularly ("we can't understand a word"); others were very faithful. One "said" once to me: "I read for myself what is announced on the board, and, if it were only for receiving the benediction, that makes my churchgoing worthwhile!" Some, with good ears and vocal cords, sometimes complain, "I got nothing out of it" ("it" being the whole worship service). What a terrible thing to say!

The LORD sends us away, loaded with His blessing. Unbelievably wonderful. That makes the worship "the greatest show (?) in town."

* * *

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Some empty spots have still to be filled up, in order to complete our simple elaboration of the glory of divine "worth-ship."

1. THE "FRAME" OF THE WORSHIP SERVICES

With "frame" we mean here that, considering the character of corporate worship, our whole life is centred around it. We have already spoken of a fitting *preparation* for attending the church of God. But what happens after the service? If a preacher, who spent all his energy in preaching the divine message, would join the crowd on the parking place, he would be reminded of the warning of our Saviour that we must be on guard that the birds do not pick up the seed that was sown. Seldom would he see little groups, heads together, discussing and sharing what they just received.

This is an evil under the sun. The men of Beroea, having heard Paul, went home and searched the Scriptures to see whether these things were true; and they were true! Even when a social hour is held, the talk seldom

centres around the sermon and the coffee-drinkers seldom centre around the preacher to ask him about his sermon.

Well, then, there is the home. The families return home. What then? Does the father (and mother) ask his children about the sermon, and answer their questions if they have any?

We must train ourselves to "multiply the sermon" by meditation, discussion, and witnessing for the Lord. How many still think of it on Monday? Should not the prayer of that minister of my youth be heard, "Father, grant that Thy children may get through to Saturday on the strength of the bread of life which they received today"?

2. PROPHECYING FROM THE ORGAN BENCH

Dr. K. Schilder used these words with reference to the well-known organist *Jan Zwart*. He did not hesitate to speak of the prophetic task of the organist. This does not mean that the organist should have an over-riding influence during the service. His task is a humble, a serving, one. Yet, it is an important one. He may enhance the whole service by his preludes and postludes and especially by accompanying the congregation. He can also do damage to it, by faulty playing or by pulling out all stops and deafening the eardrums. His choice of music may betray that he has no clue of what is going on. His excuse may be that he is taken for granted most of the time. Never did the minister talk with him. Information on what is to be sung and preached comes at the last moment, so that he cannot prepare himself for it. For correction of such a situation the minister should take the initiative because he is responsible for the course of the service. Consistories should not neglect the organist either, but enable him to improve his art and his music library. Money should, if necessary, also be invested in providing for organists for the future. Talents should be encouraged. The whole congregation will reap the benefits of such wisdom.

3. SPECIAL OCCASIONS

We did not speak of specific elements which according to Confession and Church Order belong to the worship service. We mention ordination of office-bearers, discipline and excommunication, also re-admission.

As to the place in the order of the liturgy: ordination usually takes place

after the sermon, also for the reason that the preacher may deem it fitting to deliver a special sermon, dealing with the special offices in the church. Announcements of discipline and actual excommunication may take place before or after the first prayer, i.e. of public profession of sins. God is acting in those events, and thus they belong within the context of covenantal worship.

4. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Closely related to sub 3 are the announcements. Which ones? And where do we place them? The overall principle should be that we limit the announcements to a minimum. Article 30 of the Church Order may have some bearing on this: "only ecclesiastical matters." Society secretaries sometimes "forget" to send in their information for the bulletin. Educationally speaking, the best way might be to refuse to make up for their neglect by announcement from the pulpit. But . . . Well, such announcements should then be made before the service starts. Not after; that would be too much of an anti-climax. Nearly every church has a weekly bulletin. That is the place for all such information. Even meetings organized by the consistory can be published in the bulletin. People can read, can they not? And if they have but a little interest in church matters, they will do so. Helping the lazy ones makes them only more lazy. But decisive is that such announcements do not belong in the covenantal "back-and-forth" of the liturgy.

With approbation by the congregation of appointed office-bearers, of attestations, and of receiving into the communion of saints it is a different matter. Such announcements might find their proper place before the offertory, except when they concern "guests" to the holy supper; that should be done before the communion starts. There is no strict rule; there should be some freedom for a minister to find the proper moment for bans and similar announcements.

As to attestations, incoming and outgoing, I would speak a word for a less formal way of doing things. Why not welcome a newly-arrived family with some Christian words, even ask them to rise so that everyone knows who they are; why not wish a departing family Godspeed to their new home and home-church? Is that not a matter of course within the communion of saints?

5. MORE PARTICIPATION?

We conclude this series with this question. It was already asked at the start, but the answer was postponed in the hope that the discussion of Reformed Liturgy would be the answer. You know the question, the desire; the accusation that our services are too much a "one-man show."

Our answer to such accusation is that each church-goer should intensively participate in every part. In the singing, of course. Sing with heart and mouth! Know what you are singing and rejoice in it. It may happen that the greatest comfort, the strongest edification, will be your share just by having sung certain psalms and hymns. Tears may have filled your eyes; be not ashamed of them! Then, pray with the minister because he prays on behalf of you and for you. And listen, listen, listen! When the bread of life is distributed, you have to chew it, to digest it, to let it become part of you. Hearing the Word in the right manner is not much easier than preaching it! If there is such a participating attitude, no need will be felt for more participation.

The only use for a choir I would see is in supporting congregational singing. From my youth I remember that choirs trained themselves mostly in good Psalm-singing, and you could notice that in church! Now, with several new tunes, a choir could perform some *diakonia* or service here. It would not even be necessary to sit together as a choir in church. Spread throughout the congregation, their support will be noticeable.

I myself (this is personal) see some opportunities for more participation in the second service, where the Catechism is preached. Notwithstanding denial, I maintain that there is a difference between the first and the second sermon. In the first sermon (the expression is, again, from the *Book of Praise!*) the minister can say, "Thus says the LORD . . ." and then announce his theme. In the second sermon he will, of course, also be able to say that, but he will, according to the style of the Catechism, often introduce his theme by, "thus we confess in accordance with the Scriptures . . ."

I do not defend a "more informal" p.m. service, but I do see a possibility that the service be introduced by more singing; by asking the congregation what they would like to sing.

I do *not* see occasion for discussion of the Catechism-teaching in the public service. That can be done during

a social hour, as some smaller congregations regularly have it. And, of course, there is always free access to the minister.

Finally, an elder or some other member could be asked to lead in closing prayer. But not all elders are such "leaders" as depicted in *The Elders' Handbook*, by Berkhoff & De Koster, 1979.

These remarks may blow up some dust. Okay then, let's not get excited about these personal ideas, but let's all get excited about the beauty of Reformed Liturgy.

To come back to that "free access to the minister," a wise minister (and do we not readily accept that they all are?) will be happy to hear reactions; to get suggestions, requests, to further elaborate in a future sermon on a doctrinal matter that was not fully understood. He will be thankful for requests and wishes regarding texts, singing, praying. He is "a servant of servants" and he needs all the loving support he can get to better conduct the awe-inspiring covenantal communion with our God and Father, through Jesus Christ, in the Holy Spirit, in the church of God, in the courts of the LORD of hosts.

* * *

G. VANDOOREN

'During my holidays I had the rare privilege of listening to three of my (younger) colleagues. It struck me that at this "blessing or salutation" they did not lift up both hands to bless, but only showed the palm of one hand. I did not like that at all and am wondering where it comes from. Have they been taught to do so at the College? What is the reason for that difference? What rationale could be behind it? Could Rev. VanDooren elaborate on this point? I talked to several Church members who also thought it to be strange.

vO



Church News

Declined:
the call to the church at Edmonton, Alberta:

REV. J. GEERTSEMA
of Chatham, Ontario.

press review

A BREAK OVERDUE

That is the title of an article in *The Outlook* of July 1980, written by the Rev. H. Vander Kam. We read:

"Appalling Decisions"

The Banner of April 25, 1980 contained an excellent and informative guest editorial by Rev. W. Haverkamp entitled: "The Dutch Decisions Regarding Homosexuals." The writer speaks of "appalling decisions" which the Gereformeerde Kerken of the Netherlands have taken concerning the matter of homosexuals and the failure of this denomination to consult with others, with whom they stand in close ecclesiastical fellowship, about this matter. He concludes that "the time has come to take steps to sever the existing relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands." He does not advocate this severing of relations without a deep sense of grief. His roots were there. It was the church in which he was baptized. One gets the feeling that his proposal was wrong from his heart. But, the "appalling decisions" taken by this church permit no other conclusion.

A CHURCH NO LONGER REFORMED

The decisions of the GKN regarding homosexuals is, however, only one instance in a long list of difficulties which we have in our relation to them. There is the view of Scripture held by many of their scholars. There are the questions regarding creation, the resurrection and the atonement. There has been a lack of discipline of those who contradict the confessions we hold in common. There is the membership in the World Council, etc. One can indeed weep when he sees how this church has lost its Reformed character and that it is no longer a vital force in the lives of many of its members.

"The questions regarding creation, the resurrection and the atonement" concern teachings of, in particular, Kuitert and Wiersinga, professor and student pastor, respectively, in the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKN). The reader knows that Prof. Kuitert denies, e.g., the historicity of Genesis and many other parts of the Bible, and also has a deviating view about the resurrection. And Wiersinga has become known for his apostate views in connection with the death of our Lord, in fact denying the atonement character of that death as we confess it. However, in both cases, and in so many

others, the root of their deviations and false doctrines is a totally un-Reformed and unbiblical view of the Scriptures: for them the Bible is not the infallible and inerrant Word of God, but a book with (errant) human religious views from Israelites and from the early congregation. And the decision about practicing homosexuals who are yet to be admitted to the table of the Lord and to the offices in the churches (the GKN) is nothing more than a consequence of that root evil: the unbiblical view of the Scriptures.

Rev. Haverkamp says that with the decision about homosexuality the time has come for severing the ties. And Rev. Vander Kam agrees. But should we not come to such a conclusion when the root of all the other evils is present, namely, a different, un-Reformed view of the Scriptures, which often — and also by the synod of the Christian Reformed Church in connection with the Verhey-case — is so nicely called "a different way of interpreting the Scriptures," so that they pretend it is not a matter of the Reformed or un-Reformed confession regarding the Bible, but a matter of two different (but allowable) interpretations. And precisely because this basically liberal view of the Bible is found not only in the synodical GKN but also in the Christian Reformed Church, I doubt very much that the ties will be severed by the CRC.

By the way, also at the RES meeting last month in Nimes the same was seen: strong protest against the decision regarding homosexuality in the GKN, but weakness with respect to the other points: regarding Kuitert, Wiersinga, and membership of the World Council of Churches.

Nevertheless, I am glad with such reactions, and with what Vander Kam writes further:

CONSIDER THE HISTORY

It is high time that we consider the history which lies behind the present state of affairs in this church so that we will also be able to understand why we cannot persuade the Vrijgemaakte Kerken in the Netherlands and the Canadian Reformed Churches to enter into closer fellowship with us unless we terminate our fellowship

with the GKN. These churches left the GKN in 1944. This happened, therefore, while the Second World War was still raging in Europe and Holland was still conquered territory. We did not know what had taken place until after the war was ended. In 1946 the First Reformed Ecumenical Synod met in Grand Rapids. Prof. Aalders, of the Free University, informed the RES of the things which had happened in the years 1942-1944 which led to the split of the church. The other side was not heard! The Christian Reformed Church simply continued its former relations with the GKN while those who had left the GKN maintained that they were the true continuation of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland.

Rev. Vander Kam could also have mentioned that from the side of our people, and of the church at Neerlandia, at the time still within the Christian Reformed Church, many an urgent



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request was made to synods of the CRC to examine the matter; but that these requests were not accepted. I may refer the reader to Rev. W.W.J. VanOene's book, *Inheritance Preserved*.

In what follows in his article the Rev. Vander Kam tells the readers of *The Outlook* about the history around Prof. K. Schilder. First attention is paid to *New Leaders After 1920*. After the death of Kuyper and Bavinck

... there almost seemed to be the feeling that the last word had been said when Bavinck's great work [*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* (Reformed Dogmatics), J.G.] had been published. This led to a certain amount of scholasticism in the church.

And

During the 1920s there were two notable heresy trials in the church. The first one was the case of Dr. Netelenbos and dealt with the historicity of the events recorded in Genesis, etc. The second dealt with the view of Dr. Geelkerken who was not assured of the historicity of the events recorded in Genesis 3. In both of these cases the Synod took a very firm stand and both these brethren were deposed.

Then, under the heading *Enter Dr. Schilder* we read:

Dr. Geelkerken has been deposed in 1926. Dr. V. Hepp was the editor-in-chief of *De Reformatie* and Dr. K. Schilder was one of the associate editors. In 1929 Dr. Hepp began to work on a "Calvinistenbond." This was to be an organization for Calvinists from various countries. Dr. Geelkerken was asked to join and to take a leading part in this organization. Schilder objected that a person whose Reformed position had been condemned by the Synod could not be recognized as a Calvinist. By far the larger part of the religious press sided with Schilder. The debate became so heated that Dr. Hepp resigned as editor of "De Reformatie."

In what continues we read that K. Schilder went to Germany to finish his theological studies, and that he was appointed by the synod of 1933 as professor in the Dogmatological department in Kampen; that, however, the attacks from the side of Dr. Hepp and others against Schilder continued. We also read that Schilder wrote many articles of warning against the Barthian theology that came up in those years; also against the mystical strain in the *Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken*: as well as against the National Socialism of Hitler in Germany and in The Netherlands.

What follows then, I will quote completely. It is and should be of interest also for us as older ones that we say: yes, that is what happened, and

for us as younger ones who did and do know something about the history, but may find some new points. We read:

Opposition to Schilder

But, although he had awakened the church as no one had done for many years, the opposition was not lacking. Various writers found fault with the sharpness of his polemics. Envy also was not lacking. Whereas the Free University had played the leading role for many years, some of its leaders were beginning to see that the influence of Kampen, and especially its dogmatician, was being felt throughout the church and that Schilder had many disciples. His students realized the greatness of this man and the preaching gave evidence of more life. The Scriptures were being opened as they had not been for some time. Schilder advocated the right of Kampen to give graduate degrees and the men of the Free University opposed it with all their might.

The Synod of 1936 was a very important one. For one thing, it required the churches to deal disciplinarily with those who belonged to the National Socialist Party. Another matter which came up at this Synod, though it did not come from a minor assembly and was therefore really not legally before Synod, was the matter of polemics and "Differences of Opinion" which became "Doctrinal Differences." This matter was simply brought up by two delegates to this Synod. Amazingly, the Synod decided to go into the matter and finally appointed a committee to study various doctrinal issues which were under discussion in the press. Both Schilder and Hepp were members of this committee. While the Synod was still in session, Dr. Hepp published the first of a series of brochures dealing with "Dreigende Deformatie" (Threatening Deformation.) In these brochures he did not mention names nor cite pages of works he was quoting although everyone knew who were the objects of his attacks. He attacked Vollenhoven and De Graaf and Schilder, among others. This manner of procedure on his part made it virtually impossible for the committee to do its work. Dr. S. Greijdanus resigned from the committee because of Hepp's action. Drs. Vollenhoven and Schilder did not resign, but they did not meet with the committee the last two years. The unity was broken.

During the years after 1936 Schilder continued to write as he had done earlier. Not only Dr. Hepp, but also Dr. H.H. Kuyper attacked him again and again. Twice he wrote an "open letter" to Dr. Kuyper. He warned against the peril of Nazism and unmasked Dr. Vande Vaart Smit, a minister in the GKN who had become the director of the Nazi Press Bureau in Holland. He was untiring in showing the dangers of the Barthian Theology and the glories of the Reformed faith.

In 1938 Dr. M. Bouwman wrote a doc-

toral dissertation under the guidance of Prof. H.H. Kuyper in which he advocated a disciplinary power to the major assemblies which they had never had before in Reformed Church Government. Prof. S. Greijdanus wrote several articles against this position. This dissertation is important because it would be used a few years later.

Late in the year 1938 Schilder was invited to come to the United States and lecture and preach in various places. The then editor of *The Banner* wrote that he thought it would be better if he did not come! This was printed in several papers in the Netherlands, e.g., *De Heraut*, the paper of H.H. Kuyper. The tensions in the Netherlands were becoming very strong. Nevertheless, Schilder came and received a marvelous welcome throughout this country and people stood in awe of his brilliance.

When the Synod of 1938 met the war had broken out in Europe. In May, 1940, the Netherlands was conquered within the space of five days. The editorials written by Schilder after the occupation of the country must rank with some of the most courageous articles which have ever been written. In August of 1940 he was arrested and placed in a concentration camp in the Netherlands. His paper, *De Reformatie* was completely destroyed. *De Heraut*, under the editorship of H.H. Kuyper was allowed to be published because it was friendly to the Germans. Schilder remained in prison until December 1940 and was then forbidden to write. Several times during the war he was almost arrested but he stayed in hiding.

Mass Depositions

During the war, 1944, while Schilder was not able to defend himself, the Synod of 1942!!!, which was still meeting in 1944, first suspended him and three months later deposed him as a minister and professor of theology. On what grounds? On none of the points of doctrine given to the committee in 1936 for study! Rather, on the ground of his refusal to subscribe to the doctrine of Assumed Regeneration! This was one of the points adopted by the Synod of the GKN in 1905. It belongs to the Conclusions of Utrecht which were a compromise to bring the people of the Afscheiding and Doleantie together. This one point was now elevated to the status of a creedal statement which he had to sign! He, of course, refused stating that he was only called to sign the Confessions. Dr. Berkouwer was president of this Synod. Although Schilder had a great respect for the ability of Berkouwer, he never let him forget that his name was on the notification of Schilder's deposition.

Dr. Greijdanus, who had already retired because of age, was also deposed by this Synod. A candidate would not sign and he was refused ordination. When another church called him and ordained him, he, together with the whole congregation

were expelled from the denomination. In one place fifty office bearers were deposed! Hundreds of office bearers, ministers, elders and deacons were deposed. Almost one hundred thousand (100,000) people left to follow those who had liberated themselves from this tyranny. It was a much larger group which left the GKN than the group who had left the State Church in either 1834 or 1886!

It has been shown that there is a difference between the doctrinal statements of 1905, meant to be a compromise, indeed, and those of 1942 and following years. What in 1905 was meant as a compromise and was weakened by other statements, was made binding doctrine in 1942 and following years.

I have one other critical remark. Although I do not deny that what we read in this article is true — and it is true — nevertheless the emphasis is too much placed on the person of Prof. Schilder and his opponents. The Liberation in this way becomes too much a matter of persons; in particular, the person of Schilder.

But let me quote also the rest of the article:

The Liberated Churches

A "new" denomination was formed called "De Vrijgemaakte Kerk," "De Gereformeerde Kerk Onderhoudende Art. 31" and, simply, "De Gereformeerde Kerken" because they considered themselves the continuation of the historic Gereformeerde Kerken. The Theological School at Kampen was continued. Dr. Greijdanus came out of retirement to teach New Testament again. At their first Synod they appointed three new professors, namely, Holwerda, Veenhof and Deddens.

It became clear later that the ground used for deposing Schilder was not so important to the GKN. Two years later much of it was taken back, but it had served the purpose! H.H. Kuyper was restored to honor by a later Synod posthumously even though he had been friendly to the Germans during their oppressive rule in Holland. Schilder, however, had no place in the GKN. Later history has shown that the decline of the GKN can be traced to 1944.

Out Inter-Church Relations: Who Are Our Relatives?

The CRC continued its relationship to the GKN. In fact, when Schilder again came to the U.S. in 1947, the denomination was warned by the "Synodical Committee" not to invite him to preach or speak in our churches! Today the Synodalen (GKN) meet for worship with the Hervormden and Catholics! But Schilder, whose Reformed character was never questioned, had no place in those churches!

Do we wonder why the Vrijgemaakten and the Canadian Reformed Churches ask

us to terminate our fellowship with the GKN before they will have fellowship with us? With which church should we stand in ecclesiastical fellowship? "The time has come to take steps to sever the existing relationship with the Gereformeerde Kerken in the Netherlands" (*The Banner* 4-25-80). These steps should have been taken long ago.

And that is what, from our side, was said to the Christian Reformed Church again also in our last Appeal, as can be

seen in the *Acts of Synod 1977* of Coaldale as an appendix.

It is my sincere hope that the day may come that those who want to be and to remain really Reformed in the Christian Reformed Church, and we, may be united in one church. Articles like this may work in that direction under the blessing of the LORD.

J. GEERTSEMA



Books

P. Nijkamp, HERFSTTIJ DER VOORUIT-GANG, De Vuurbaak, Groningen, 1980, 266 pp., DF1. 23, 59.

For the reader of Dutch, this is a very interesting and timely book that gives a sound Christian perspective on many economic and political issues of the day. The book is composed of ten more or less independent chapters, each dealing with a specific area of concern in modern economic life. Nijkamp, professor of regional economics at the Free University in Amsterdam and a member of the Reformed Church (Lib.) in Holland discusses various topics in a clear and balanced way. The problems of technology, environment and milieu, foreign aid and labour relations are all thoroughly treated. The second chapter also presents a critique of Bob Goudzwaard's *Capitalism and Progress*, recently published in Canada by Wedge Publishing Foundation.

On the whole this is a very good book, and I often found myself agreeing with the author. One point, however, was questionable to me, and I mention it here because it recurs rather frequently in the book: Nijkamp makes quite a bit of the notion of "renewal", referring to such passages as Rom. 12, Col. 3, Eph. 4, and so on. Nijkamp is to be credited for being much more explicit than Goudzwaard in stating that true conversion to God can be the only lasting foundation to social renewal. He clearly points the reader to the norms of the covenant, and he gives more Scriptural depth to the notion of normed living than Goudzwaard does. Nij-

kamp, however, only mentions God's judgments (including His economic judgments) at the end of the book, and not in any great detail. Many of the world's economic ills are attributed to humanistic and egocentric man, but are not typified simultaneously as divine judgments. In history the LORD so often brings renewal *through and in* judgment. That is the way of the covenant. Giving more attention to that aspect of the covenant would have made the book more convincing and more realistic. As it is, I find some of Nijkamp's proposals for reform so far removed from the realm of possibility — given the world situation today — that they hardly appear realistic. I do not even think his proposals would win support in any wing of the Christian Democratic Party in The Netherlands.

On the other hand, Nijkamp makes some very interesting and far-reaching proposals regarding the economic life of the Church in this time. Some of them are practical and very worthwhile. That alone makes the book worth reading.

J. DeJong

OUR COVER

Highway 3, near Osoyoos. (Photo Courtesy B.C. Government.)

FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of *Clarion* was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on Saturday, August 30, 1980.

Our Reformed Response to the Secular Labour Unions⁶

(Conclusion)

10. AUTHORITY, RIGHTS, AND DUTIES IN THE LABOUR MARKET

a) *The Authority of the Bosses (Management)*

It is not really necessary for a Christian to be told that God has supreme and total authority, but it may be that a Christian needs to be reminded that all other authority rests on this supreme authority. We need only look at Romans 13:1 to corroborate this. "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God" (NIV). So then, the Lord requires submission from everyone who is under authority since He is the author of, and stands behind all those who have received, this authority.

Who has received this authority from God? To begin with, every parent. The family is the most basic of all authority structures in society. (Teachers are included in the parental authority structure). There is the authority given to the church in the persons of the duly ordained Pastors, Elders, and Deacons (The Church Council). This government is of a spiritual nature. Then there is the authority of civil government; be it in the form of emperors, kings, tyrants, or democratically-elected leaders. Finally, there is the authority of the bosses over the servants or slaves. That the bosses have real authority, and that serving and obeying them is equated with service and obedience to the Lord, can be clearly seen from passages such as Colossians 3:22ff., Titus 3:9ff., and I Peter 2:18ff. Some may object and point out that in these passages most translations speak of "slaves." This is true. The Greek word *doulos* can be translated as servant, but when used in relation to *despotes* (boss or master), it is often meant as slave. However, there is also another word which should be translated as servant (*oiketees*) or as hired worker. This is also used in relation to *despotes* and *kurios* (boss, master, or lord). Cf. I Peter 2:18ff., Luke 16:13, etc.

In brief, it makes little or no difference whether there is a slave-master

relationship or a servant master (hired-hand/boss) relationship, for both require service and obedience on the part of the person doing the work, to the one for whom the work is being done.

b) *The Rights of the Workers*

When, in our modern situation, a worker agrees voluntarily to indenture him or herself to a boss (or company) for a definite wage rate and time, as well as for a certain number of hours per week, he/she owes the boss obedient service "as to the Lord" (Col. 3:22ff). This indenture may be broken by the boss when the employee does not hold up his end of the bargain (laziness, incompetence, etc.), or by the employee when the boss breaks the working agreement, or when it is not renewed with a decent wage and benefit package. After all, "the labourer is worthy of his wages," cf. Luke 10:7. When a boss, then, will not pay a fair wage rate, a worker is free to leave and seek employment with someone else. Keep in mind that this is then the righteous action of an individual without any collusion or connivance with other workers, such as, a strike action. If other workers feel the same way, the boss would soon have no one left to work for him. This is also the original idea of the Free Enterprise system. You will understand that this would leave no room for any kind of "featherbedding," but would ensure that the hardest and most capable workers would always receive premium rates, made possible by their productivity. If our society were to go back to this original ideal, it would mean greater pride in workmanship and incentive to personal productivity, and as net result, it would mean greater prosperity for worker, management, and country.

(A true unionist would howl in protest at this, since this is essentially a rejection of the principle of class-struggle and a return to sanity for both worker and boss.) Much more could be said about the labour principle of the Free Enterprise system and about the *false* union claims of their being primarily responsible for the present improved lot of the workers, but let this suffice for now.

c) *Public Theft*

So far we have only looked at the strike weapon as being a legalized revolt against the God-given authority of the boss. However, we should keep in mind that even though this is condoned by the laws of our country, it is nevertheless contrary to God's Law. We should also keep in mind that to withdraw one's services when a contract or agreement is not honoured or when a fair wage is refused, is as much a worker's right as offering his services for hire. However, he has no right to prevent others from offering their services for terms rejected by himself. If workers have the freedom not to work, they should also have the same freedom to work. "But," says the unionist, "if this happens someone else will be taking my job." Not true. It is one's job only as long as one continues to submit to the boss (company). When this is terminated, one no longer has a job to speak of, and then it is time to look for another. This also means that then one has no right either to prevent others from working at the job one has freely vacated. To do so anyway constitutes stealing.

That's right, stealing from the boss or company when, as a result of picket activity, sympathy strikes, etc., they are unable to do business and as a consequence, lose money (often millions). It is also stealing from the willing workers who are then unable to earn their livelihood. To press this point home, we need only think of what we confess about the eighth commandment in Lord's Day 42 of the Heidelberg Catechism: "That I further my neighbour's profit wherever I can or may, deal with him as I would have others deal with me, and labour faithfully that I may be able to relieve the needy." This is clear, Christian language and the complete anti-thesis of the anti-Christian union propaganda and practices.

d) *Guilty by Association (Membership or Corporate Responsibility)*

Does this mean that only those union members who vote in favour of a strike are guilty of anti-Christian conduct (i.e., a sin against the fifth and eighth commandments)? No, it does not. Individual union members may quit, but do not strike. The whole brotherhood strikes and whether one likes it or not, every member of such a brotherhood is equally guilty so long as they remain a member. It then also stands to reason that as long as they

support such a union, either actively, or passively via only paying their dues and by not attending the membership meetings, they are members of a body (brotherhood) and equally responsible for all its actions. (E.g., membership in a church also makes one corporately responsible for all the decisions and actions of the local church as well as for the confederation (“denomination”) with which it is united; i.e., decisions and actions of all its major assemblies.) As such, these people simply have no part in Christ when they knowingly continue to support such an anti-Christian organization. Church membership or citizenship in the kingdom of heaven is only possible for those who actively serve the one Master, Jesus Christ. He says: “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Mammon (money or riches)” (Matthew 6:24). In other words, the labourer’s allegiance must be either to the brotherhood of Jesus Christ or to the brotherhood of darkness, where God’s covenant Law is ignored. To the Church at Laodicea He wrote: “I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other! So, because you are lukewarm — neither hot nor cold — I am about to spit [lit. vomit] you out of my mouth” (Revelation 3:15-16). We could say that to be a member of one of the labour unions affiliated with the AFL-CIO or CLC, while at the same time being so-called against its principles and/or practices, is nothing but an attempt to appease two masters; and as such one is lukewarm, i.e., sickening to both masters. The only difference is that the one will only despise him temporally whereas the other will despise and reject him both temporally and eternally.

11. THE COERCIVE METHODS OF THE MODERN LABOUR MOVEMENT TO MAINTAIN AND ASSURE ITS GROWTH

a) *Closed and Open Union Shops (Check-off)*

One of the modern union’s movements most coercive and vicious methods of seeking or maintaining power over the workers is the “closed” or “union shop.” The “closed shop” is a business which employs only union members, and the “union shop” is a business which can hire anyone, union or non-union members. But these new employees must then join the union

within a certain period of time, or else pay the equivalent in union dues while remaining a non-member.

In the U.S.A. there are at present nineteen states which have passed legislation banning the “closed” or “union shops.” They have accepted the so-called “right to work laws.” These laws guarantee a person’s right to obtain employment without joining or supporting a union. But alas, such laws have not been passed by any of the Canadian provinces, even though the right to freedom of employment has been adopted by the United Nation’s General Assembly on December 10, 1948. This right is spelled out very specifically in the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”:

Art. 20 (2) “No one may be compelled to belong to an association” and Art. 23 (1) states “Everyone has the right to work, to freedom of employment . . .” This right is also guaranteed in the Canadian Bill of Rights.

b) *Join or Starve*

In Canada the “closed shop” is practised by practically all the trade unions, i.e., as a tradesman you can either join the union of your trade or starve as far as the union is concerned. We said before that this method of seeking to have power over the workers is viciously coercive, and this is the plain truth. These unions have absolutely no sympathy for those who for conscience reasons simply cannot join them. In this they reveal the evil of supporting the Marxist principles of Class Struggle. Those who refuse to join the right class are expendable.

c) *Pay or Starve*

Closely connected with the “closed shop” is the “union shop.” This principle is employed by most unionized industries. In many of these industries the so-called “Rand Formula” (the Rand Formula derives its name from the 1946 ruling by Mr. Justice C. Rand, who imposed a union check-off on the Ford Motor Company after a lengthy strike by the UAW. This Formula has become a standard feature in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Quebec. At present the Ontario government is also considering legislation (Bill 89) which would make the deduction of union dues an automatic feature for every company which has been unionized) is used. This means that a person technically does not need to join the union which has received the bargaining rights in the place where

he works, but must pay the regular union dues, i.e. he is forced to pay “financial tribute” (check-off) to a union he did not choose. If the popular statement that “power over a man’s substance is power over his will” is as true as I think it is, then man’s personal freedom is as effectively infringed upon under the “Rand Formula,” etc., as if he had been forced to join the union in a “closed shop.” The distinction is then only a matter of empty semantics’ i.e., a distinction, but no essential difference. The same principle applies with the same result, i.e., the closed shop says “join or starve” and the union shop says “pay or starve.”

d) *The Distinction Between Voluntary Dues and Union Check-off*

However, there is a difference between voluntarily joining a union in a closed shop (paying dues voluntarily in a union shop situation), and being forced to pay union dues in a union shop situation. To voluntarily join or support an anti-Christian labour union is equivalent to voluntarily cutting oneself off from the Brotherhood of Christ and joining the brotherhood of Satan. Such people have taken their stand over against Christ and all who are His brothers and sisters. They have no part in the Kingdom of God unless they repent.

On the other hand, when one is subjected to a “Rand Formula,” etc. (union check-off), this is normally done contrary to one’s will. It could be argued that one should not work at places where there is a union shop where one will be forced to contribute to an organization dedicated to a struggle against Christ (we will come back to this later), but let us for the moment think of a situation where a person has been employed for some time already, and where, via a majority vote of the workers, a union gains the bargaining rights. In most cases, this results in the application of something like the “Rand Formula.” Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that for those who refuse to join the anti-Christian union, their monthly dues are not a contribution (they did not give their assent) but a tribute exacted by law. You might even call this legalized theft, since it has been sanctioned by our legislators. The amount equivalent to the union dues is simply deducted from the wages of the non-union members in the same way as the deductions for income tax, C.P.P., and U.I. You could

Labour Unions — Cont. on page 415.

Grad 1980

Langley Christian High School

On June 25, 1980, at 6:30 p.m. we were treated to a dinner prepared by the Grade 11 students on the occasion of the Grade 12 *Graduation Ceremony*. "The Class of 1980" — the first Grade 12 Graduation of our schools in the Fraser Valley. The graduation was attended first of all by the Grads and their escorts, as well as their parents, teachers, school board, and staff.

This was the informal part of the evening, and after dinner the students had their "Roasting" of the teachers — a humorous Grad ceremony where the principal was awarded his own diploma by the students. This presentation was received with much pleasure by us. Other teachers took their turns and received similar gifts. By then the dinner was over, and more serious events were to follow upstairs in the church building.

Upstairs we received our official program. The evening began at 8:00 p.m. There was a lot of interest and the building was almost full. With Mr. S. VanderPloeg at the organ, the Processional took place. The Graduates were seated in the "Elders Bench," and the Principal, Mr. Blom, opened with the reading of Isaiah 40:31 and led us in prayer and thanksgiving.

Mr. Blom talked about the text and how it applies to the Graduates. "But they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."

His speech aimed at the future of the Grads. It gave them a message to walk in the ways of our Lord in their future endeavours, so they can run for the Lord and not be weary.

Grades 11 and 10 entertained us with the singing of a Welsh Hymn.

The Class Historian, Norene deWit, was next on the pulpit. She started out with the first day in Grade 1 and ended with the final day in Grade 12 — from the William of Orange School to the Langley Christian High School. An event to remember. After the singing of Psalm 149:1, 2, by us all, we had a guest speaker well-known to us all. Representing the parents, Mr. Peter VanderPol, addressed the Grad-

uates. "Don't lead a life of selfishness but walk in the Lord's ways and serve Him first."

Bill Sellers was next on the agenda, and, as the Valedictorian, spoke to us on behalf of all the Grads. He thanked our Lord for the blessings of Christian Education received by them. Then, also the teachers and parents were mentioned for their efforts and hard work to provide them with their education.

Another song by the Grade 10 and 11 students and then the Chairman of the School Board, Mr. Hendriks mounted the pulpit. His appearance was a surprise since his name was not on our program. But he needed no introduction. Mr. Hendriks is an accountant, and this was very evident in his speech about debits and credits, saying that this Graduation of Grade

12, where fourteen students graduated, put his books in the black. All the Debits of hard work by the School Board, parents, and teachers were paid for by this ceremony.

We then moved on to the Grad Certificate Awards, where each pupil was congratulated by the Principal and the Chairman of the Board.

The Graduates, in turn, presented the High School with a Canadian flag for the new school building in Langley.

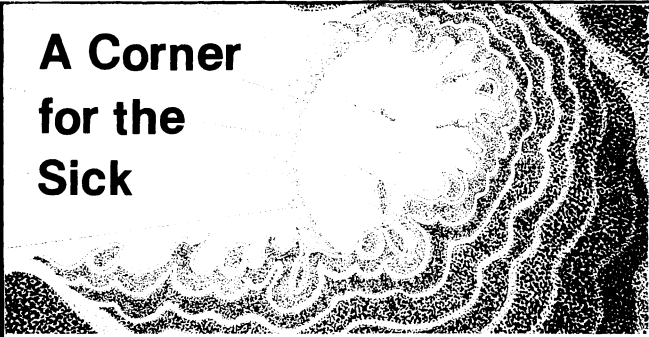
We then sang Hymn 33:1, 3, standing, and Rev. VanderBoom closed with us in prayer.

A beautiful evening indeed. And on the way home I reflected on how from the first grade to Grade 12 the Lord had guided these students to Graduates. It is a blessing we do not realize enough. As parents we have sacrificed for this, but we have not suffered for it. Indeed, if we look back, we have received a hundred-fold of what we gave, in spite of our shortcomings and sometimes grumbling and opposition. It is the Lord Who used us for His end. We are but tools in His hands. And we pray the Lord that we may be worthy to be used by Him as His tools.



Principal: Mr. P. Blom (left front); Vice-Principal: Mr. J. vanLaar (right front); Students (first row starting at left): Emily Flokstra, Joanne Vanderzwan, Joyce Welfing. Second row starting at left: Wieke Nap, Mary van Woudenberg, Norma vanderPol, Ruth Schoen, Jack Aikema. Third row starting at left: Martin Onderwater, Earl Schouten, Nancy Boes, Norene deWit, William Selles, Bill Selles.

A Corner for the Sick



But those who are wise shall understand.

Daniel 12:10

Who are meant by those wise people? The text gives us to understand that it is the believers, who, after hearing and obeying God's commandments, purify themselves, make themselves white, and are refined. They ARE wise, because they live in obedience to God's will.

In contrast, it is mentioned that the wicked shall do wickedly and none of the wicked shall understand. What will they not be able to understand?

Daniel is given to understand that they will be things concerning the future. He has to seal the words until the appropriate time.

In Revelation 22 we may read that John is commanded NOT to seal up the words of the prophecy, for the time is near. We may also read that those who wash their robes are called blessed. It means, that those who do God's will and obey His commandments will have happiness conferred upon them. They shall understand! But the wicked, who refuse to be converted, who reject the Word of Life, will not know the joy of a truly repentant heart. They will remain in darkness.

"But that others who are called by the gospel . . . are converted is not to be ascribed to the proper exercise of free will; . . . but it must be wholly ascribed to God, who, as He has chosen His own from eternity in Christ, so He calls them effectually in time, confers upon them faith and repentance, rescues them from the power of darkness, and translates them into the kingdom of His own Son . . ."

Article 10, Chapter III-IV
Canons of Dort

The Legend of the Spider and the Silken Strand Held in God's Hand

There's an old Danish Legend
with a lesson for us all
Of an ambitious spider
and his rise and his fall,
Who wove his sheer web
with intricate care
As it hung suspended
somewhere in midair,
Then in soft, idle luxury
he feasted each day
On the small, foolish insects
he enticed as his prey,
Growing ever more arrogant
and smug all the while
He lived like a "King"

in self-satisfied style —
And gazing one day
at the sheer strand suspended,
He said, "I don't need this,"
so he recklessly rended
The strand that had held
his web in its place
And with sudden swiftness
the web crumpled in space —
And that was the end
of the spider who grew
So arrogantly proud
that he no longer knew
That it was the strand
that reached down from above

Like the chord of God's grace
and His infinite love
That links our lives
to the great unknown,
For man cannot live
or exist on his own —
And this old legend
with simplicity told
Is as moral as true
as the legend is old —
Don't sever the "lifeline"
that links you to
THE FATHER IN HEAVEN
WHO CARES FOR YOU.
Helen Steiner Rice from *Someone Cares*

The wicked will not be able to understand, because the words of Life are foolishness to them. "For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God," I Corinthians 1:18. Paul writes to the Corinthians (ch. 2:8, 10), "But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glorification. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, 'What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love Him, God has revealed to us through the Spirit.'" And he writes to the Ephesians, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (2:8).

"God, Who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ . . . that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus" (2:4, 5, 7). Paul prayed that God would grant them the power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge. To know CHRIST is wisdom and understanding!

We have received a request for Paul Dieleman. Paul hopes to celebrate his 11th birthday on September 29th. Paul is mentally handicapped, but has a great feeling for music. He loves to play the piano. He also likes animals. Shall we spread many rays of sunshine his way, brothers and sisters? His address is:

PAUL DIELEMAN
307 Connaught Avenue,
Willowdale, Ontario M2R 2M1

Send your requests to:

Mrs. J.K. Riemersma
380 St. Andrew Street E.,
Fergus, Ontario N1M 1R1



News items are published with a view to their importance for the Reformed Churches. Selection of an item does not necessarily imply agreement with its contents.

BUDAPEST

The Hungarian State Printing Company in Budapest will publish a facsimile edition of the Karoly Bible. This Bible, product of the Reformed Hungarian theologian Gaspar Karoly appeared in print for the first time in 1590.

The 20,000 copies have already been sold, even before they are printed. By means of this new printing the Hungarian State Printing Company wishes to make the original text of the best-known Hungarian Bible edition accessible for study purposes.

The Karoly Bible — which has been revised several times in the course of the years is — still in use with a number of Hungarian Churches.

With consent of the government the Hungarian Bible Society printed approximately 320,000 Karoly Bibles during the last twenty years. Since 1975 there exists in Hungary also a Bible in the colloquial speech, of which some 80,000 copies have been issued to date. (ND)

NIMES, FRANCE (RES NE)

The irenic tone that had prevailed at the RES Nimes 1980 throughout nearly three weeks of meeting changed when on the last full day of discussions the issue of homosexuality came up for debate. A number of member churches had become upset that the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (GKN) had taken a decision on homosexuality that ran counter to the traditional position. Three churches had even suggested that unless this issue was settled, their continued membership in the

Circumspection...

DANCING

I had a particularly difficult time the other day trying to convince a young friend of mine that Christians and dancing simply do not mix. Admittedly, the young man put up a magnificent defence of the dance, concluding that our people take a prudishly hypocritical attitude towards legitimate cultural expressions. "Why, we are not even allowed to square-dance!" he exclaimed, adding that square-dancing is merely an innocent form of folklore.

All innocence, indeed. My young friend explained that the Bible records dancing without at all condemning it. Miriam and the women of Israel danced exuberantly after Israel crossed through the Red Sea (Exodus 15:20). King David, as you know, "leaped and danced" before the LORD with all his might when the ark was brought to Jerusalem (II Samuel 6:14ff). And his wife, Michal, who despised the frantic antics of this disco-king, was punished with childlessness. Besides, the Psalms even encourage such activity, "Let them praise His Name with dancing . . ." (Psalm 149:3). And what have we done? We have dulled our worship services to the point where the monotonous drone of the preacher's voice lulls many a parishioner into tranquil slumber. Apparently my young friend wasn't so impressed with the efforts of our local pastor either.

Now I am not much of a Bible scholar, but I am quite sure that this "dancing" of which the Scriptures indeed speak, can hardly be compared to what we today understand by the same word. Israel's "dancing" was rather a kind of "processional" to the temple on days of feast and joyous thanksgiving, e.g., Psalm 68:24, 25, "Thy solemn processions are seen, O God, the processions of my God, my Kind, into the sanctuary — the singers in front, the minstrels last,

between them maidens playing timbrels . . ." Such processions may have functioned quite well in the ceremonial character of the Old Testament worship, but that is in itself no reason to introduce them in our time; as long as their "substance" (i.e., the joy and gratitude through Christ) remains, we are doing just fine.

Besides, my friend neglected to mention that the same Bible also records instances where this "dancing" is outrightly condemned as belonging to pagan and idolatrous worship. In Exodus 32 we read that with all their singing and dancing the people had "broken loose" in their worship of the golden calf. So the Bible cannot be misquoted to endorse "Saturday Night Fever."

A simple survey of the history of dancing will show that HEATHEN cultures first discovered and subsequently deformed dancing into blatant eroticism, connecting it, among other things, with "courtship, puberty, and fertility rites" (Bob Larson, ROCK, page 53). The roots of the modern dance do not lie in the pure worship of the Lord, but in man's own sinful need to uncap his physical energy and give vent to his sexual urges, indeed "to break loose." I know that some of our own young people will object to this "Reformed" analysis. Yet someone like Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones — who knows the function and purpose of modern dancing better than any of us — admits frankly, "All dancing is a replacement for sex" (G.Q. Scene, Spring 1967, page 72).

The modern-day dance thrives on the relentless and overpowering rhythm of rock and roll which compels the body to move in a sexually explicit motion. And then I have not yet said one word about the vulgar lyrics which accompany the rhythm. Most lyrics contain one repeated invitation to let loose and get into the "hot



"Saturday Night Fever."

stuff." The dance is the means and the body is the medium through which basic drives can be excited and displayed in a seemingly legitimate setting: the Disco.

This becomes even more clear when we note that dance forms, during the past decades, have really degenerated. Current styles actually cause a kind of self-hypnosis and ecstasy which is evident also in the ritual dancing of primitive societies. In her book, *THE BOOK OF THE DANCE* (quoted by Bob Larson), Agnes de Mille, herself a dancer and choreographer, has written, "When they

[i.e., dances, Cid] are rough and graceless, they reflect a disintegration not only of individuals but of community life as well." And who will deny that a process of disintegration is indeed taking place in almost every field of life today?

When we know that the sexual promiscuity of our time is promoted also in the dance which prepares the body for immorality, we have no choice but to abstain from it entirely, also from more "innocent" forms which may lead to further experimentation. "The body is not meant for immorality, but for the Lord and the Lord for the body" (I Corinthians 6:13).

Without being a prude, one must certainly be prudent. Perhaps my young friend does have second thoughts about his firmly stated conviction that dancing is allowed. In 1928 even the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, drawing attention to theatre-attendance, DANCING, and card-playing, said, "It greatly deplores the increasing prevalence among us of these forms of amusement, urgently warns our members against them . . ." If this warning went unheeded there, it should not happen among us.

Our young people do not need any close encounters of the promiscuous kind; they have enough to struggle with as it is.

Cid.

RES would be at stake. The Advisory Committee on which were delegates from both the GKN and the "plaintiff" churches, met late into the night. The debate in plenary was tense throughout. Yet a decision was reached that found the approval of the vast majority.

In its decision the Synod recognized the intention of the GKN in their pastoral concern in drawing attention to the suffering, despair and experience of rejection to which homosexual persons in many cases are being subjected. The Synod also stated "in accordance with the traditional Reformed understanding of Scripture" that all homosexual practice is sin. It further stated that "any advice or counsel that weakens the resistance to sin does not help but actually harms both the struggling person himself and others who might be affected through him."

Turning to the GKN the Synod requested the Dutch church to clarify their pastoral letter on "homophilical" (homosexual) persons in order to make clear that their view on homosexual practice is in accordance with Scripture. The Synod further expressed its — "grave concern about the ambiguous nature of the 1979 decision of the GKN" on homosexuality.

Several major United States religious figures have called on the government to "launch a thorough examination of the entire spectrum of issues involved in genetic engineering . . . before it is too late." The shared statement, by National Council of Churches general secretary Claire Randall, U.S. Catholic Conference general secretary Thomas Kelly, and Synagogue Council of America general secretary Bernard Mandelbaum, was issued in the aftermath of the U.S. Supreme Court decision authorizing patents on new forms of life, specifically ruling that a "man-made" microbe is patentable. "We believe," they said, "that no government agency or committee is currently exercising adequate oversight or control, nor addressing the fundamental ethical questions in a major way." The statement also urges international guidelines for genetic engineering and pledges that the religious community "will address these fundamental questions in a more urgent and organized way." (CT)

The Unitarian Universalist Association has resolved to promote the hiring of openly homosexual and bi-

NEWS MEDLEY

Fergus, Ontario, August 22, 1980

To our Readers

Not only are the summer doldrums upon us, whereby the number of bulletins is reduced to a trickle at times, but also that which is mentioned in those relatively few bulletins does not provide us with much news. I am certain that you are not interested in learning who all are visiting here from the old country or who, finally, are going to make a trip to see how things are there nowadays and how much has changed since they left. And, since I go only by written sources, I cannot provide you with a medley this time. I give the reason why, lest anyone should think that I am going to take it easy; and in the second place I do so to prevent frantic letters in which fear is expressed that your favourite column is about to disappear from your indispensable magazine. Meanwhile the activities may resume* in the course of the coming weeks and I have good hopes for our next issue.

*or: be resumed

*Till then,
Yours, v.O.*

sexual persons to leadership positions within the denomination and its local congregations. At their annual meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico, delegates from more than 1,000 member churches in the United States and Canada also voted to apply for assistance to those wishing to apply for conscientious objector status, and in favour of public financing of abortions. Denomination president O. Eugene Pickett said that a major domestic priority for the church is "rebuffing the emergent new right in its vengeful desire to smother the rights of women, gay people, minorities, and others who struggle for justice." (CT)

The Roman Catholic segment of the United States population has increased dramatically during the last thirty-three years — at the expense of Protestants and Jews. In its newsletter, the George Gallup-related Princeton Religion Research Center further indicated that since 1947 Catholics have moved from 20 to 29 percent of the nation's adult populace, while Protestants have slipped from 69 to 59 percent, and Jewish adherents from 5 to 2 percent. A "relatively high birth rate" and "the influx of Hispanics" are cited as factors in Catholic growth. (CT)

The Presbyterian Church of Ireland voted to withdraw from the World Council of Churches (WCC) at its June General Assembly in Belfast, Northern Ireland. The 433-327 vote made final a move begun two years ago when the church suspended its WCC membership. The main issue then was the WCC's grant to the Zimbabwe Patriotic Front, perceived by many as parallel to a subsidy of armed resistance movements in Northern Ireland. (CT)

OSLO

The bishop of the Evangelical Church in Pakistan, Arne Rudvin, accused the World Council of Churches that it has done very little to help the refugees from Afghanistan who have been sheltered in refugee camps in Pakistan. Rudvin (originally from Norway) declared during a visit to Norway that the World Council of Churches shows little interest in helping the victims of the Soviet aggression because it is afraid of a reaction from the Soviet Union. (ND)

HANNOVER (EPD)

The Evangelical Church in West Germany wants to use the scheduled visit of the pope to consult with him about a better cooperation with the Roman Catholic Church in Germany.

The leadership of the Evangelical Church hopes for an official invitation to meet the pope. The pope will visit West Germany from the fifteenth to the nineteenth of November. The wish

of the Evangelical Church to have a discussion with the pope about the ecumenical situation in West Germany was expressed by the new vice-president of the chancery of the church in Hannover, Hartmut Loewe. Loewe declared that the Evangelical Church is eager to seek for ways in which to practise the necessary cooperation. (ND)

vO

Christian Love in the Administration of Discipline

Address delivered at the Seventeenth Annual Women's League Day in the Fraser Valley, June 1980.

The subject of discipline is an important one. It's a topic with which we, parents or teachers, are very concerned. When we deal with the subject of discipline, we should, first of all, ask the question: What is discipline? We often have the mistaken notion that discipline is the result of a series of dos and don'ts. But when we talk about discipline we must realize that discipline is a way of life. If we want to find the definition of the word "discipline," we can go to Webster's dictionary, and we will find under the topic "discipline" a whole list of meanings and definitions. Discipline, we read, is the art of instructing, training, cultivating one's mind. But it also means: to correct, to chastise, to teach rules, to drill, to administer punishment in order to correct and train. And I'm sure that a few additional definitions and interpretations of discipline can be added. However, I believe that from the foregoing we all have a pretty good idea what the concept of discipline stands for. We as parents are engaged in the administration of discipline all the time. Our actions, our words, our total behaviour, are all expressions of discipline. I would like to emphasize that actions speak more loudly than words. And that applies to the administration of discipline, too. I'll have more about that later.

Now, it's not my idea to speak about discipline as it relates to the instruction or education or training of our children in a general way. When I speak to you about discipline in the

home or in school, I have in mind that particular aspect of discipline which deals with the action of parents or teachers which, hopefully, and with much prayer, will result in correction of undesired behaviour in our children.

Now I realize full well that in the world in which we live, and in our present-day society, the concept of discipline is not very popular in many circles. The concept of authority is denied or rejected. In a world in which anarchy and lawlessness seems to grow stronger and becomes more evident, the idea of authority is diminishing and fading, almost to the point of disappearing in many circles in our society. Even in our public institutions of learning. We live in an age of rebellion, and man pretends to be a law unto himself. Our newspapers are filled with accounts of acts of rebellion. And we know very well that even in our homes, at times, we meet that spirit of rebellion among our own children, and especially among many of our own teenagers. The word and concept of discipline is not popular because it implies authority. Discipline is an action or act exercised by some bearer of authority. That bearer of authority can be government, or employer, or teacher, or parent. But let's never forget that authority is a Biblical concept. And it is very important and necessary to believe that, when we speak of authority and discipline, we can be sure that we stand on a Scriptural foundation. Only when we speak of authority and discipline according to the norms which are set forth in the Word of God, as the only authoritative guide for our daily life and walk, and only when relate discipline

to the ordinances of God which have been revealed in His Word for all spheres of life, can we derive the proper significance and meaning of the concept of discipline. Someone who does not accept the Word of God and does not believe the sovereignty of God can talk about discipline and authority till he is blue in the face, but, no matter what high sounding philosophy is being expounded, he is missing the mark. God is the ultimate source of authority. And all authority is therefore from God, and all those who exercise authority are servants of God, if they want to acknowledge it or not. Romans 13 deals with authority. And we read in verses 1 and 2: "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God. The powers that be [in business, in the state, in school, at home] are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the powers [authority] resists the ordinances of God." Now God delegates authority to various people. In church, the consistory has received the power to rule. In the state, the government has received the power of the sword to punish (discipline) evil-doers. In the schools, teachers have received authority from the parents. In business, it is the employer who is the power to be. In the home, of course, the parents have received the power to rule. And all these various administrators in their fields and positions of authority are accountable to God.

Sin has become the great destroyer of life in its totality. In paradise, before man rebelled against God's discipline, every relationship was in perfect harmony with the Creator. Sinless man was given a mandate to have dominion over the earth. But that same mandate remained in force even after man's disobedience against God's law. But, you know, now it has become so difficult to carry out or administer the Biblical concept of discipline when we look at those who have been delegated to administer discipline. They are all sinful people who are inclined to rebellion because of the sinfulness of their heart. It is therefore so difficult for a parent to exercise discipline justly and fairly. Sinful creatures correcting other sinful creatures. And yet, this is still the mandate and the duty which God has laid upon all those who are called by God to positions of authority. And we, as parents, must accept the responsibilities and obligations given to us in dealing with children.

As I mentioned already, discipline

is a very unpopular idea in our society today. I believe that we will all agree that in our day and age there is a growing lack of respect for authority. Everyone seems to be inclined to do his or her own thing. Again it seems to be as it was in the days of the Old Testament judges: There was no king in Israel and everyone did what was good in his own eyes. Today God is being expelled from society. And, when God's laws are trampled underfoot, lawlessness fills the vacuum. We live in an age of lawless individualism. In education we see the results of a child psychology which promotes the philosophy of "child-sovereignty." We hear about "His Majesty the Child." Modern psychologists consider a child at birth to be a *tabula rasa*, a blank sheet of paper. Nothing has been written on it yet — neither good nor bad. The child is thus considered to have an innate — an inborn — goodness. They theorize that if a new-born baby would be left by itself on an uninhabited island, it would grow up to be a good moral human being because there is no bad environment which can pollute the soul of the child. A child becomes delinquent because it is affected by bad examples set by parents and teachers.

Now, apart from the fact that it is stupid to imagine that a baby could survive, the whole idea is preposterous. We know what the Word of God teaches, and we believe it, don't we? According to the Word of God a child is conceived and born in sin, and, when it grows up, it daily increases its debt. That's the language of the Scriptures. And every parent, here present, has on many occasions experienced and also admitted the truth of this Biblical teaching. Many of us remember the Dutch saying: "*Kinderen zijn geen engeltjes maar bengeltjes*" (Little children are not angels but [at times] little brats).

In modern educational philosophy there is no place for parental authority and discipline, or punishment, or demanding obedience. These ideas are old-fashioned — relics of a bygone era. We are being told that we live in an age of new enlightenment. Last year, 1979, was devoted to the child. It was "The Year of the Child." The child in our modern society is pretty well autonomous; it more or less has self-rule. A parent is no longer allowed to put any pressure on the child. Not in any way. The child should be allowed to develop according to its own skills and abilities, in freedom, without restrictions. The child should be allowed to decide for itself how it wants to be trained or educated.

Well, it does not take much effort to point out from Scripture the nonsense of this humanistic, thoroughly un-Biblical theory. It is a concept which is the fruit of many years of liberal teaching by modern educators and psychologists who have systematically rejected the idea of God's sovereignty and His laws and ordinances for all His creatures. These false prophets deny that parents have the God-given authority to demand respect and obedience.

Today parents are told to enter into a "big brother" and "big sister" relationship with their children. And it is no longer an exception in many un-Christian homes that parents and children address each other by their first names. Well, when parents allow themselves to undermine their God-given authority, how can they expect their children to act in a God-pleasing manner when it comes to showing respect for and to their parents and other authorities? Children have to learn the difference which exists in the structure of the various relationships. It was so ordained by God in His creation

Proverbs 3:11, 12

My son, do not despise the LORD's discipline
or be weary of His reproof,
for the LORD reproves him whom He loves,
as a father the son in whom he delights.

order. Children have to be taught that the Fifth Commandment (setting forth, among other things, the duty of children toward their parents) belongs to the table of the Law which concerns our duty to God. Parents, at least as long as the child is a minor, stand toward their child in the place of God. It's as simple as that. Parents at home, teachers in school, have been delegated to their position of authority, and they represent *God's* authority. And our children had better realize this, and the sooner, the better. So many young people do not accept the fact that their parents are the recipients of the authority to rule over them by divine right. Today the motto is: freedom. Children rebel against authority because parental authority is viewed as a roadblock to their freedom. Authority is looked upon as a restriction to freedom. But our children should be taught that authority does not take away freedom. True freedom is the freedom for which Christ has given His blood on the cross of Calvary. We have received the freedom of the children of God. We possess that freedom which has freed us from the dominion of the arch-rebel, Satan.

Since we have now established, from the Scriptures, the fact that we, parents, have authority to deal with our children, we should then look at the administration of discipline. I have said already that it is such a difficult task for parents to discipline fairly and justly because of our own shortcomings.

And I am fully aware of the fact that we all fail to live up to the commandments of God. When we realize that we are persons of whom the Bible says that they all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23), then it is so difficult to administer just discipline and to hand out fair punishment.

We all agree, of course, that in training our children discipline and punishment are necessary and part of our child training. When our children are disobedient we have the right to discipline. The Bible teaches us that God also chastens His disobedient children. But when God punishes or disciplines or chastens, He does so in love. God, in His discipline, is always seeking to save, never to destroy. We often discipline or punish a child because our feelings are hurt. It is not the behaviour of the child which we seek to correct and change, but we punish to give ourselves a feeling of satisfaction. We don't want to think of the mental injury which we have inflicted upon the child.

We have learned methods of discipline. When we have learned a particular method of discipline which is detrimental and harmful to our children, we should try to unlearn our own behaviour. It is so easy for us to be unreasonable in our discipline. We so often punish instead of discipline a child. The well-known Dr. Narramore, Professor of Psychology at Rosemead, Calif., makes a distinction between punishment and discipline. Punishment, according to Dr. Narramore, is a means of administering retribution (paying back for some evil done), but discipline is designed to promote the growth of the one who is being disciplined.

God never punishes His children. Punishment for sin has been suffered by Christ. A believer, a child of God, is not being punished but he is being chastized, or disciplined. Discipline is God's way of bringing His children to spiritual maturity.

Is that our motivation in the punishment of our children? Can we say that we are motivated by love when we discipline one of our children at home or in school? We can be so awfully critical of what our children do. And we can express our criticism in language which has the intent to hurt our child. We so often fail to criticize in a positive manner. I'm sure that we don't intentionally try to find fault with our children. And, although it is true that with some of them we don't have to look very hard to find something wrong, nevertheless we should approach and correct these difficult children with love. How often does it happen — and I'm sure that we all are guilty — how often does it happen that we lash out in anger at a child in an unfair and un-Christian way? When we are angry with one of our children, we should try to follow the well-known advice to count to ten before opening our mouth. I'm sure if we would follow this advice, there would be much more wisdom in our angry words. It's so easy to get angry, but so difficult to control our anger. We should fight against these serious problems. God calls for us to do just that. In Proverbs 29:18 we read that the fool gives full vent to his anger, but the wise man, holding it back, quiets it. It is so important for parents to learn self-control and self-discipline before we can discipline our children effectively and properly. If we fly off the handle easily, we set a poor example to our children, and it becomes difficult to teach them self-con-

trol. If we shout in anger at our children, how can we expect our children to address us in a civil way when we discipline them? Let us never forget that actions speak even louder than words, and our children, regardless of age, are great imitators.

Discipline is necessary. Our children know that there are rules and laws which have to be obeyed, because laws are intended for the well-being of every one. And when these laws and regulations are broken, the one who breaks the law is guilty and therefore has to expect the consequences and deserves punishment.

Parents certainly have the duty to exercise discipline. But we should always be reasonable. But, at the same time, we should always be firm. Too many parents are too wishy-washy when it comes to demanding obedience to their rules. In our family devotions at the table we are reading from the Book of Samuel. We just read about the abominable sins of the sons of Eli. Eli was the religious leader in Israel, keeper of the door of the tabernacle, the man to whom every one in Israel was supposed to look up to. But his sons were a disgrace to him, and God was very angry with them. How did the sons of Eli get to be that way? The reason is stated in I Samuel 3:13. Eli never restrained his sons. Eli had never been firm in his dealings with his sons. And Eli's sons knew that no matter what they did, they could get away with it, as far as their father Eli was concerned.

Yes, children need to know what is expected of them. There have to be rules, and parents should demand acceptance of, and adherence to, these rules. When punishment becomes necessary we have to make sure that our punishment is fair. We should always keep in mind that punishment is not a cure-all either. When punishment is unfair it may cause resentment. Resentment may lead to rebellion. Instead of helping, we may have done great damage. And after the punishment we should also be able to forget. We should never bring up the reason for the punishment again. We should let by-gones be by-gones. The child should know that the parent has forgiven and is willing to forget, and so the relationship between parent and child can be restored. The thing which is so vital in the parent-child relationship is the factor of love. Our children should at all times know and feel that they are loved. There can never be too

much love in a child's life. When we have to discipline our children, they should know that we still love them but don't like what they have done. Whenever we discipline we have to make sure that our children realize that we differentiate between the child and his behaviour.

It is easy to love children when they are good, but we must love them all the time. The same applies to God's discipline. God loves us because He has adopted us to be His children, but God hates our sins.

Christian love in the administration of discipline is so necessary for the good of the child who is being disciplined. As a teacher, I know that it is so easy to hurt children with thoughtless, verbal criticism. The third chapter of James speaks of the power of the tongue. The tongue is compared to a world of iniquity. With our tongue we offend, curse, and defile. Not so long ago we had a P.T.A. meeting in our school. Teachers had the opportunity to meet the parents. And more than one parent discussed the subject of discipline in our school. Several parents expressed their feelings and were of the opinion that Christian school teachers can show such a lack of Christian love and patience. One mother expressed to me her concern regarding the actions and words of teachers who, at times, can make such derogatory remarks. The constant criticism of her son's teacher had a harmful effect on her boy. One afternoon he came home and shut himself up in his room. When the boy didn't come down for a long time, the mother went up to find out about his problem. When she asked him what troubled him, he asked her a question. "Mom," he said, "am I really that bad? Teacher is always after me, and she always says that, where there is trouble in the classroom or on the playground, she can be sure that I'm not far away." In I Corinthians we read about love. "If I had faith and were willing to give my body to be burned (even for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven) but have not love I am nothing." It is true that parents and teachers can be so cruel to children and students. Occasionally, after I come home at night, I review my day in school, and then I wonder sometimes why I made certain remarks in disciplining my students. Was I really interested in the well-being of my students? Or did I try to throw my educational weight around to impress my students? Did I glory in the authority which I have? I should have

remembered the words of Jesus when he talked about little children: "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in Me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." A teacher or a parent using such methods of discipline is destroying something. He or she is inflicting wounds upon the souls of our children, who are God's covenant children, that may well take many years to heal. Again we do well to listen to I Corinthians 13: "If I had all the knowledge, but lack love, I'm like sounding brass."

Teaching and training God's covenant children at home or in school is such a beautiful task, and it is a tremendous privilege when God calls us to be a parent to do this great work. It can be so rewarding when a student, who used to be grumpy all the time and moody and had difficulties with other children, slowly breaks out of his shell of inhibition and becomes a normal child.

In our administration and exercising of discipline we need to be filled with compassion, patience, and love. Again we read in I Corinthians 13: "If I had faith to remove mountains but lack love I am nothing." Our children have to be made aware of our sincere love for them. Parents need to show love. Not the kind of love of which the world sings. Maybe some of you remember that song which was so popular a few years ago: "Love makes the world go round and round." That kind of love makes one dizzy. It's the love of Christ that we need. We have a calendar in our school's office which carries this message: "Let the love of Christ constrain us." Yes, let the love of Christ control our words, our actions, our total behaviour. We know that God is

love and that Christ is the inexhaustible source and fountain of all love. And every time when we need to be filled with that love (and that is daily), we can go to Him. And Christ will provide us with that which we need, if we ask Him with a sincere heart.

I also would like to emphasize the importance of prayer. Prayer is such an important factor in our discipline. Prayer can change the behaviour of our children. When we have difficulties with our children, let us lay our difficulties before the throne of our heavenly father. We have the assurance from God's Word that the prayers of the righteous accomplish much.

In conclusion, let me say a few things through which we can influence our children and help them in their growing to maturity. Point out to them how important it is to read the Bible on a regular basis. Personal Bible reading is so necessary (not only for our children but for all of us, of course). Point out to our children and adolescents Christian goals. Impress upon our teenagers the need and obligations to use their God-given talents to His glory and in His kingdom when they contemplate their vocation. Let us point out to our children the importance of having Christian friends. Good, Christian friends can be so helpful to our teenagers. They need all the help and support they can get in their daily fight against sin and temptation to which they are exposed.

Christian love in the administration of discipline. It's a difficult task, but not an impossible task, because we have the assurance that we can do all things through Christ. And so, in our discipline, abide patience, understanding, and love, these three, and the greatest of these is love.

H. DE RAAD

Romans 8:18

I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Books

The Consummation of History. A Study of the Book of Revelation by George G. Weeber, Edited by Carol Dykstra. Reviewed by L. Selles.

No publisher is mentioned on the title page and no price is indicated. Family or other Christian Bookstores will be able to provide the desired information. As the book is a paperback of 283 pages, a reasonable price may be expected.

The author, who was a co-organizer of the Reformed Bible Institute, and who served as minister in the Christian Reformed Church and later in the Reformed Church in America, before his retirement wrote the book in order to give a contribution in the knowledge of the redemptive process of the reestablishment of the kingdom of God as it is transpiring on earth according to the book of Revelation, p. 2. Although the study does not offer much in terms of exegesis which is not found already in Reformed interpretation of Revelation, it presents its material in a well-organized way. This makes the book a useful tool in societal and personal study of Revelation.

The author does a service to the reader by presenting a preliminary study which acquaints with the terminology used, the kind of literature with which one gets to do in Revelation, a survey of the contents of the Bible book, and an analytical outline of it. An overview of the main types of interpretation applied to Revelation is given, and attention is paid to the pre-millennial and dispensational views which play a dominant role on this continent.

Weeber himself interprets in the line of L. Berkhof, A. Kuyper, B.B. Warfield, W. Hendriksen, R.C.H. Lenski, and, we may add, S. Greijdanus, though Weeber does not quote him. He follows what is called "the synchronistic or parallelistic system of interpretation," p. 27. That means that the various visions are concurrent in time, which covers the whole new dispensation from the first to the second coming of Christ and points to the same events though from a different perspective and in a progressive way. The trumpets portray an intensified version of the Seals, and the bowls of the trumpets. If this concurrence is

restricted to the age within which seals, trumpets, and bowls occur and does not exclude various times at which they occur, I agree with it. I cannot say the same thing with respect to the formulation of the theme of Revelation as submitted by Rev. Weeber. This theme, according to the author is: "The revelation of Jesus Christ as the unveiling of our exalted, glorified and sovereign Lord over His church and the world and as the revealer and executor of the secret decrees of God in order to consummate His victory over the world of evil at His second coming and to establish the royal kingdom of God," p. 27. It seems to me that Revelation itself puts it more simply and more clearly in the words of 1:1: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show to his servants what must soon take place"; or as it reads in 1:19: "Now write what you see, what is [referring to chapters 1-3] and what is to take place hereafter [referring to chapters 4-21]."

Special attention is paid to the symbolic form of Revelation and its implications for the interpretation. When it comes to the various numbers used in the book one wonders whether the writer of this study does not read too much into some numbers once in a while. I think of the number twelve. It is, in his opinion, the result of the multiplication of the number of this world (four) and of the divinity (three). It signifies for that reason the work of God in creation and redemption in its unity and completeness, p. 32. It makes it also imperative to understand the four living creatures of 4:6 as representative for earthly creatures, "the redeemed creation as it will be in the day of consummation," pp. 140/1. It leads in turn to an understanding of Revelation 4 as "a preview of the new creation, with all the redeemed as a sea of faces reflecting the divine glory of Him who sat upon the throne as the Sovereign of all . . ." p. 137. Is it not simpler and closer to Scripture to refer for the number twelve to what the Bible tells about the twelve patriarchs, the twelve tribes, and the twelve apostles, and that way to the unity and harmony of the people of God?

For the rest Rev. Weeber is well aware that the symbols of Revelation wherever possible should be un-

derstood in the light of the revelation as given in the other books of the Bible, and time and again he refers to specific passages which cast light on the signs of Revelation. That's what makes this study valuable, because it is the only way in which one can come to a right understanding of the book.

That, meanwhile, does not exclude the fact that there remain visions or parts of them about which there can be difference of opinion, or of which must be said that the interpretation is not right. It is more in a platonic than in a scriptural line to speak with Kuyper of the "seven lampstands" in 1:12 and of "the woman" in 12:1 as the ideal church as it is in the mind of God, pp. 57 and 200.

As to the seven churches, mentioned in chapter 1, the author rejects the view that they represent seven stages in the history of the church till the day of the Lord. He agrees, however, with Hoeksema, that "there is an indication of the course of development the church will follow: the direction of this development will be from Ephesus to Laodicea," p. 57. That must mean that there is a deteriorating development. The trouble is that Ephesus is anything but a first-rate church, and that between Sardis and Laodicea stands Philadelphia, one of the most faithful churches.

I already mentioned chapter 4. Not everyone will know, as Weeber writes, that the dispensationalists tie up the "open door in heaven" with what they call "the pretribulation rapture," whereby the church on earth is transferred to heaven and church history comes to an end. Weeber points out that, contrary to this view, chapter 7 specifies the great multitude as they who come out of the great *tribulation*, 7:14, pp. 128/9. Different from Kuyper, who thinks of the time of the consummation, Weeber sets the date for the taking of the scroll out of the hand of God by the lamb on Ascension Day. That is more than the text says and therefore uncalled for, p. 146.

On the ground of the translation of 5:10, "and they reign on earth," a future millennium, as expected by all Chiliasts, is rejected by Weeber who follows Lenski on this point. The present tense, "reign," however, has a lot weaker support in the manuscripts than the future tense "they shall reign." It makes one cautious for rash conclusions on the basis of a disputed tense.

As the text speaks of "men," 6:4,

and "the fourth of the earth," 6:8, there seems to be no good ground to make the *believers* victims of the opening of the second, third, and fourth seals as Hendriksen-Weeber do. Not before the fifth seal is mention made of believers, the souls under the altar, 6:9. Although the text says so, Weeber considers it in conflict with the spirit of heavenly saints to call for vengeance. This call should not be ascribed to them but to their *blood*, pp. 155/6.

We find something similar in the exegesis of 12:1. Although the text speaks of "war in heaven," it is impossible, according to the author, to conceive of war in the presence of God. This war is nothing else but a sign of the effect of the redemptive work of Christ pictured as a war, pp. 202/3. With all respect for the good intentions of the author, these instances evince a biased, instead of a scriptural, exegesis.

The "silence in heaven" of which 8:1 speaks is taken in the context as evidence of reverence, called for "by a most sacred scene," p. 166. This context, however, speaks of the opening of the seventh seal and with it of a new series of judgments. Does that not point in the direction of the terrifying silence before the outburst of the storm of God's wrath? The "mortal wound" of the beast, 13:3, signifies, according to Weeber, the deathblow which Satan received when he was cast out of heaven to the earth, 12:9, p. 210. Though the author does not want to identify satan and beast, I cannot see how he can avoid it with this exegesis.

A distinction is made by Weeber between the harvest and the vintage of 14:14-20; the former would speak of the ingathering of God's elect and the latter of the judgment over the wicked, p. 221. As the text itself does not speak of the elect, it seems precarious to bring them in at this place which emphasizes that the time for the judgment of God's wrath has arrived.

Chapters 17-19 contain a more detailed description of the bowl visions according to Weeber, p. 233, whereby the *woman*, i.e., "the Supreme anti-Christian Seductress," p. 235; the *beast*, i.e., the anti-Christian power; and the *dragon*, i.e., Satan; are eliminated, and the dead are judged. There is a close relation, indeed, between the one thing and the other, but since the bowls are called plagues in chapter 15, it may be better to distinguish them from God's final judgment.

A brief summary of the Gospel-

age from the first coming of the Lord to His second coming is portrayed in 20:1-6 according to Weeber's exegesis, p. 256. The (in his view) restricted binding of Satan already started at the time of Christ's birth and extends over the new dispensation wherein Satan cannot prevent the establishment of the kingdom of God, p. 257. With this exegesis Weeber walks in the tracks of most Reformed interpreters, though not of

all. Further study remains necessary. won't give it a try at this time. The review already became longer than was planned. With it I tried to express my sympathetic critical appreciation for the work of Rev. Weeber and to make clear that this study, like all other ones, on Revelation, and of all the Bible books, for that matter, should be used with all the care to which the Word of God is entitled.

Labour Unions *(Continued)*

say that once the plant, business, or hospital has been unionized, the employer is then normally compelled to make these union deductions, *by law*.

e) Open Shop

The "open shop" is a business which may or may not have a collective agreement with a union, and which is free to hire union or non-union employees. In such a situation, the union dues tend to be considerably higher since fewer people share the cost of union representation. However, such a situation does justice to the freedom of association and employment guaranteed by our "Canadian Bill of Rights" and the United Nations "Universal Declaration of Human Rights" (mentioned above). These "open shop" situations are supported by law in nineteen states in the U.S.A. Let us hope and pray that similar legislation may be passed in our Provincial Parliaments, in order to remove the present union slavery from our country.

f) Is It Wrong For a Christian to Join Any Labour Union?

No. The principle of a labour union is not wrong *per se*. There are still a number of (diminishing rapidly) of shop unions, business, or professional associations in our country which a Christian can join. However, this depends on the principles and practices adopted by such organizations. It is quite permissible and even desirable that Christians join fellow-citizens in the common quest for social justice in every sphere of life. After all, they are called upon to be the salt of the earth. If, then, the principles and practices in this quest for social justice are not in conflict with God's Word, Christians should endeavour to provide leadership. However, as soon as such an organization endeavours to "bind the conscience"

of the Christian (with wrong principles or practices), it is time to protest, and, if no change is effected, it is then time to leave. Christians are called to remain free in Christ.

12. THE CHRISTIAN RESPONSE TO ALL ANTI-CHRISTIAN LODGES, ASSOCIATIONS, CLUBS, LABOUR UNIONS, AND/OR LABOUR LAWS

a) Is Neutrality Possible?

It is nothing unusual that at present there are people who desire to talk about the so-called existence of neutral organizations. Such a philosophy takes care of a lot of problems; i.e., when an organization is not "militantly" anti-Christian in its basis, purpose, and/or practices it may then be joined, for it is neutral. This neutrality would then serve as a kind of no-man's-land between Christ and Satan. However, no matter how well argued, such a philosophy still amounts to no more than a self-delusion, for neutrality has existence only in relation to inanimate objects, but not in relation to man. We have a Lord Who says, "He who is not for Me is against Me, and He who does not gather with Me scatters" (Matthew 12:30, Mark 9:40, Luke 9:50, 11:23). As such, we could say in brief that any organization which would cause one to compromise one's Christian principles is against Christ. We simply cannot afford to be wishy-washy in relation to any organization. Remember Revelation 3:14ff.?

We need only look at what happened in Reformed churches where such a scripturally-alien ideal was adopted; cf. CRC Synod decisions 1943-47, mentioned before. Especially after having placed the AFL-CIO in the area of neutrality, many local churches were completely hamstrung in their attempts to exercise guidance and/or

discipline. The result has been that even stewards in this anti-Christian organization could become elders in the churches, with the consequent disastrous effects.

Perhaps you may say: "If then neutrality is impossible for any person — i.e., he or she must be either for or against Christ — is it then really possible to join any organization which is not professedly Christian? Yes, it is; see f) above. However, one should realize that when a Christian is permitted full freedom in any organization, and when the actions of such organizations are not *per se* against God's Word (be they done with the wrong intent on the part of some) that such an organization is then not neutral. For neither the Christians who are members, nor the non-Christians, are neutral, but they allow each other complete freedom while pursuing a common goal; e.g., in social justice, professional expertise, agriculture, business, labour, police, army, conservation, pro-life, etc. Christians are in the world but not of the world. However, they may not isolate themselves *from* the world. Salt and light are very much needed.

Much more could be said on the topic of neutrality, but let this suffice for now. Nevertheless, there are still some pressing questions left in relation to obviously anti-Christian organizations; such as, How must we respond to them?

b) A Resounding NO To Membership or Support of ANY Anti-Christian Organization

In the first place, we dare not give anything less than a resounding NO to (voluntary) membership in any anti-Christian organization. To join such organizations is equivalent to taking upon oneself the "mark of the beast"; cf. Revelation 13:11-18. It would also be a matter of committing spiritual suicide. God will then no longer be one's Father, since such a person has then opted to join the father of darkness. "Now just a minute," you say; "there are many sincere Christians who are also members of the organizations in question; you mean to say that there is no hope for them?" There most certainly is, but *only* when they repent and terminate their membership; cf. II Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1 and Revelation 14:9ff. There will be many who have faithfully attended the worship services, who have sacrificed much for the kingdom of heaven, and who have spent a whole lifetime saying "Lord,

Lord," but when they also endeavoured to serve both the Lord and Satan, they will all hear the same message on Judgment Day, i.e. "I never knew you, get away from Me, you evil-doers!" Cf. Matthew 7:21-23. In order to prevent this from happening, the Lord pleads with and commands all His children to repent, and reminds them that when they endeavour to serve two masters, *He* will get sick of them and reject them; cf. Matthew 6:24, Revelation 3:15-16.

c) What About Union Check-off?

To this question we should also respond positively by stating that this form of discrimination should be avoided if at all possible. In other words, a Christian should not seek to be employed in a place where he or she will be forced to support an anti-Christian organization via compulsory check-off, and, if one's place of employment becomes unionized as a "union shop," then one should seek employment elsewhere, i.e., when possible.

d) What About the Anti-Christian Labour Laws?

Christians should do whatever they can to exercise their political responsibility. In relation to the above, ways and means should be sought and used in influencing the Provincial Parliaments to conform to the human rights principles adopted by our country and the United Nations. However, keep in mind that our government is not *per se* forcing anyone to join any organization, but that it has given legality to the union demands of "join or no job," and its own decisions to compel the bosses of union shops to deduct union dues also from the wages of non-union members.

Our aim should be to have laws passed in our Provincial Parliaments which ban the closed shops and union shops. This is the least we should aim for, and by the grace of God this is possible (e.g., the "right of work" laws in some U.S. states.) However, this will never happen when Christians in our provinces continue to revel in their political apathy. Nothing will change unless this is preceded by a lot of hard work and earnest prayer.

e) What Is the Position of Those in our Midst Who Are Members of an Anti-Christian Organization?

As you know, there are a number of church councils who have publicly stated in the past that membership in

an anti-Christian organization and church membership are incompatible. This means that those members among us who are members of an anti-Christian organization must be admonished to repent of their sin. That this must be done with much patience is a foregone conclusion. What happens if they do not repent? Then a consistory has no other alternative than to proceed with church discipline, and, if this exercising of Christian love does not meet with the desired repentance, then this in turn can only result in the excommunication of the member who refuses to repent and serve only one Lord. Such a case is no different from other cases where members refuse to repent of other public sins.

f) What Can We Do For Such Members?

If we know of members who are guilty of any sin, then gently, firmly, and knowledgeably confront them with their sins following our Lord's instructions, e.g., in Matthew 18:15ff. Besides this, let us spend much time in prayer for each other, and especially for those members of whom we know that they are in danger of being overcome by the power of darkness. Remember? "The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much" James 5:16. See also I John 5:13ff., etc.

REV. SIMON DE BRUIN
Pastor of the Canadian Reformed
Church at Edmonton

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CONSULATE GENERAL
OF THE NETHERLANDS**

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OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

BEUSEKOM, Gerrit, geboren op 30 oktober 1906, naar Canada vertrokken in 1953.

VAN DE BIJL, Siebolt, geboren te Lemmer op 18 juni 1914 naar Canada vertrokken in 1953.

WYNIA, Watze, geboren te Wonsera-deel op 8 april 1915 naar Canada vertrokken in 1950.

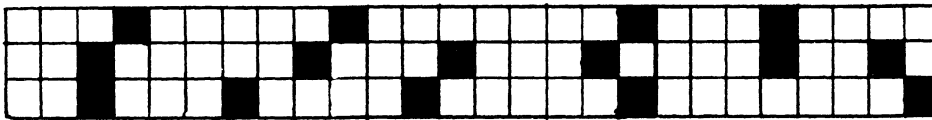
HOL, R., naar Canada vertrokken in 1953, laatstbekende adres in Nederland te Hengelo (Ov.).

De Consul-Generaal, voor deze:
MEVR. G. SCHNITZLER

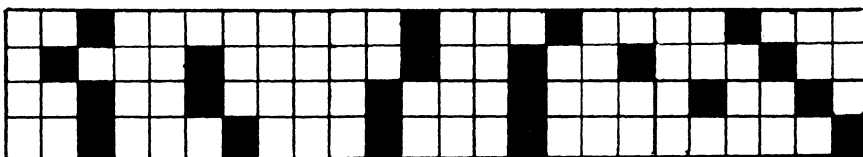
Bible Puzzle



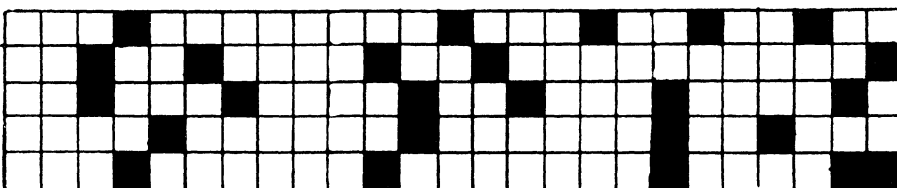
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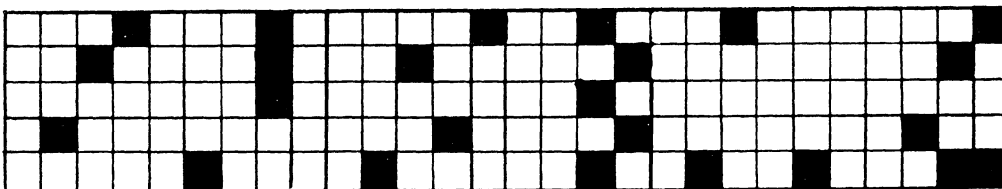
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U R O R W W T H R T R R V L



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S O L O W T E N E R T H O T O T I S H I T H O
S O T A W H U L O O T R O S O U S T
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A D D T F A A E E D E D H F A N K D Y H H R D W J
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S N G S T V S J E S T T E E L S O T S P I L W
A N S N O R S H O N L

Instructions:

Here are several fill-in-the-blank mini-puzzles. Each puzzle contains a Bible text. The letters of each row are scrambled and placed under the corresponding row. Words continue going across only, and if there is no blank at the end of the line, the word continues onto the next line.

Fill in each puzzle with the letters under the rows until all the letters have been used and the Bible text is complete.

It is a good idea to stroke off the letters as they are used in the puzzle.

Answers:

- Colossians 3:17
— the Father through Him. —
Jesus, giving thanks to God
in the name of the Lord
word or deed, do everything
D. And whatever you do, in
23
is no law. — Galatians 5:22-
control; against such there
fulness, gentleness, self-
kindness, goodness, faith-
love, joy, peace, patience,
E. But the fruit of the Spirit is
threw 7:12
and the prophets. — Mat-
to them; for this is the law
men would do to you, do so
C. So whatever you wish that
ever. — Isaiah 40:8
of our God will stand for-
flower fades, but the word
B. The grass withers, the
— Psalm 119:105
feet and a light to my path.
A. Thy word is a lamp to my

ELIZABETH TEITSMA

our little magazine

Hello Busy Beavers,

Are you curious about the WINNERS in our Contest?
Sometimes it's hard to wait, right?
This time you'll have to be patient just a little longer.
We want to be sure to have EVERYBODY's entry before
we close our contest!
It takes a while before I get those entries.
Think you can wait just a little longer?
Keep reading and you'll find something interesting to do
— while you're waiting!

But first Busy Beaver *Annette Haan* sent in something to share with you. Think about it!



J — Jesus first
O — Others second
Y — Yourself last



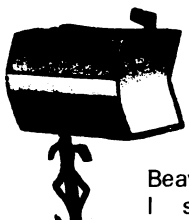
Busy Beaver *Diane Smith* has a very nice poem to share with you. She writes: "My older brother Bert made a kite. He and I sometimes fly it on windy days. Here is a poem about it:

I asked my Mom if it was all right,
For Bert and me to fly his kite,
We were excited when she said we might
And it really was a beautiful sight."

I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did, Busy Beavers! Why don't you read it again and "watch" the pictures that you "see" as you read each line.

Think you could make a picture now to go with the poem? I would love to see them, so I will send a bookmark to every Busy Beaver who will illustrate the poem for me!

Is it a deal?



From the Mailbox

Of course you may become a Busy Beaver, *Tania Werkman*. Welcome to the Club! I see you're a real Busy Beaver already sending us a poem in your first letter. Do you help look after some of the animals on your farm, Tania?

Thanks for your quiz, *Edith Hofsink*. I can see you didn't have trouble keeping busy during the holidays! And are you happy you're back in school now? Thanks, too, for your contribution to our Birthday Fund Project, Edith.

Hello, *Annette Haan*. It was nice to hear from you again. I see you really enjoyed your holiday, too. How did you like the first day of school, Annette?

I'm glad you enjoyed swimming so much in your holiday, *Rosalinde Moeliker*! I did too! Now what kind of weed can that be in a lake that will make you itch? I'm curious. You should tell us. Maybe we should watch out, too! Thanks for your pretty letter, *Rosalinde*.

Did you like our Contest, *Jolette Moeliker*? And are you used to going to school again after those lovely summer holidays? Is your dog quite obedient now? Bye for now. Write again soon, *Jolette*.

Hello, *Diane Smith*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thanks for your very nice poem. I know the Busy Beavers will really enjoy it.

How is your fort coming along, *Arno Moeliker*? I'm glad you had such a good time swimming during your holidays. Is your neighbour busy building his house again, *Arno*?

I'm glad you liked doing the quizzes for the Contest, *Sharon Knol*. Did you really find them hard? Maybe we need more practice? What do you think? Bye, *Sharon*.

I see you've been very busy again, *Karen Stam*. Keep up the good work! I really do hope you get your pen-pal. Let me know, all right?

Busy Beavers, we have another request for a pen-pal! Who would like to exchange letters with:

Karen Stam
14937 - 68A Avenue,
Surrey, B.C. V3S 5N9

QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Edith Hofsink* has something for you:

Puzzle Wheel

Can you find 11 different Bible names?

2 of them are used 2 times!



Busy Beaver *Karen Stam* wants to keep you busy too! Here are her:

Puzzles

1. If you add 7 to me, you'll get 15. Who am I?
2. Add 5 to me. Then take away 2. You'll have 6. Who am I?

3. Add 4 to me. Then add 6 more. You should get 12. Who am I?