



Canadian Agreement on Infallibility

Rome has grasped the lead in the ecumenical movement of the twentieth century. It is intriguing to see how after the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) the bishop of Rome and his curia manipulated the Christians and their leaders into gradually accepting even the most staunch Roman Catholic positions. A clear pattern emerges: Rome will first breach the gap between Constantinople and the pope. The excommunication of 1054 was lifted in 1965, when patriarch Athenagoras visited Pope Paul VI. The 1979 encounter of their successors resulted in the decision to embark upon official dialogue preparing for a complete reunion. After a preliminary meeting on the isle of Rhodes two years ago, the real "dialogue of love" began in Munich during the summer of this year, 1982. It will be interesting to follow the discussion about, e.g., the phrase "and the Son" (known as the *Filioque*) in the Nicene Creed. The Western Church included this phrase in the article on the Holy Spirit, while the Eastern Church has repudiated it until the present day. Our Canadian Reformed readers may glean from p. 469 of their *Book of Praise* how involved we are in this dispute. It is an indication of the importance of the ecumenical activities of the Roman Catholic Church, still by far the largest denomination in Christianity. To me these Roman activities are the most significant in the world of ecumenism. Even the World Council of Churches, with all its political hustle, is dwarfed by *Roma aeterna*, eternal Rome with its consistent strife for universal supremacy in Christendom.

Besides this encounter with the Eastern Orthodox Church, there is for Rome the dialogue with Lutherans and with Reformed/Presbyterians. There is, e.g., a whole series of publications under the title *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*. The broad and liberal policy of inviting many paid off in a remarkable increase of the ecumenical "dialogue" not only in Europe but also on the American continent.

But in the world of the denominations that date their reformation in the sixteenth century, it is not the Lutherans or the Reformed who are first on the list of Roman Catholic discussion partners. When Rome directs its attention to Western Christianity, it is Anglicanism that has priority. The encounter with the archbishop of Canterbury and the visit of the pope to Britain showed the deep interest in quenching the animosity dating from the breach in 1534. There is an Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission working toward "that unity in truth for which Christ prayed" (Common Declaration of Pope Paul VI and the Archbishop of Canterbury, March 1966). It published joint statements on Eucharistic Doctrine (1971), Ministry and Ordination (1973), and Authority in the Church (1976). Especially the last statement on the question of authority — its nature, exercise, and implications — dealt with a hot issue: it spoke of the authority of councils and of the Roman See.

However important this Venice 1976 international statement may be, we would now like to discuss a typical

Canadian development in the relation between Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism. The Journal of Ecumenical Studies (Winter 1982) carries a report entitled "*Canadian Agreed Statement on Infallibility*." The Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada is the official ecumenical commission established by bishops of the two communions; it is a study-action group that works for the reunion of the two churches. Each church appoints eleven members to the official commission and the United Church of Canada sends one observer. Anglican members include professors in systematic theology at Trinity College and Wycliffe College in Toronto; there are also their Roman Catholic colleagues of Regis, St. Michael's College, and St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto. Together they produced the Toronto Statement on Infallibility.

This statement fits in with the work of the international commission, not only in the persons involved but also in the issue discussed. Prof. Eugene Fairweather (Anglican, Toronto) and Prof. Jean-Marie Tillard (Roman Catholic, Ottawa) are members of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission as well as of the Canadian Dialogue. And the 1976 international statement had listed papal infallibility as an area of disagreement between the two churches which would need further work in order for reunion to be achieved.

Our readers will understand what is at stake here. According to the First Vatican Council (1870) it is a divinely revealed dogma that the Roman Pontiff "possesses through the divine assistance promised to him in the person of St. Peter, the infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed in defining doctrine concerning faith or morals." Such definitions of the pope are therefore irreformable because of their nature, but not because of the agreement of the Church. Vatican II defined the infallibility of the college of bishops in their ecumenical councils and in the meantime it underlined the doctrine of infallibility of the pope.

One would be inclined to surmise that if there is one Roman dogma that is met with insurmountable Protestant objections, it will be this doctrine of infallibility. Must it not be a stumblingstone even to the Anglicans? We gratefully remember the confession in Article XXI of the Anglican Articles of Religion (the Thirty-Nine Articles) concerning the authority of general councils: they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining to God. This article gave a good reason: forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God. And it offered also a right conclusion: wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of Holy Scripture. I will not now relate the history of this Article XXI on the American continent but state that a Reformed confessor can heartily agree with this part of the Anglican confession.

But the Anglican Church is shedding its Reformation confessional character, and the hierarchic and liturgical similarities with Rome are gaining the upper hand and are encroaching upon the right doctrine. This is also clear from the joint doctrinal statement on infallibility, approved by the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada. We reprint it in its totality, published in the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* (Winter 1982, pp. 86/7):

1. God alone is essentially and inalienably infallible, incapable of deceiving or being deceived.
2. The Church as a whole can be said to be infallible in the analogical sense that, by God's grace, it will never deceive or err so gravely concerning the truths of the Gospel that the message of salvation is lost to humankind. To speak of "infallibility" in this sense is not to claim that either the institutions of the Church or even the majority of its members are immune from error. It is simply to assert that the Church can be confident in the sufficiency of the Holy Spirit, who will safeguard the faith and enable the Church to fulfill its mission. The Church puts its trust in God who will not allow it to fall totally away from the path of salvation.
3. The truths of the Gospel thus "infallibly" preserved enlighten the whole people of God. By virtue of their participation in the prophetic ministry of Jesus Christ, all persons and institutions of the Church are called to express and preserve these truths in appropriate ways. However, we must recognize also a special sign of God's grace in preserving the Church from error at times of crisis or when fundamental matters of faith are in question: this sign occurs when the institutions which serve the universal fellowship (i.e., council and/or primate) are enabled to articulate these truths faithfully to Scripture and in a way that commends itself to the whole Church, thus equipping the Church to meet the challenge. Such pronouncements, by virtue of their foundation in Scripture and their appropriateness to the need of the time, give the first embodiment to a renewed agreement in the truth to which they summon the whole of the Church. The "formal authority" of such pronouncements helps the Church to meet the threat of error and gives it confidence in proclaiming the Gospel: but it must always defer to the "material authority" of Scripture, in fidelity to which the pronouncements were formulated.

This statement has been hailed as an example of extreme conciseness and of delicately nuanced language. It is the first ecumenical declaration reporting agreement on the doctrine of infallibility. As such it deserves close scrutiny and thorough analysis.

The declaration consists of three theses: a thesis concerning God, the Church, and persons and institutions of the Church (especially council and/or primate). It descends from a thesis about God which appears acceptable to each and every Christian. Via a thesis about the Church as a whole — which seems to be not much of a stumblingblock — it reaches the much debated area of "the institutions which serve the universal fellowship (i.e., council and/or primate)." For the last word each and every one will substitute the word "pope" or "Roman pontiff," although he is not expressly mentioned. Step by step the reader is brought into the sphere of the Vatican dogma of 1870!

Another remarkable aspect of this agreed statement

on infallibility is the absence of Scripture proof. Sure, it speaks in general about "the truths of the Gospel" and "the 'material authority' of Scripture," but it does not quote the Word of God itself. A Reformed reader, instructed by the manner in which his confessions time and again refer him to the context of Scripture passages, looks in vain for such method in this Anglican-Roman Catholic statement. Christ gathers His Church by His Spirit and Word, in the unity of true faith. The Church is born from the Word; it is *creatura verbi*, a creation of the Word, as Luther used to say. Apart from the lack of direct Scripture references in the entire declaration, one must say that the transition from God (Thesis 1) to Church (Thesis 2) is too abrupt: can one reason from what is called the essential and inalienable infallibility of *God* to the analogical infallibility of the *Church* as a whole, without even mentioning God's normative *revelation*? Answer: No; see I Tim. 3:15.

We should pay special attention to the terminology. One of the astonishing aspects of this statement is that Anglican and Roman Catholics agree on the use of the word "infallible" and "infallibly" with respect to the Church and its activity, be it that in Thesis 3 the adverb is adorned with quotation marks. When the church is called "infallible," it must mean that the Church cannot err. In the time of the Reformation, Calvin already granted the point that the Church cannot err in matters of salvation, but he immediately added the explanation and restriction: "The statement is true *in so far as* the church, having forsaken all its own wisdom, allows itself to be taught by the Holy Spirit through God's Word" (*Institutes*, IV. 8. 13). Word and Spirit belong inseparably together. The safekeeping of the truth wholly depends on whether the Word of the Lord is faithfully kept and preserved in its purity.

A similar statement is found in the Second Helvetic Confession (1566, Art. 17): "This holy Church of God is called the temple of the living God, built of living and spiritual stones and founded upon a firm rock, upon a foundation which no other can lay, and therefore it is called 'the pillar and bulwark of the truth' (I Tim. 3:5). It does not err *as long as* it rests upon the rock Christ, and upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles. And it is no wonder if it errs, as often as it deserts Him who alone is the truth." The Reformation did not speak about an infallibility of the Church as an inherent characteristic. The term is not found in Scripture, and after the misuse by an autonomously acting institution (1870!) it should be abandoned.

The agreed statement is ambiguous, while it uses the term "infallible" and fills it with the contents of another term, namely "Indefectible." We confess the indefectibility of the Church: thanks to the eternal counsel of the triune God there will always be a Church of Christ. In Art. 27 of the Belgic Confession we state concerning the catholic or universal church that it has been from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end thereof; which is evident from this that Christ is an eternal King, which without subjects He cannot be. One would call this the Reformed confession of the indefectibility of the Church. But this is something different from the concept of the infallibility of the Church. That the Church always will be there, is a promise that requires faith. It does not mean that each and every local congregation will always remain. When a Roman Catholic speaks of the infallibility of the Church, he thinks of the institution of Rome. Avery Dulles, a Jesuit theologian, rightly remarked in a reflection on the Canadian state-

Cont'd on next page.

LABOUR AS A MANDATE

Conclusion

The third article made a beginning with the extensive answer to be given to the obvious question: How can The Preacher in one breath say that he hates labour, and that it is a gift of God to find enjoyment in your labour (although that may also deserve the name "toil.")

A connection was seen between our labour "here" in this "vale of tears" and our labour in the eternal kingdom. The conclusion was that the two are intimately connected, lie in one line, although the differences may be many and great.

The most important question was, "How do I find what is exactly the kind of labour for which the LORD has fashioned me" (Psalm 139)? The first part of the answer was: believe that your Creator has a specific purpose with you for the sake of His glory. Then we set some steps on the way to find out what He wants to do with my life.

4. Labour and Talents

Scripture leaves no doubt that talents and gifts have been given to all. It would be very un-Scriptural to think that "talents and gifts" refers only to "spiritual matters."

INFALLIBILITY — cont'd.

ment: "According to the Roman Catholic understanding, indefectibility or perpetuity is promised to the Church that retains communion with Peter's successors." The Reformed confession, however, speaks of the catholic church which is a holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

Especially because of the ambiguity in terminology and the clouding of the real issues between Rome and Reformation with respect to the relation of Word and Church, the agreed Canadian Statement on Infallibility is a dangerous declaration.

J. FABER

Is it not striking how often the Lord Jesus, in His *Parables*, refers to labour? Try to call some of these parables to mind. You hear of two sons, sent by the father to the farm; the one says "yes" but doesn't go; the other says "no," but he goes and fulfils the task. Another parable speaks about workers hired at the labour market at various hours of the day, till one hour before sundown: all get the same wages. Then, the Master goes abroad and divides the work among his servants, appointing an overseer to direct the work. "Blessed is the servant whom the Master when He comes finds at work." And, of course, there are the various parables of the Master or King, going abroad and giving different mandates in the forms of different quantities of "talents" or "pounds" with which all have to work for the Master.

Sure, all these parables begin with, "The kingdom of heaven is like . . ." and thus it cannot be denied that these talents and work assignments first of all point to tasks in the kingdom, taken in the more narrow sense. But, as we have seen earlier, all work of kingdom children is to be kingdom work. In many of these parables the literal meaning and the purpose of the parable lie very close to each other.

Now again the question, "How can I find out what special gift or "talent" (to use this big word for my little life) the LORD has given me? In many cases young people have clear preferences. Mechanics, carpentry, computer science, teaching, nursing, art — make the list as long as you want. How fortunate are those who know from the start what they want and where their strength lies.

Not everyone is that lucky. But then, there are guidance teachers, psychoanalysts, and other kinds of counsellors who can test you, analyze their findings, and come to a certain conclusion, which in most cases is worth following up. The LORD has not much patience with young people who spend their young and valuable years as loafers, not realizing that they live

only once and that a spoiled yesterday never comes back. But He is pleased to bless those who take all the things we are discussing seriously. Remember: "Find enjoyment in your labour — it is the gift of God."

There is room for a word of warning here. The term "talent," already indicated, may give you an inferiority complex, because "talent" makes you think of Nobel Prize winners, of Discoverers, of people who make the *Who's Who*?

But for the LORD it does not really make much difference whether you are high on the ladder, or low. The above-mentioned parables, with their great differences in the number of talents given to the one and the other, already told us that the really important thing is not how many and how great talents you may have (there are only very few in that position), but whether you are faithful and *use* the single talent or little gift that the Lord gave you when He fashioned you in the womb of your mother.

5. Secularization

We are still trying to answer the big question: How can I find enjoyment in my task as the gift of God? You have your own question as a counterpart. "Do you really want me to believe that in this industrialized society, with its guided (or misguided) economy, this world of mass-production, of conveyor belts, my job — anyone's job — has anything to do with that mandate of which Genesis 1 spoke to us?" "Yea, do you really want me to believe that there is, smack in the middle of this crazy society, room for what you call a "divine mandate!"" Is the Heidelberg Catechism right in Lord's Day 49 when it assigns to everyone an "office and calling"?

The unqualified answer is Yes! I want you to believe that. I say: to "believe" that with a faith as defined in Hebrews 11:1!

Let me first remove the impression that you all have to be teachers, preachers, missionaries, or scientists, computer experts, and the like. Surely

not! Also the most humble and monotonous labour, like on the assembly-line or dishwashing in a large hotel, must or may be seen as a divine "office and calling" that is related to the great mandate of Genesis 1 and 9, and which is repeated in Revelation 22:3.

You may find some help in the following *three examples*. The first is pretty well-known but deserves repeating. Centuries ago a gentleman passed a building site. He saw three men sitting next to each other. All three were doing the same job: chipping stones to make them suitable for the new structure. He asked the first one, "What are you doing there, my friend?" The surly answer was, "Can't you see? I am chipping stones" The man went on and asked the second labourer the same question. The answer was quite different, "Well, sir, I am making a living for my family; we are expecting another baby, and I want to support my oldest son in his studies." Then he came to the third man, doing the same tedious, monotonous, lowly work of stone-chipping. But this third man saw his work in perspective. Sure, he was chipping stones; he was also making a living for his family, but to the stranger he said — and there was music in his voice — "Sir, I am building a cathedral!"

All three answers were true, and yet . . . If one cannot see in his daily work a humble and modest contribution to the one mighty cathedral that the LORD God is building, one is "most to be pitied," to quote Paul, 1 Cor. 15. Poor person, who lives and works without a sense of calling, a mandate and purpose in his life. Don't blame the kind of work he is doing: blame *him* for it.

The second example comes from personal experience. Years ago I knew a brother in Holland who was very active in church work, evangelism, etc. His daily work, however, seemed to miss a steady line. At a certain time I asked him if the rumour was true that "nowadays" he was a "lompbenboer," i.e., a collector of rags and other "junk" lying in people's attics. He paid them a small amount after having weighed the stuff, and then brought it to a plant or workshop where all that stuff was (as we would call it now) "recycled" and thus in some way from that dark corner in the attic was brought back into production. Thus, when I asked him, "Is that really what you are doing nowadays?" (this rag-collecting was considered a very lowly job!), his

cheerful answer was, "Yes sir! I am working for the kingdom!" My reaction, "How do you explain that?" was met with the explanation: "Well, all that stuff is lying there idle; I bring it back into the production-process, and thus I add my little share to keep the world turning, turning, towards the Great Day of Christ." I can tell you, he was a very happy man. I remember his smile.

The third example, though not so eloquent, may also help someone to get a better perspective on his daily work. In the same city we visited people — among them an older couple, the man wearing a beautiful golden watch with a golden chain, not very much in harmony with the modest style of their home and life. I asked him, or rather made some comment on the beautiful watch. Proudly he answered, "Yes, I got that when I had been working forty years between the weaving-ooms in the textile plant." Now, if you have ever been there, you know about the high humidity to keep the threads from breaking, the terrible noise that forces the workers to speak with gestures, just like the deaf-mute. Imagine: forty years in that noisy, humid plant . . . He even added proudly: "I never missed a day because of sickness!" Did he complain? No, he was thankful that he had been able to complete the forty years as a healthy man, and at the end he had a nice little home without a golden roof, where he could spend the rest of his days with his wife. He had been a little cog in the big machine to keep the world moving in fulfillment of the mandate of Genesis 1. He had not laboured in vain!

You may do with these three examples whatever you want. You may smile at them, you may scorn, or you get a warm feeling in your heart for so many humble labourers who have not lost the sense of "office and calling," even under such circumstances. And when you then compare your own life with theirs, you may feel ashamed, and become convinced that the LORD has to forgive you quite something here.

6. When one is "in Christ," the Last Adam, one may again share in the luxury of the first Adam. He did not need "to work in order to live," but he "lived in order to work."

The order of the *six petitions* of the Lord's Prayer also teaches a lesson here. We pray first that we may do our share, "we and all men"(!), in the hallowing of Father's Name, the coming

of His Kingdom, and the "happening" of His Will. But, in order to do that, the Lord Jesus tells us to ask in the fourth petition, even before forgiveness of sins, "Give us this day our daily bread." Father, we want to work in Thy service, but wilt Thou then provide us with the means.

Now, one should not exaggerate, and by using the line "live in order to work" exclude the other, "work in order to live." Also here we must learn "to speak with two words." Because Scripture tells us that both are true. Paul writes to the Thessalonians, "If any one will not work, let him not eat," 11, 3:10. Obviously, as long as we are in the "first-creation world," we cannot walk around as in a paradise, just picking the fruits from every tree during our walk. We will have to work for it! But because we are also "in Christ," we already share in the glory, once lost but regained. We now live for the Lord, we live to fulfil our share in the



THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

Published bi-weekly by Premier Printing Ltd.
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Second class mail registration number 1025.

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE
MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.
1249 Plessis Road,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2C 3L9
Phone: (204) 222-5218

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION P.O. Box 54,
Fergus, Ontario, Canada N1M 2W7
ISSN 0383-0438

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original mandate, and we may leave the provision for our needs to Him who mandated us.

7. A next remark, that flows from the previous one, is that only in this way we may regain "labour joy."

It has been said that in our society there can no longer be such a thing as having joy in your labour. Labour is only a necessary evil and should be limited to less and less hours. The real joy can only be savoured in the hours of non-labour, the hours of leisure, relaxation, "doing nothing," and thus these hours should become longer and longer in the ideal future society. Poor people, who do not know the joy of labour, of accomplishment, of productivity, and of creating something. We hasten to add that my task as God's worker is certainly not limited to that number of hours that I spend in my "daily job," by which I make sufficient money to support my family. There are several hours left, which certainly should not be spent in "lazing" around.

Two remarks may be made in closing. First, Scripture mentions some secondary or indirect aspects of our daily work. Again to the Thessalonians Paul wrote, I, 4:10-12, "Work with your hands so that you may *command the respect of outsiders.*" Obviously, labour is also a means of witnessing, as we confess in Lord's Day 32, "that by our daily work our neighbour be also won for Christ." Further, daily labour is done for the fulfillment of the great commandment. We find this all over the Bible: we work to exercise righteousness and mercy towards our neighbour; in one word: by our labour we are to love him. The Wedding Form reminds the newlywed of Paul's rule, "Work faithfully in your daily calling (!) that you may support your family and also help those in need" (Eph. 4:24).

The second remark refers again to that so-called leisure time that is expanding in modern society. Sure, everyone is entitled to relaxation. The first commandment the LORD ever

gave was to follow His example and take a day of *rest*. To this has been added what our grandparents hardly knew: seasonal holidays. That's now considered a "right" for everyone. But this rest cannot be all that God has meant for us in our so-called leisure time. There are so many duties, functions. First, the husband and father should spend time with his family. Next to this important task there are those like time for Bible study, for fellowship with fellow believers. Think of the universal task to witness for Christ, or whatever name you want to use for your share in promoting the Gospel. Further, Dr. STOTT once wrote that the greatest unemployment problem is in the church. We still have not learned to put all the special gifts and talents the LORD has granted to the communion of saints to work. Church and kingdom may put their demands upon your time and energy. And, last not least, there are the works of mercy which are an essential part of our God-given mandate. Visiting the sick and the shut-ins, volunteer work in the local community — all those activities for which you are not paid, but by which we fulfil the great commandment: to love God and our neighbour.

Thus, in distinction from unbelievers, God's children have many opportunities to "find enjoyment in your labour — *this is the gift of God.*"

What is first and most-important for us in our labour? To make more money so that we can buy more for ourselves and have more fun? Yes, that is the growing demand for double incomes: it is for man himself. But the Bible warns, "Do not labour to acquire wealth; have the wisdom to show restraint" (Prov. 23:4). "Those who want to get rich . . . wander away from the faith, setting their hope on uncertain riches" (I Tim. 6). Let us rather set our hearts and minds on how our life can be of benefit for others; that it may have meaning for church and kingdom; that we fulfil our office and calling as faithfully as the angels in heaven do, Lord's Day 49. Then one may plead on the promise, "You shall eat the fruit of the labour of your hands; you shall be happy, and it shall be well with you" (Ps. 128). Then you may even expect to hear one day, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much; enter into the joy of your Master" (Matt. 25:21).

This is the gift of God.

G. VANDOOREN

PSALM 90

1. LORD, thou hast been since thou didst shape cre - a - tion
 Our dwell-ing-place in ev- ery gen- er - a - tion.
 Be - fore the moun- tains were brought forth and ground-ed,
 And thou the earth and world hadst formed and found-ed,
 From ev - er - last - ing stands thy ho - ly throne,
 To ev - er - last - ing art thou God a - lone.

8. Show forth thy *work* to all who serve before thee,
 And to thy children show thy *power* and *glory*.
 May he, the LORD, our *gracious* God and Saviour,
 Shed on us all the *riches* of his favour,
 Establish thou the *labours* of our hand:
 Establish them, that to thy praise they stand.

Shall We Worship God in Church with Dancing??

In the previous Press Review, I mentioned that two matters especially dealt with at the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church, were of interest. The one was on nuclear weapons. The other dealt with dancing. Again I pass on the whole "set of statements and guidelines" on "Dance and the Christian Life" as the Synod adopted it. It is again taken over from *Calvinist Contact*, June 25, 1982. Here it follows:

The Christian and the World

1. God created man in His image and mandated him "to have dominion over all the earth" (Gen. 1:28). This includes the cultural mandate to develop all the potentials of creation and to dedicate them to the glory of God.
2. Because sin entered the world, even the best works of man are defiled with sin (Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 62), but sin is being restrained by God's grace.
3. By God's particular grace sinners are, in principle, renewed and are restored in their threefold office as Christians in order that they may acknowledge the kingship of Christ and may serve Him in all their activities (Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 32).
4. The difference between believers and unbelievers cannot always be detected in the products of their cultural activities, but it becomes evident in their motivation, direction, and purpose (Rom. 12:1-2).
5. Worldliness is the evil of giving the love of the heart to things temporal or sinful instead of giving love to God and seeking to do His will (Rom. 12:2; I John 2:15-17).
6. Every area of human life is a battlefield between good and evil, where the Christian must learn to discern and to do the will of God. Therefore the Christian must accept and enjoy whatever things are true, honourable, just, pure, and lovely (Phil. 4:8), and he must reject and shun all evil.
7. The Christian must lead a life of spiritual separation from the world, even while enjoying those things which are neither commanded nor forbidden by the Word of God (I Cor. 7:31).
8. The Christian must not only abstain from and protest against evil in the world, but he must also call society to the obedience of Christ, thus serving

as the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13-14).

9. All Christians, according to the talents God has given them, must work positively and constructively to fulfill the cultural mandate (Eccles. 9:7-10).
10. The Christian must discriminate in his use of the products of culture, in harmony with the scriptural principle of Christian liberty.

The Exercise of Christian Liberty

1. In all moral issues concerning which the Scriptures make known the will of God, the Christian bows voluntarily and without reservation in faithful obedience (Matt. 6:10; Rom. 12:2; I John 2:17).
2. The Christian is free from every ordinance other than that which God demands in Holy Scripture, which is the only rule for faith and conduct (Gal. 5:2-18; Rev. 22:18-19; Belgic Confession, Art. 7).
3. In the use of things temporal, the Christian shall be guided by an enlightened conscience, in prayerful submission to the Word of God, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, always maintaining an appreciative consideration of the pastoral guidance of the office-bearers of the church and of the mind of his fellow Christians (Ps. 119:19; II Cor. 3:17; I John 2:20, 27; Eph. 3:16-19).
4. The Christian honours human authority in the home, the church, the school, the state, and in all other spheres of society only for the sake of Christ, who is our eternal king. No human authority may lay down laws of its own for Christian conduct. Those in authority do have the right to require submission to the law of Christ. They may and often must lay down regulations to maintain good order, but such regulations shall bind the conscience only insofar as they are in harmony with the Word of God (Matt. 28:18; Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 104; Belgic Confession, Art. 32).
5. The exercise of the Christian's freedom of conscience should be restrained, not by the dictates of his fellowmen, but by his own love and faith, his concern for his own spiritual welfare and that of others, and by his desire to do the works of faith according to God's law and His glory (Heidelberg Catechism, Q. 91).

6. Although Christian liberty is in principle a gift to all believers, it can be fully exercised only by those who are mature. The youth of the church are in a position analogous to that of Israel in the old covenant, being "under guardians and stewards" (Gal. 4:2). This places upon the parents the duty of guiding their children into a responsible exercise of Christian liberty; and places upon the church the duty of coming to an understanding of the complexities of the life of contemporary youth, and in that light the duty of instructing them so they may properly discern the will of God for their lives." *Acts of Synod 1966*.

Dance as a Cultural Expression

- a. In the most basic sense, the human capacity to dance roots in creation. God gave us bodies that are instruments of sense and motion and made us capable of responding to musical themes and rhythmical movement. This capacity is rooted in creation, not in the fall.
- b. This capacity to dance is a universal human phenomenon, which finds expression in every human culture. It shows itself in various forms, including religious dances, artistic dances, and social dance. Each of these types has legitimate reference points in our creation in God's image, for God made us creatures of faith, artistic sensitivity, and sociability, each of which can find valid expression in dance forms.
- c. Dancing, along with every other created human capacity, suffers from fallen and sinful condition. This fallenness enters dance in all its forms — religious, artistic, and social — and affects the entire context of dance, including setting, music, and motivation of participants, as well as the structure of the dance itself.
- d. The Christian is not called to a rejection of the human capacity to dance, but is called to redeem this ability to a God honouring use. The challenge of a redeemed use of dancing includes religious, artistic, and social forms of dance, and extends to the entire context of dancing, including motivation, setting, and music, as well as the structure of the dance itself.

Evaluation of Specific Dance Forms:

a. It is Biblical and therefore fitting that God's people use appropriate liturgical dance forms for the expression of their deep feelings of praise to their God. The God who gave us bodies responsive to music and capable of rhythmic movement does not require that we ignore our bodies in worship or that we praise Him only with our minds and voices.

Note: Synod referred point a. to the Liturgical Committee for further study of its implications and its feasibility of implementation and to report to Synod 1984.

b. Like painting, sculpture, and music, artistic dance forms such as ballet are legitimate avenues of expression for the Christian who pursues them in acknowledgement of Christ's redemptive claims.

c. The folk dances of many ethnic cultures, including various square dances, generally reflect a joyful use of music, rhythm, movement, and social involvement which can be redeemed by a Christian community that makes a sensitive effort to control the ingredients of music, motivation, and context.

d. The ballroom and social dances of our contemporary culture present a far greater challenge to conscientious Christians. While many of these dances present positive potential for the expression of genuine artistic skill as well as healthy social interaction, they also present negative potential. They can be, and often are, deliberately sexually suggestive; they allow partners to make physical contact indiscriminately on a very casual and superficial basis; and the entire context in which such dances are held often reflects the hedonistic values dominant in our culture. Christians will find it difficult to redeem ballroom dancing without monitoring closely their attitudes, the nature of their participation, and the context in which these dances take place. Christians should not participate in them without the exercise of genuine Christian maturity.

e. Such contemporary dances as disco, present a whole array of features that are sharply in conflict with Christian standards. These features include a blatant sexual suggestiveness, a narcissistic orientation, and use of musical themes that flout Christian values. Christians will find it difficult to redeem these dances and should firmly reject them as they appear in our culture.

Education in Dance

a. It is the responsibility of schools, colleges, churches, homes, and other Christian organizations which decide to sponsor dances to do so not merely permissively but to ac-

cept responsibility for their structure and context, including setting, music, and guidance towards the motivation of participants.

b. Educational institutions which sponsor dances must also accept responsibility for providing leadership and guidance toward an ongoing evaluation of the constantly shifting patterns of contemporary dance and toward the development of new and genuinely Christian dances. Acceptance of such responsibility may well involve the development of courses designed to implement this task.

c. Christian families who sponsor dances on various occasions such as wedding receptions must take responsibility for the manner and context in which they take place.

In an accompanying article with the heading "Dance, too, can be redeemed," Wally Vandekleut reports on the discussion at the Synod. From it I take over the following parts. It should give a good impression of the discussion:

Synod has mandated the Christian community to learn how to dance redemptively. . . .

In one of the most difficult discussions of Synod for many, the delegates struggled hard with the content of the report written by the study committee and recommended by the Majority Report of the Advisory Committee.

On the one hand there was the clear majority who maintained that *all* of life is under the Lordship of Christ and must be redeemed in His honour.

There were also those who could not include the realm of dance under Christ's Lordship. In summary, their concerns were as follows:

"Dancing is spiritually dangerous. . . .

"John Calvin, who was committed to the cultural mandate, opposed the dance. . . .

"If we search ourselves, we will see that dancing is wrong; we are just too sinful. . . .

"If we adopt the dance report we will give our young people a free ticket to dance with an indiscriminant mind. . . .

In response, those who supported the report said in summary as follows:

"Dancing is another area of life, like drama, film, arts, labor, wealth and prosperity, education, etc., which we are called to redeem. . . .

"To the Christian, grass is God's grass. . . . and dance is God's dance. . . .

"To be against reforming dance is to be selective of culture. This is not the Reformed position. Christ reforms and changes culture. . . .

"If we don't accept the challenge to redeem dance, then we have to discipline a lot of young people. We have failed to give our young people leadership. . . .

"We serve the church better by giving it something to discuss, than by giving it nothing. . . .

"Dance and the Christian Life" is not a free ticket. If anything, all Reformed Christians and especially those who are dancing, are now seriously challenged to responsibly seek ways to redeem dance.

I shall make only a few remarks here. I was glad to read the statement that "such contemporary dances as disco" are "sharply in conflict with Christian standards." And "Christians will find it difficult to redeem these dances and should firmly reject them as they appear in our culture." Only I would have used the word "impossible" instead of "difficult." That "impossible" gives a better ground for the exhortation to "reject them."

But what is true for those forms of dancing, is true also for other forms of social dancing. Couples are involved in dancing. I can imagine people saying that the only form of social dancing that could be permitted is that of husband and wife together. But the practice of life is that, when father and mother dance together at a social event, the children will dance also; and not only those engaged, but also those not engaged, also those not going steady. The end is: everyone dances with everyone. And, if the old ways of social dancing are accepted, what, then, in principle and in practice, prevents one from participating in disco dancing? The former might be a little less obviously sexual than the latter. But the difference is only gradual. I refer you here to what was quoted in a previous volume of *Clarion* from people who know the social dance: it is sexually arousing.

As I see it, the Synod saw no other way than to try to give a "pious" frame to a form of worldliness that has been accepted by so many already. And those who have accepted it want to defend this worldliness with this "pious" frame. Worldliness in the church is plastered with a misused doctrine of our "cultural mandate." It is true that in this world "sin is being restrained by God's grace." That means: in general. But that does not mean that so many things that easily lead to sin and are so much connected with sin must be "redeemed" for Christ. The reality in this life is that Christians live in a hostile world over which Satan rules, and in which they are strangers and sojourners, living soberly and watchfully. I cannot read in these statements and guidelines this holy soberness and

Cont'd on page 334.

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

“Your prophets have been like foxes among ruins, O Israel.” Ezek. 13:4

Foxes Among Ruins

In his proclamation against the false prophets and prophetesses, the prophet Ezekiel uses what to us is an unfamiliar simile: Israel’s prophets were like foxes among ruins. As the context indicates, this obviously had to do with their behaviour among God’s people, their tendency to use flattering words and to gloss over many crucial issues. They did their best to keep God’s people calm by signalling great delays both in punishment and judgment. Even though the forces of destruction were breaking out on all sides, these prophets kept up an optimistic message, urging all not to be aroused or alarmed. A kind of detached nonchalance was the order of the day.

The curious reader might wonder, however, how these prophets could be regarded as foxes among ruins. What does this metaphor mean? It is quite descriptive; yet, it appears elusive. Indeed, explanations as to its meaning abound, some dwelling on the characteristics of foxes, others on their homes. The fox himself presents us with a bit of an enigma here; he is very crafty and sly, but he is also very coy and shy. What elements of his character does the prophet wish to isolate in order to warn and awaken the people of the LORD?

The simplest explanation is the one which takes the existing situation in account. Israel was threatened at the time, both by widespread internal decay and by external offences. They *were* in peril, even if they did not see it. But these prophets actually *refused* to see it. They were quite comfortable in the state of decay and felt at home. Just as the fox makes a comfortable home among ruins, so these prophets did nothing to prevent or avoid destruction, but actually promoted it by their words — all for their own well-being. The prophet Jeremiah, too, spoke of prophets who tried to placate the people by stating that no harm would befall them, Jer. 14:14ff., 23:31ff. It seemed as if this was what the people wanted! At a time when their security was threatened, they enjoyed listening to prophets who kept telling them that all would be well.

Indeed, in the light of the situation, Ezekiel’s metaphor conveys a grim reality. Things were not well in Jerusalem; but a big part of the problem lay with her prophets. Like foxes, they were not there to do any restoring or rebuilding. They were not there for any type of *preventative* work. They were there to get out of it what they could, to enjoy themselves among the ruins. Like foxes, they were not around at critical moments; they knew how to keep themselves out of trouble. All in all, they were having a good time.

And why does the LORD’s prophet bring this criticism before God’s people? He does so in order to prepare and equip them for the true realities, in order to awaken them to the actual state of affairs. The false prophets were daubing things with whitewash, glossing things over, and failing to be frank about real states of affairs. Here the believer who waited for the LORD was told that things were not that pleasant, and that God’s chastising hand would reach out over all Israel.

And the Church of the New Testament does well to take note of the prophet’s words. For the end-time scenario witnessed by the prophets Ezekiel and Jeremiah will come upon God’s people again; only the final judgment will be much more grievous, Rev. 7:14, 16:1. In this age of the Spirit, in which the Lord Jesus Christ has completed His work on earth, and now reaps its harvest from heaven, the elements of the final stages have been fully revealed. That is why Paul tells Timothy that the last days will bring times of *stress*, II Tim. 3:1; times with self-indulgent preachers, 3:6; times in which people will not endure sound teaching, but with itching ears will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own likings, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander into myths, 4:3, 4. That is why he exhorts Timothy to be steady, unflinching in patience and teaching, 4:2, 5. Faced with deserters, the apostle Paul encourages steadfastness, perseverance, and regular instruction.

For despite what men may say, this is what the Church needs. And the faithful of God’s children will always receive it willingly, too. We do not need foxes, dogs, or wolves; there are always more than enough of these, Acts 20:29ff., Phil. 3:2. Pray to the Head of the Church for *faithful shepherds* and a *faithful flock*. And let God’s people be on guard, watchful and sober day by day, knowing that we will all be called to give account as to our knowledge of and behaviour with the Word of life.

With the completed work of our Saviour behind us, we have been delivered from the ruins of sin. We ought not to return to them again. Preachers and hearers alike ought to be *re-builders* in the midst of the old ruins, setting up the first pillars of an eternal dwelling. And that can be done only by heartfelt obedience to the voice of the LORD, unflinching love for His cause and for each other. To those who steadily persevere on this road, the Lord will give the crown of righteousness, the lasting reward of faith which can only be found in Him.

J. DEJONG

God-fearing watchfulness. Christ taught us to pray: "Bring us not into temptation." Jude warned that we must "hate even the garment spotted by the flesh." The result of all this so-called "redeeming" of the culture and cultural forms of *this* world leads only to being conquered by the world. We see here a misuse of the doctrine about our "cultural mandate," because there is not that restraint of being strangers in this world.

Again, yes, we do read in the Bible about dancing, out of joy, for the Lord. People did so in great joy and thankfulness for the redeeming works of the Lord. This occurred in Old Testament times. But this form of dancing for the Lord (women, Ex. 15:20; David, II Sam. 6:14, 16 ["leaping and dancing"]), was totally different from the social dancing of couples. That was for the Lord. Social dancing is a worldly form of entertainment for man himself. And I cannot see how this can be "redeemed" so that it is to the glory of God, to the strengthening of obedience of faith, and to the winning of the world for Christ.

Besides, in the New Testament we do not read about dancing in worship for the LORD. We never read that Christ or the apostles worshipped God with dancing, or were engaged in social dancing, or said that the dancing of e.g. Herodias' daughter (Matthew 14:6) had to be "redeemed." In the New Testament — and therefore also in the Reformed Standards — the emphasis is on the hearing (and preaching) of the Word of God, whereby is added the singing of Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Col. 3:16). But we never read that the Christians danced in worshipping the Lord. I sure hope that both the Liturgical Committee and the Christian Reformed Church receive the wisdom to say "no" to dancing in the worship services. Dancing will not keep people in church either. Only the solid, good preaching of the pure gospel will, together with humble obedience to that purely preached Word of God. I hope that they will receive the wisdom and strength to say "no," as yet, to all social dancing, despite the realization that "if we don't accept the challenge to redeem dance, then we have to discipline a lot of young people." I think: and older people as well. But if that discipline can lead the churches back in the right track, is its use not laudable? In *fighting* worldliness, young people as well as their parents receive sound leadership, not in *plastering* it.

J. GEERTSEMA



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.

ROTTERDAM — DELFSHAVEN

Concerned members of the synodical Reformed Church here are going to organize an action against the decision of their Consistory to administer baptism to twin babies who are under the "parental care" of a lesbian couple. They asked the Consistory to convene a meeting with the Congregation in the beginning of August.

The babies were born to one of the two lesbians as a result of artificial insemination.

Apparently the Consistory asked the advice of the Classis Rotterdam; but Classis did not give either a negative or a positive judgment; it stated that every one is personally responsible before God.

Mr. H.J. Hegger calls such a baptism "a blasphemous show." He states that the first question at baptism should read in this case, ". . . these children of whom you are the mother and whom you have deprived of the right to know their own father and whom you caused to be born by an impregnation in which you manipulated God's creative powers, purely for your own pleasure?"

The Reformed Churches, Mr. Hegger writes, are the first of all the churches in The Netherlands, and perhaps even of all the churches in the world, to have such a blasphemous show, this shameful abuse of the holy sign and seal of the Covenant of God in the blood of His own Son.

The Rev. C.G. Bos, minister emeritus at Ermeloo, writes that this is being done "whereas in 1944 it was declared so assuredly that the LORD demands presumptive regeneration before the baptism of children of the congregation, and when churches were cast out of the federation because they could not accept this doctrine as a Scriptural doctrine. This

was never confessed as having been wrong." (ND)

* * *

TORONTO (RES NE)

The Canons of Dort, one of the "Three Forms of Unity" held by many Reformed Churches all over the world, was originally not intended to be placed on the same level as the Heidelberg Catechism and the Belgic Confession. This discovery was made by a class that met at the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS) in Toronto, during February and March, for an in-depth look at the Canons. These Canons or Heads of Doctrines, drafted by the Synod of Dort 1618-19, became confessionally binding soon after the synod. They were presented to the world on May 6, 1619, by Synod President Johannes Bogerman, an overbearing sort of man, who at the same time in ruthless fashion ordered the Arminians to leave both the church and the synod.

Much of the course, consisting of six sessions and taught by Donald Sinnema, a graduate of ICS, dealt specifically with the Arminian controversy. Sinnema, who has done considerable research on the synod, pointed out that much of synod's time was taken up with procedural wranglings. As a result tempers rose and many delegates became hardened in their positions. In Sinnema's opinion the synod became more occupied with formulating a judgment on the Arminians than with probing the issue in a search for more light.

* * *

GRAND RAPIDS (RES NE)

After thirty-seven years of publication *Gereformeerd Weekblad* (GW) has folded. The first issue appeared on July 6, 1945, only weeks after the complete liberation of The Netherlands after World War II. The final issue bears the date June 25, 1982. For financial reasons, caused by a diminishing readership, the publication was no longer feasible. It had also proved impossible to find a new editor for Prof. J. Plomp, who at the age of 70 wanted to resign.

* * *

NEW YORK, NY (ADLoBB)

. . . Missions to Jews today are "illegitimate and unevangelical enterprises," according to a prominent American Catholic theologian.

Rev. Gerard S. Sloyan, professor of Religion and New Testament Studies at Temple University, Philadelphia, Pa., said in an interfaith dialogue at Indiana University, Bloomington, IN, that Jews have made clear

through 2,000 years of history their "uninterest in any religious fusion with non-Jews."

He went on to say that this lack of interest was compounded by "attempts at forced conversion to Christianity and Islam over the ages."

The dialogue between Rev. Sloyan and Dr. Pinchas Lapide, professor of Judaic Studies Göttingen, University, was on "The Parting of the Ways: Rabbinic Judaism and Early Christianity."

According to Rabbi Leon Klenicki, co-director of ADL's Interreligious Department, the Institute's interreligious quarterly has presented the views of Rev. Sloyan and Dr. Lapide "because we believe that such a theological encounter can only take place in a pluralistic society and is a sign of a new era in which religious differences are respected."

Rabbi Klenicki, a member of the publication's Editorial Board, noted that the views expressed while not necessarily shared by ADL, clarify the issues involved and inspire further exploration.

The dialogue focused on the following theological themes:

- The concept of the Messiah and Christos in both traditions;
- The perspective of Jewish and Christian vocations in the gospel of Luke;
- The concept of Judaism in the gospel of John;
- The rabbinical response to the New Testament's ideological challenge;
- The need to return to early sources for greater understanding of the separation between the two faiths.

Rev. Sloyan urged Christians never to forget that they came from "the fruitful womb" of Israel and Judaism "whose title of birth is just as clear" as that of their own faith.

Dr. Lapide declared that "a return to the sources of Christian faith lays the foundation for a great coalition of messianic confidence between Christians and Jews."

This coalition, he added, might ripen into "an alliance of hope" in accordance with passages of "redemptive longing" in the New Testament.

He noted that Jews and Christians "ought to split the world's record between them for hopeful endurance and tenacity" in waiting for the Messiah — Jews waiting for well over 2,000 years and Christians for some 1,950 years. Dr. Lapide said that the controversy over whether or not the Messiah has already appeared should be postponed until he arrives.

At that time, he concluded, "the Messiah will remove all lingering doubts and give us his personal reply."

Comment.

On purpose we took over almost the whole piece received from the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

Two things are shown very clearly in the above: The Jews still persevere in their rejection of the Messiah who has appeared and will appear again in glory; and in the second place: The apostate Christians no longer know the exclusiveness of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Since they do not know the Lord Himself, they also lack completely the zeal which the apostle Paul displayed in bringing the Gospel to his brethren-according-to-the-flesh.

Certainly, the Messiah will appear, but He will be the Same One who before has placed Himself for our sakes before the tribunal of God under His curse. They all will see Him, and will indeed receive a personal message, for they, too, who pierced Him will see Him. And if there is still any doubt, the lingering doubt will be taken away. However, then it will be too late to change the mind.

In the above we see what all this modern "dialoguing" leads to: all things made relative, the Gospel pulled down to the level of "theological opinions," and "religious difference." In this age "religious differences are to be respected," but this means that no appeal can be made to anyone to abandon his errors and false religion and to come to the knowledge of the Truth and thus to salvation.

Christians have indeed been waiting for more than nineteen hundred years, but not for the Messiah to appear so that they can see who He is and who was right: the Jews or the Christians. We know Whom we expect from heaven. It will not be His first appearing on this earth: He will appear to put the last touch to the salvation which He obtained by His blood when He became Man.

For every one who rejects His coming into the flesh and who refuses to believe that in Him all the prophecies were fulfilled, that He IS the Messiah, there is no future, there is no salvation.

To tell this to everyone is the greatest love we can show to them.

The "kindness" and "consideration" shown for "divergentologies" as we notice it in our days is

one of the tricks of satan to obscure the truth and thus to pave the way to hell.

Greece's socialist government is moving to separate church and state, and to expropriate the church's unused land. The Greek constitution recognizes the Orthodox church as the state church, finances it, and provides for its involvement in many of its legal and administrative functions. Prime minister Andreas Papandreou, however, intends to end the church's "improper" involvement in state affairs. It views expropriation as a means to aid underprivileged farmers. Other moves include the introduction of a bill to provide for automatic divorce after several years of separation, and pending legislation to allow abortion on demand. The government's ultimate objective is to confine the church to a "spiritual" role. (CT)

VO

CANADIAN REFORMED ASSOCIATION FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Most of the readers of *Clarion* will know that we have an Association for the Handicapped within our Canadian Reformed community. The first official membership meeting was in 1978, and regular meetings have been held since that time. The board of the association meets every month, and has been working mainly towards setting up a group home for our handicapped brothers and sisters. As a result of that work you may have read the ads in the last few issues of this magazine. Other fruits of the work of the Association have been a family picnic and three summer camps. These are the only things most of you may have ever heard about the association, since not much else was publicized until now.

At the last membership meeting it was decided that a Public Relations Committee would try to give a bit more publicity to the work of our association. This committee will try to print articles related to the work for and with the handicapped on a regular basis. We also hope to give you monthly press releases of the board meetings.

If you have any questions, or requests for certain articles, please feel free to contact us. Through this column we will try to be of some help to each other, by sharing the responsibility for our handicapped brothers and sisters.

For the Committee,
B. HOOGLAND Box 345
Smithville, Ontario L0R 2A0

news medley

The previous medley was quite lengthy. This was partly the result of the pleasure of mentioning some wedding anniversaries and weaving some personal information into the congratulations.

We could do the same this time when we mention the 55th wedding anniversary of brother and sister H.J. Ten Brinke of Chilliwack. They used to live in Houston, and that's where I learned to know them first. On September 2nd they will celebrate their feast and I am certain that all children will be present plus many brothers and sisters who wish to congratulate them.

Besides having a farm, brother Ten Brinke also worked for the Canadian National Railways and I loved to tease him by saying that people that work for the railways are not working at all. In order to prove this, I mentioned that whenever I travelled by train, I always saw the people that ride the speeders standing by the side of the track and waving at the passengers. I never failed to draw brother Ten Brinke into an oration in which he described how they took care of the safety of the passengers by checking the roadbed and the tracks. We had a hearty laugh together after such encounter. In any case: it is good to see each other once in a while after so many years and to discover that in spite of advancing in age, there are still many things to be very thankful for as far as health and strength are concerned. May the Lord continue his mercies upon you.

To my knowledge, this is the only couple who are

55th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. H.J. ten Brinke were married in Hardenberg, Overijssel, The Netherlands on September 2, 1927. In 1949, along with their 8 children they immigrated into Canada and made their first Canadian home on a farm in Houston B.C. From there they moved to Smithers B.C., where Mr. ten Brinke worked in the lumber for a number of years. But because of illness he had to retire. They now are enjoying their retirement years in Chilliwack B.C. They hope to have a nice day with their children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren from Eastern, Northern and Western Canada.

celebrating an anniversary that should find a place in our column's noteworthy events.

The news from the Churches is scarce in these days of summer doldrums. Not only are most bulletins appearing on alternate Sundays — if even that frequently — but the news they contain is not all that important to pass on, except for a few cases.

We begin our trip this time in Edmonton.

The Immanuel Church is still considering ways and means which may lead to having a Church building of their own. The following is a summary of the discussions held on August 3rd.

"The main purpose of the meeting was to discuss the possibility of building a church building this year. As a result of this discussion two two-man committees were appointed, i.e. one to provide Council with a detailed analysis of the cost of building and the financial implication for the congregation should we proceed. The second committee is to contact the school board about the cost of the long-range alternative in renting the school auditorium in the case when building is not feasible for the foreseeable future. Both committees are to report back to Council as soon as possible so that Council may be enabled to come to the congregation with all the details of the possibilities open to the congregation."

Then — sorry to say — we have to move on to Ontario, because there is no more news available from the Western Churches.

Some more progress has been made in the matter of instituting another Church in the Burlington area.

The report of Burlington West's Consistory tells us:

"Progress report from Committee Institution Burlington South with

1. request to grant permission to institute a new church per January 3, 1983,
2. a proposal re financial arrangements.

In the ensuing discussion, the financial aspect drew a lot of attention, so the chairman suggested to first discuss the institution and its implications. After ample discussion, a proposal to grant permission to institute (subject to classical approval) and to appoint a committee to study the financial aspects was voted on and accepted."

A committee was appointed to study the financial implications and they were charged to report to the next consistory meeting, to be held on August 24. The decision-in-principle has been taken, and that is the more important aspect. Thus, the Lord willing, the number of Churches will have increased by one when the new Yearbook appears. One of the results of this will be that the balcony in the Rehoboth Church building will no longer be used, something which to me is a reason for joy.

In Hamilton, on the other hand, the Committee of Administration was instructed "to tender for a balcony and to come to the Consistory with a recommendation." One of the reasons why I deplore the failure of institution of a Church in the Flamborough-Waterdown area is that members from Hamilton might have come to join this Church, thus rendering construction of a balcony unnecessary. However: that's how things are.

Hamilton also instructed the "Board of Mission in cooperation with the Board of Mission Aid . . . to examine the feasibility of sending a second missionary before proceeding with the sending of a Mission Aid worker."

It is always wise to send out two people. Therein we not only would follow the practice as found in the New

40th Wedding Anniversary



Mr. and Mrs. Leyenhorst

Cornelis Leyenhorst and Wilhelmina VandeBurgt were united in marriage on September 23, 1942 in Amersfoort, Utrecht, Holland.

In 1948 they, with their three daughters emigrated to Canada. Except for four months in Alberta they have lived in B.C. all these years where also their other nine children were born. Thankful to the Lord for all His bountiful blessings we wish them further happiness in years to come.

Testament but we also would render it somewhat easier for the ones that are sent out: they can support and assist each other and discuss various difficulties and "problems" together. Two people together can still do much more than two people working separately. This applies in each and every case.

Then the question is to be considered whether two missionaries are to be sent or a missionary and a mission aid worker. From what I have learned about the experiences of the Church at Surrey, I would say that it is better to send a missionary and a mission aid worker. Experience teaches — as I understand it — that a missionary in Brazil immediately is faced with the harsh facts of poverty, illness, and lack of care. This almost forces him to spend a considerable part of his time on those things; yet this is not his specific work to which he was sent there. Two missionaries together would not solve this difficulty either: their task would still be: preach the Gospel! If a mission aid worker were sent along, this would enable the missionary to spend all his time on his specific task and at the same time the mercy of Christ would be shown to the people in whose midst he is working.

If — what I understand to be the intention — Hamilton's missionary is going to work not too far away from those sent by the Surrey Church, the possibility of consultation is there and thus the need for a second missionary instead of a mission aid worker is even less urgent. If two missionaries can be sent plus a mission aid worker, who would not be very happy with this? If only two can be sent,

it would be best in my opinion to send a missionary and a mission aid worker.

I offer these considerations as a help to come to the best possible decision. I wrote them down also to alert our readers to the questions that arise or can be raised in this connection. I wished that all our readers could become acquainted with the work in Brazil by having the *Surrey Mission News* made available to them. Then they would, perhaps, understand better what I mean. May I — again, and without any desire to arouse anyone's displeasure — express my fervent hope that all the news about the mission work of all the Churches be brought to our members in one *Mission News*?

We have another item from Hamilton.

"A discussion about the feasibility of a third service in the Dutch language results in a decision to offer a third service every Sunday in the Dutch language when the Old Age Home opens, the Lord willing, in Spring of 1983."

I do not know how it will be with my own capacity to understand the English language if I reach such an age that I have to live in an Old Age Home. Perhaps I will have to experience that what I have learned during that last forty years seems to have disappeared, leaving a gap. In that case I shall be grateful when I can hear the preaching of God's Word in a language I understand.

Yet, I think that instituting Dutch services — even if they are "only" third services — after so many years is a step backwards. Such services tend to break the Congregation up into two sections and this is deplorable.

Meanwhile, as you have noticed, the plans for the Old Age Home are closer to their realization now. In several Congregations meetings were held explaining them; artist's sketches of the building were shown, and the work apparently has started. The Consistory laid down some rules for the use of the driveway and the parking lot of the Church, and in due time here will be the first Old Age Home established by our own people for our own people. The initiative is to be lauded and the perseverance to be admired. The promoters don't have to be afraid that there won't be enough applications for occupancy. I haven't heard anything about it, but am sure that there will be more applications than available places. This shows that the need is there. And what could be more satisfying than providing in a need?

VO

Correction

A couple of errors crept into my write up on "Our College" in *Clarion* of July 16, (Vol. 31, no. 14, p. 278).

The catching up which Prof. Faber had to do after his return from Philadelphia was of course, not in the "diaconological" but in the dogmatological department.

Having already three full timers the College does not look forward to the appointment of a "third" but of a fourth professor.

And finally Mr. C. Bouwman will not receive the "Master of Theology" degree but the degree of Master of Divinity.

My apologies,
L. SELLES

A Ray of Sunshine



The following is a quotation from
Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion.

What it is to know God.

By the knowledge of God, I understand that by which we not only conceive that there is some God, but also apprehend what it is for our interest, and conducive to his glory, what, in short, it is befitting to know concerning him. For, properly speaking, we cannot say that God is known where there is no religion or piety. I am not now referring to that species of knowledge by which men, in themselves lost and under curse, apprehend God as a Redeemer in Christ the Mediator. I speak only of that simple and primitive knowledge, to which the mere course of nature would have conducted us, had Adam stood upright. For although no man will now, in the present ruin of the human race, perceive God to be either a father, or the author of salvation, or propitious in any respect, until Christ interpose to make our peace; still it is one thing to perceive that God our Maker supports us by his power, rules us by his providence, fosters us by his goodness, and visits us with all kinds of blessings, and another thing to embrace the grace of reconciliation offered to us in Christ. Since, then, the Lord first appears, as well in the creation of the world as in the general doctrine of Scripture, simply as a Creator, and afterwards as a Redeemer in Christ, — a twofold knowledge of him hence arises: of these the former is now to be considered, the latter will afterwards follow in its order. But although our mind cannot conceive of God, without rendering some worship to him, it will not, however, be sufficient simply to hold that he is the only being whom all ought to worship and adore, unless we are also persuaded that he is the fountain of all goodness, and that we must seek everything in him, and in none but him. My meaning is: we must be persuaded not only that as he once formed the world, so he sustains it by his boundless power, governs it by his wisdom, preserves it by his goodness, in particular, rules the human race with justice and judgment, bears with them in mercy, shields them by his protection; but also that not a particle of light, or wisdom, or justice, or power, or rectitude, or genuine truth, will anywhere be found, which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause; in this way we must learn to expect and ask all things from him, and thankfully ascribe to him whatever we receive. For this sense of the divine perfections is the proper master to teach us piety, out of

which religion springs. By piety I mean that union of reverence and love to God which the knowledge of his benefits inspires. For, until men feel that they owe everything to God, that they are cherished by his paternal care, and that he is the author of all their blessings, so that nought is to be looked far away from him, they will never submit to him in voluntary obedience; nay, unless they place their entire happiness in him, they will never yield up their whole selves to him in truth and sincerity.

PSALM 104

1. O bless the LORD, my soul, and praise his name.
LORD God, how great thou art, how bright thy fame!
Thou, who art clothed with maj - es - ty and glo - ry,
Thou, robed in light, we hon - our and a - dore thee.
The heav - ens thou hast stretched out like a tent,
Thy dwell - ing found - ed on the fir - ma - ment.
Clouds are thy char - iot, storms lend thee their pin - ions,
Winds are thy her - alds, fire and flame thy min - ions.

2. The earth which thou hast founded none will shake.
Deep waters like a garment thou didst make
To cover it, to stand above the mountains.
At thy rebuke, thy thunder's voice, the fountains
Took flight while hills were raised and valleys drowned.
To mighty oceans thou hast set a bound;
Thou didst appoint a place for them, lest roiling
Their floods break loose again, the earth despoiling.
3. Thou makest springs gush forth in vales and dells.
Between the hills, brooks flow from sparkling wells
And quench the thirst of beasts in field and forest,
Wild asses drink the waters which thou pourest.
There birds of heaven dwell in shrub and tree,
They sing among the branches praising thee.
Hills drenchest thou from heaven where thou livest,
The earth is satisfied with all thou givest.
4. Thou madest grass for cattle and wild beasts,
And plants for man who on thy bounties feasts.
Oil makes his face to shine when he rejoices
In bread and wine and then thy praises voices.
Well-watered are God's trees, he rains upon
His cedars planted on the Lebanon.
There in the tree-tops are the storks residing,
Goats roam the crags where badgers find a hiding.
5. To mark the months thou, LORD, hast made the moon.
At thy command the sun turns dusk to noon,
And when thy day by night is overtaken
Then in the forests the wild beasts awaken.
Young lions roar and ask from God their prey,
But when the dawn appears they steal away
And lie down in their dens, the sunlight scorning.
Then man awakes and greets the dewy morning.

6. Man goes forth to his *work when morning* calls
And labours till the evening shadow falls.
O LORD, thy many glorious works astound us,
In wisdom hast thou made them all around us,
Of thy great riches thy creation sings.
Thy ocean teems with countless living things;
It is, for ships, a place to make their way in,
And, for Leviathan, a place to play in.
7. All look to thee, a *countless multitude,*
That in due time thou mayest give them food.
Now filled with the good things that thou providest,
They are dismayed when thou thy countenance hidest.
When thou dost take away their breath, they die;
They are created when thou, from on high
Thy Spirit sending, them with life enduest.
The face of all the earth thou, LORD, renewest.
8. The glory of the *LORD forever stands;*
May he rejoice in all that he commands.
He looks on earth and makes creation shiver,
He touches mountains and they smoke and quiver.
I will sing to the LORD through all my days,
While I have being make my hymns of praise.
May he, my joy, be pleased; let sin be vanished.
Bless God, my soul! Let wicked men be banished.

*On our Calendar for the month of September,
 we have:*

MARY VANDE BURGT

2789 Lehman Road R.R. #1,
 Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 1M3

The Lord willing, Mary will celebrate her 26th birthday on September 11. Mary's hobbies are handcrafts and baking. She helps out at home where she can use her skills. Mary loves to receive mail.

PAUL DIELEMAN

307 Connaught Avenue
 Willowdale, Ontario M2R 2M1

Paul hopes to celebrate his 13th birthday on September 29, the Lord willing. Paul is attending a special education class at the Junior High School, where he is on a rotation upterm, like the other pupils. His progress is slow, but he enjoys school. Paul is a happy boy. He enjoys receiving cards for his big day.

Shall we send this young sister and brother our best wishes, brothers and sisters?

Please send your requests to:

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

Report on the Rally of the Canadian Reformed Women's Societies in Alberta

The rally of the Canadian Reformed Women's Societies in Alberta was held this year on June 9. It was hosted by Coaldale, but the location was Trinity United Church in Calgary.

At 10:00 we convened upstairs in the church, and began by singing Psalm 47:1, 3. Mrs. Jackie Leffers, who led the day on behalf of Coaldale, opened in prayer. She then extended a hearty welcome to all those in attendance. Scripture reading was from Romans 12:17-13:10, and afterwards the different societies were introduced. There were seventy-one women present from five different societies: Edmonton Providence, Edmonton Immanuel, Barrhead, Calgary, and Coaldale.

Mrs. Leffers then introduced the guest speaker, the Reverend J.D. Wielenga, whose topic was "Modern War and the Scriptures." He began by saying that war is not a strange topic for a women's rally, for it is women as mothers who often help form their children's views on war.

Nuclear war has become the moral issue of the eighties. Civilians are demonstrating for disarmament, and

leaders of countries are pushing for increased defense. We, as Christians, cannot be pacifists when it comes to nuclear war, but rather we must urge our governments do what God has commanded them to do. The governments are to execute God's vengeance until He comes (Romans 13; Lord's Day 14). They are to do what God will do on the last day. It is here that the whole issue of nuclear armament is decided. We share the horrified feelings of those supporting disarmament, but cannot identify with them because they value biological and physical life too highly.

What we must do is to pray that God in His mercy will spare us a nuclear war. But we must preach the message not to fear God's Will, but rather to fear Satan.

Reverend Wielenga's speech brought forth a wide variety of questions, and a fruitful discussion. At noon, a delicious hot meal was served downstairs by the ladies of Trinity United Church. There was time afterwards to socialize, and many took advantage of the beautiful weather and went for a walk.

We reconvened upstairs at 1:30

and Mrs. Elsie Eelhart sang two solos for our entertainment. The discussion continued, after which we sang the League Song, "Sing God's Glory." With the formal part of the day over we gathered downstairs where refreshments were served. Entertainment was provided by the women of Coaldale. One piece was entitled "Women in Church History." It detailed the roles of six women who played vital roles in the development of God's church. Along with a narration, the ladies were dressed in clothing from the appropriate era. Also poems were read and a game played.

Afterwards the floor was opened for comments and questions — during this time Coaldale received many thanks from the societies for hosting the rally. All agreed that it had been a day of fellowship and learning. We sang Hymn 53:1, 4, and Mrs. Leffers closed in prayer. Since many women had long journeys ahead of them, it wasn't long before the buses were loaded and back on the road. With thanks to the Lord, all returned safely to their homes and families.

K. VAN SPRONSEN

BULKLEY VALLEY WOMEN'S RALLY

They didn't arrive by bus-loads at the Smithers Canadian Reformed Church. There were, however, almost fifty women from the Smithers and Houston congregations who met that sunny, warm morning for coffee before the rally began. It was the first time a rally was organized for the women of the Bulkley Valley. Because of the distance they were unable to join in the festivities with the Fraser



Participants studying the Riverside Park nature hunt question papers.

Valley women's rallies. Therefore, when a few women suggested, "Let's organize our own," work was begun, and the plans became a reality on June 10th.

After ten o'clock, the president of the Ladies' Society "Deborah," Mrs. C. VanSpronsen, invited all present to join in singing Psalm 95:1 and 2 and led in prayer to ask for God's blessing. She welcomed the women and remembered the four who had hoped to come but were sharing a hospital room after they had each just been blessed with a child.

Rev. G.H. Visscher was introduced as our speaker on the topic *The Goodness of God and the Old Testament*. In the Old Testament the devil seems to have so much effect when we hear of violence and bloodshed. In the accounts of Elisha and the she-

bears, the extermination of the Canaanites, and the numerous wars, so much cruelty has one questioning whether there is a contradiction between the Old Testament with a God of vengeance and the New Testament with a God of love. But a closer look reveals that it is not God who is cruel but our society that is cruel and unjust.

Rev. Visscher went on to explain how God wants justice done to the one who breaks His laws and He wants him to receive punishment that fits the crime. The Old Testament laws and punishments were realistic to maintain order and justice in a fallen world. With the law He tries to restrain lawlessness and shows that He is a merciful Father who doesn't want to lose His children. Punishment is a deterrent to root out the disease of sin before it spreads. It was meant to save Israel, and through them also the world. When one studies the history of the wars the Israelites fought at God's



Rev. Visscher presenting his speech.

command with the Canaanites, it is clear that the enemy was punished for their sin which was full.

He continued his interesting speech showing us that the New Testament does not soften God's judgments. The New Testament calls us to a spiritual warfare where the emphasis is on eternal judgment and death and warnings for the day of wrath. Jesus

teaches the love of God like none other, but He says it is not for everyone. There is not a contradiction between the New and Old Testaments. Vengeance is God's in both. With humility and reverence we will adore the



Winners of the nature hunt (Captains of their teams) with their "gold medals" — ribboned canning jar lids.

judgment of God. Even the Son of God was punished for our sake, for there was no other way. God's love was to conquer His wrath to show us His mercy.

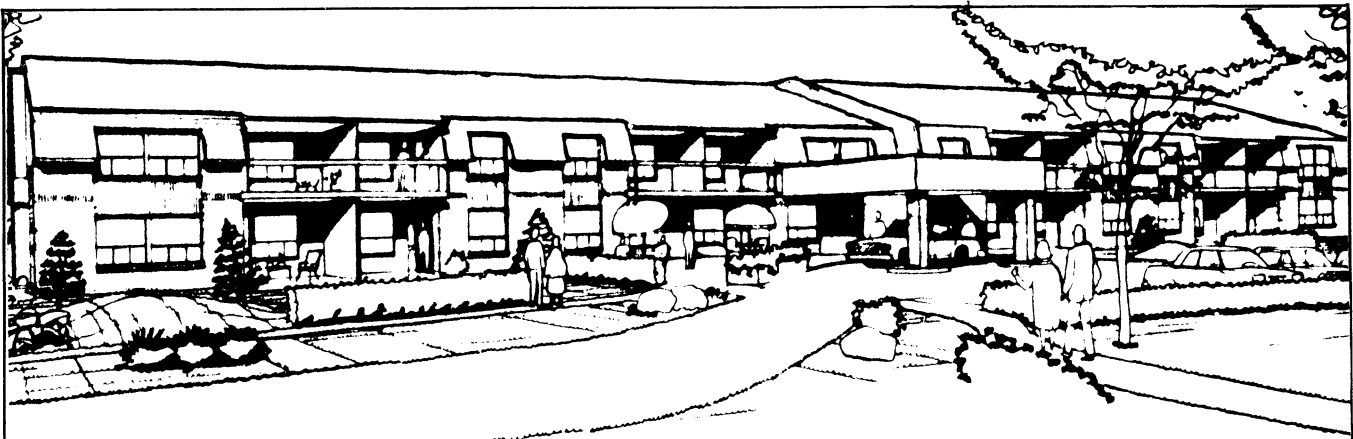
We praised God with the singing of Psalm 145:1 and 2. Together we enjoyed coffee and continued to a discussion led by Rev. Visscher.

The speaker was thanked for his presentation and he too joined us for lunch (Mrs. Visscher was one of the new mothers).

In the afternoon the ladies enjoyed the sun at nearby Riverside Park. In teams they socialized while they walked about the park trails hunting for varied specimens of flowering plants and bugs. Some had collected up to forty different flowers and had captured in bottles live creatures. There was a competition among the groups to create the most original and attractive floral arrangement using their collection; the results were beautiful, even professional. It was a wonderful time of fellowship and a time to marvel at and enjoy God's creation.

While still battling mosquitoes, everyone had refreshing drinks. "Gold medals" were presented to the winners of the nature hunt. Mrs. Kanis closed the rally and led in thanksgiving prayer. It was the hope of many that the first rally would lead to an annual event.

(Mrs.) ANN PENNINGA



EBENEZER VILLA

337 Stone Church Road, East, Hamilton, Ontario

Owned and operated by the Canadian Reformed Society for a Home for the Aged Inc.

D.V. February 1983, our Senior Citizen Home with 30 spacious apartments will be ready for occupancy.

Applications and inquiries from prospective tenants are now invited.

This two storey building complete with elevator, lounge and craftsroom, is now under construction, on a two acre parcel of land next to the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church.

*For more information write to:
Ebenezer Villa*

Canadian Reformed Society for a Home for the Aged Inc.
P.O. Box 6032, Station "F" Hamilton, Ontario L9C 5S2

In the process of establishing our 30 unit senior citizens' building, we have probably reached the busiest time ever. A time in which many actions and important decisions must be made rather quickly within a short amount of time.

The last newsletter, you may recall, asked for suggestions for a name for the Home for the Aged. Well, we received some suggestions and after careful deliberation, the Board decided on a name. Since this Home is setup by Canadian Reformed people and it hopes to provide an atmosphere in which God's covenant children, in the sunset of their lives may serve Him better, the Board found that a biblical name would be most appropriate. Therefore, based on I Sam. 7:12, the name "Ebenezer Villa" was chosen. The name "Ebenezer" means "Hitherto the Lord has helped us." We would like to thank all those who showed interest and took the time to submit other names.

Since our project is a partially government funded project, through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), it was necessary to put up for public tender the construction of "Ebenezer Villa." Tenders for this project were opened on June 25 and the lowest bidder, Harm Schilthuis & Sons of Ancaster, was awarded the job. We also had to arrange for a mortgage. As mentioned in one of our earlier newsletters, the land on which the building is to be built, had to be rezoned. This was done and was approved by the City of Hamilton. It received final approval by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), before a building permit can be issued. With all these formalities in place, we can proudly announce that construction has now started.

As a matter of information for our future or prospective tenants, we can also fill you in as to some of the

things you can expect. First of all, the rent for the year 1983 will be \$320.00 per month for a single bedroom unit and \$375.00 per month for a two bedroom unit. These rates will include heat, hydro and water. Should it be that you could not afford these rates, then you will be charged rent-g geared-to-income or approximately 25% of total monthly income. The building will have a total of 30 units, 23 with one bedroom, 5 with 2 bedrooms and 2 specially designed handicap units. It also has an elevator, a large furnished lounge, an office, a library room, a craftsroom and a laundry room. The apartments will be painted in a neutral beige colour, so the tenants can do with them what they want. The carpet can be chosen by the tenant at a competitive additional cost. Just recently we learned that the Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church will provide a Dutch service every week, once the Home is in existence. These are only a few of the qualities which we feel make this Home unique. And we are sure many others feel the same, since we have received 13 applications already before the Home has even been built. It is therefore, that we strongly urge anyone who is interested in living in this Home to, as soon as possible, contact one of the following Board members for more information.

M. Vandenbos: 679-4429	J. Schulenberg: 957-3939
G. VanWoudenberg: 563-7990	B. Dekker: 386-6771
H. Bartels: 765-4965	G. Gritter: 765-2985
H. Van Luik: 563-8168	

All correspondence can be directed to:
Canadian Reformed Home for the Aged Inc.
P.O. Box 6032, Station "F" Hamilton, Ontario

for the Co-ordinating Committee

C. FEENSTRA

Letters-to-the-Editor

Dear Mr. Editor(s):

A few comments concerning the new column "Personalialia" in our Canadian Reformed Magazine.

In the back of *Clarion* we can read of the wonderful works of the Lord in creating new life; brothers and sisters choose beautiful and well-known texts to show their thankfulness but also to praise our Creator, and to give Him all the credit. We also see in *Clarion* how the Lord blesses marriages, and grants couples to celebrate anniversaries; also here hopefully only God receives the praise and honour. Marriage and engagement announcements also tell of the wonderful ways of our Covenant God. These announcements alone are a pleasure to read and they all testify of the wonderful works of our God. Our whole Canadian Reformed Magazine hopefully is to the glory of our God.

But now a new column named "Personalialia"; its aim is to make known the achievements of our church members, something which they have achieved either by hard work, or hard studying, or per-

haps because of a special talent. *Clarion* even asks for a picture so that we can see who the recipient of this honour bestowing occasion is.

Two stories from Holy Scripture come to my mind. In II Sam. 24 we read of King David who was punished by the Lord for numbering the people; the sin was pride. Also in II Kings 20, we read that the Lord is angry with King Hezekiah who boasts about his treasures which of course point to his achievements as well. In II Cor. 11 the apostle Paul also boasts about his qualifications but not before telling his readers that he is speaking as a fool. Paul says in II Cor. 10:18, "It is not the man who commends himself that is accepted, but the man whom the Lord commends."

The whole Bible warns against pride and looking to our own achievements.

The column "Personalialia" will in my opinion invite us to boast about our own achievements as the unbelieving world does, rather than boast in our Covenant God who sent His only begotten Son into the world who humbled Himself even unto death on a cross.

Yours in the Lord,
H.A. BARTELS
Ancaster

RESPONSE

Dear Brother:

This is quite some heavy flak directed against our proposed new column. Even some Bible texts have to serve to show how wrong we are. Quite something, isn't it?

Would we really take away any honour from the Lord when publishing some honour bestowed upon one of His children or when making it known to the readers and brotherhood when children of His have been enabled by Him to achieve something? Is this really to be put on a level with what David did or Hezekiah?

If texts are to be quoted, we could easily do the same and remind our brother of Nehemiah's petition to the Lord to remember for his good "all that I have done for this people," 5:19; 13:31; or we could mention the promise which our Saviour Himself gave concerning the woman who anointed His feet: "Wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her," Matt. 26:13.

But why come with such heavy artillery?

In the past we did publish pictures and captions of persons who received a bachelor's master's or doctor's degree. What's wrong with that? We never heard one word of criticism on that.

I read *Nederlands Dagblad* quite regularly and oftentimes see a picture of someone who was decorated for so many years of faithful service. In an accompanying little article we are oftentimes told what the brother did in the service of his Master and King. What's wrong with that?

We certainly do not invite the Church members to send us a glowing article about their *own* achievements. In all likeli-

hood, we would not publish that anyway. But when there are others who bring something to our attention, e.g. a graduation, or someone's appointment as professor at a university, or someone being elected to a municipal or city council, or someone being recognized for so many years of faithful service, we shall gladly publish that.

Hero-worship? Idolatry? Conceit?
Keep things simple, please.

VO

Dear Editor:

May I express to you my deep appreciation for the editorial coverage given to the recent doctrinal controversy at Westminster Seminary and in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church as well as for the personal concern that has been consistently shown.

I would like to comment on your observation that it would have been preferable for me to have submitted to a judicial process with a view to obtaining "an official Orthodox Presbyterian statement" on matters that are of particular concern to the Canadian Reformed Churches. I can sympathize with your objective but believe that your expectations would have met with disappointment for several reasons.

The charges that were contemplated did not take up my covenantal doctrine as such. They focussed more narrowly on the nature of justifying faith and the place of repentance. The question whether the covenant was made with believers and their seed or with Christ and the elect was not introduced directly.

Further, I would estimate conservatively that it would have taken some five years for a judicial case to work itself through the various judicatories, and even then I doubt that that would have been the conclusion of the matter. One of my more vigorous opponents has said that the controversy would go on for 30 years and he is probably right. The Canadian Reformed Churches would have to wait a long time to have their questions answered. The Form of Government gives to Presbyteries the power "to resolve questions of doctrine or discipline seriously and reasonably proposed." I tried this route and discovered that the resolution arrived at in an orderly way did not end the matter.

Beyond that, in the Presbyterian system judicial trials do not result in official statements. The only result is that a certain view held by a particular person is, or is not, acceptable. Another person may hold exactly the same view and remain untouched by the decision, except that if charges were filed against him as well, a precedent would have been set. Precedents are not binding, however. The only official statements of doctrine are contained in the Confession and catechisms. What these statements mean when questions of interpretation arise can be ascertained only by informally observing what

Church News

ACCEPTED to Chilliwack, B.C.:

CANDIDATE C. BOUWMAN

of Fergus, Ontario.

He declined the calls from Brampton, Carman and Neerlandia.

General Synod 1983

After having received the favourable advice of the Regional Synod of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Western Canada, the Canadian Reformed Church at Cloverdale, the convening Church for the General Synod 1983, informs you that the Synod will be convened, the Lord willing, on *Tuesday, November 1, 1983.*

DELEGATES— International Conference of Reformed Churches

The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad has delegated the *Rev. M. vanBeveren* and the *Rev. J. Visscher* to attend the constituent assembly of the International Conference of Reformed Churches to be held in Groningen, The Netherlands From Oct. 26 — Nov. 6, 1982. This action of the Committee is taken in light of the mandate that it received from Synod Smithville 1980 (see *Acts* Art. 153, E, 7, a).

is actually being taught in the churches from week to week.

It is right and proper for the Canadian Reformed Churches to press the OPC for a more specific and formal definition of the answer to the question, With whom is the covenant made? This can happen in the context of official ecclesiastical contact. The most that can be discovered, however, is the opinions of the particular persons with whom the Canadian Reformed representatives happen to speak. The official doctrinal position of the OPC is that the covenant of grace is made with Christ and in him with all the elect (Larger Catechism, Q. 31). The Confession unfolds the covenant of grace as an offer of salvation to sinners (all men) and a guarantee of salvation to the elect (Chap. VII, Sect. 3). The Directory for Worship does say that "the promise of the covenant is made to believers and to their seed," but spells this out in terms of "interest in the covenant and right to the seal of it and to the upward privileges of the church." The Directory is not an official doctrinal pronouncement.

My suggestion would be that the Canadian Reformed Churches take steps to acquaint Orthodox Presbyterians with the nature of the struggle in the Netherlands for the sake of sharpening doctrinal perception. Perhaps some enterprising brother could, for example, translate the recent series by Professor Kamphuis in *De Reformatie* explaining the doctrinal aspects of the Liberation. The translation could be adapted for a North American readership and be distributed among Orthodox Presbyterians. Many do not understand what the issues were and a knowledge of this history might go far toward avoiding a potentially painful conflict on this side of the Atlantic.

Although I am no longer a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, I continue to have a warm interest in and re-

OUR COVER

Safe, secure and "Hitching a Ride" an award winning picture in 1981.

The City of Ottawa has more than 20 swans, all descended from six pairs presented by Queen Elizabeth as a centennial gift in 1967.

Killing two young swans, fish and turtles are accused of having no respect for this royal family. Two mated royal pairs and their cygnets were removed and relocated, for their own protection, to the City's swan ponds and nursery until they are large enough to cope with the river's natural hazards.

The remainder continue to enjoy their summer idyll on the Rideau. Ottawa August 1982.

spect for the work and witness of the Canadian Reformed Churches. I am convinced that they have much to offer, much that is sorely needed, and much that would be enthusiastically welcomed on the North American continent by multitudes who want to be obedient to Christ and his word. Both the uniformly favorable reception accorded to Dr. Faber as well as the strong support which I enjoyed among students at Westminster, many of whom did not come from Reformed churches or backgrounds, convince me of that. Just over 100 years ago, Charles Hodge of Princeton Seminary, Presbyterianism's Herman Bavinck, bemoaned the fact that we had forgotten the covenant. By the grace of God we are seeing a renewed interest in the covenant and that promises to be for the benefit and advancement of Christ's Kingdom.

Cordially yours in Christ,
NORMAN SHEPHERD
Glenside, PA

PRESS RELEASE

of the Classis Ontario North held on June 24, 1982.

1. After Christian opening, the credentials are examined and classis is constituted: Rev. Pouwelse, chairman; Rev. VanOene, clerk; Rev. Aasman, vice-chairman.

The chairman welcomes the brothers. He remembers the Rev. Mulder's calls to the churches of Chilliwack and Burlington-East. He also remembers the Rev. J. DeJong's call to Burlington-East and wishes him strength in his decision. Earlier Rev. J. DeJong had turned down a call to Burlington-West. The chairman informs us that the proposed new church in the Burlington-West area did not go through as yet. Another effort will be made to form a new church in the downtown Burlington area. The chairman also remembers the Rev. VanSpronsen's call to Orangeville which he turned down. He hopes that Orangeville will receive a minister soon in view of the difficult circumstances in which Orangeville finds itself. He also remembers the Rev. Scholten who passed away earlier this year. He is remembered as a faithful servant of the Lord. Finally the chairman also remembers the marriage of Rev. Loopstra, a minister who has served our churches for many years. The chairman wishes him the Lord's blessings.

The agenda is established.

2. The examination of brother Clarence Bouwman begins after all the necessary papers are found to be in order. In closed session classis decides that the sermon proposal of brother Bouwman on Acts 5:1-11 is sufficient to permit the con-

tinuation of this examination. He is then examined on the exegesis of Ruth 4 and Hebrews 13 and knowledge of the doctrine of the church. In closed session it is decided to declare this brother eligible for call to the churches. Brother Bouwman signs the form of subscription.

3. The examination of brother Eric Kampen begins after all the necessary papers are found to be in order. In closed session classis decides that the sermon proposal of brother Kampen on Genesis 22:1-14 is sufficient to permit the continuation of this examination. He is then examined on his knowledge of and adherence to the doctrine of the church. In closed session it is decided to grant him permission to speak an edifying word. Brother Kampen promises to remain faithful to the confessions.

4.a. Reports of church visitation are submitted. The following churches have been visited: Burlington-East, Fergus, Guelph, Orangeville, Toronto.

b. The Church of Brampton reports on its auditing of the classical archives.

c. Rev. Mulder reports on words spoken on behalf of classis at the occasion of Rev. VanBeveren's farewell service.

5. Instructions: a. The Church at Burlington-West asks whether Rev. Pouwelse may be relieved of his classical arrangements to preach in Ottawa. The request is not granted.

b. The Church at Burlington-East asks whether the Rev. VanDooren may be appointed as its counselor. This is approved. Burlington-East also requests pulpit supply once per month. The request is not granted.

6. Preaching arrangements are made for the vacant churches of Brampton and Ottawa.

7. Appointments are made in order to fill the vacancies left by the Rev. VanBeveren: O.T. exegesis, Rev. Aasman; Ethics, Rev. Pouwelse.

8. In the question period ad Art. 41, C.O., the Church at Orangeville requests advice. Advice is given.

9. Preparation next classis: convening church is Ottawa; date: September 16, 1982, at 9:00 a.m.; place: Toronto church building; officers: Rev. Mulder, chairman, Rev. Pouwelse, Clerk; Rev. VanOene, vice-chairman.

10. No censure ad Art. 43, C.O. is necessary.

11. The Acts are read and adopted and the Press Release is read and approved.

12. The chairman expresses the appreciation of classis for the excellent way in which some sisters of the Church of Toronto provided the brothers with meals and refreshments.

13. After some words of thanks by the chairman, classis is closed with prayer by the vice-chairman.

For the Classis,
R. AASMAN, vice-chairman

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

You all like stories, I know.

Here is the story of how one Busy Beaver celebrated Canada Day last month.

"Well for Canada's birthday we first went to Keho Lake at about ten-thirty. When we got there it was thundering and lightning, so we were going to go home. But on the way home it stopped raining and we went to Park Lake. There we went fishing but didn't catch anything. So then Mom, me, Steven, Irene and Albert went to the swimming area, and Dad and Joanne kept fishing. Later on we picked up Joanne and Dad. They still didn't catch anything. So we all went to the lake, took a swim, then had a game of soccer, ate, and played soccer again. Then we got ready to go home. When we came to Coaldale we went to Aunt Harriet's and Uncle John's. Then we went home. That's the end of my day."

* * *

Now it's time for birthday wishes!

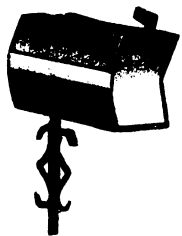
To all our Busy Beavers celebrating a September birthday we wish a very happy day with your family, and your friends, too. May the Lord bless and keep you in the year ahead.

The same wishes as always, but just as well-meant!
Many happy returns, Busy Beavers!

Keith Lubbers	Sept 9	Chuck Buikema	Sept 19
Joos Poppe	9	Margo Hofsink	20
Julia VanderPol	10*	Juliet Selles	20
Tammy Linde	11	Richard Woelders	20
Mary Vande Burgt	11	Corinne Terpstra	22
Brian Berends	15	Jennifer Dijkstra	26

*This is a very special date because it's also the birthday of our Theological College, for which we have our BIRTHDAY FUND!

* * *



From the Mailbox

How is your broken arm, *Felicia Viersen*? Are you getting the cast off soon? I hope you didn't let a broken arm spoil your holiday fun! Thanks for the quiz, Felicia.

Thanks for your contribution to the BIRTHDAY FUND, *Mary-Ann Van Woudenberg*. Congratulations to

you on your new little cousin! Do you get to help look after him sometimes? How is your new tunnel coming along, *Mary-Ann*? Thanks for the quiz. I think the Busy Beavers will like it!

Hello *Shirley Van Raalte*. Thank you for a nice chatty letter and an interesting word puzzle, too. Keep up the good work, Shirley. I'm glad you're enjoying your holidays. How about your entry in our big contest?

Congratulations on a good report card, *Miriam Vander Werf*! I see you had a very successful Walk-a-thon, too! Every now and then, Miriam, I explain that the Birthday Fund is for the Busy Beavers to give our Theological College a birthday present in September. Miriam, wouldn't your friend find it very hard to be a real Busy Beaver because she doesn't get the Clarion? Thanks for sharing your "things-to-do"!

How did you like Jasper, *Marie Hamoen*? Did you have lots of fun? How are your new kittens doing? Have you sent in your answers to the big Summer Contest already, Marie? Thank you for both pictures, Marie!

How did you do on your swimming lessons, *Joanne Hamoen*? Did you like your holiday in Jasper? I'm glad you had such a nice birthday. Thank you very much for your contribution to the BIRTHDAY FUND, Joanne. Have you sent in your entry to our Contest? Thank you for the picture!

* * *

Riddles For You

Lots of riddles were sent in again. Lots of fun to share! These are from Busy Beavers *Linda DeBoer*, *Charlene Van Woudenberg*, and *Miriam Vander Werf*.

1. What colors would you paint the sun and the wind?
2. What geometrical figure represents a lost parrot?
3. What good quality does the North Pole remind you of?
4. What relation is the doorstep to the doormat?
5. What does a calf become after it is one year old?
6. What is it that never was and never will be?
7. What did the mouse do when he came home to find his house on fire?
8. What is the difference between a bottle of medicine and a bad boy?

Answers:

1. The sun rose and the wind blue. 2. Polygon (polly gone). 3. Justice (just ice). 4. A step-father (farth-ear). 5. Two years old. 6. A mouse's nest in a cat's ear! 7. Took out all the baby mice and did mouse to mouse respiration! 8. One is well shaken before being taken, and the other should be taken and well shaken!

* * *

Busy Beavers, did you enjoy the puzzle? And did you enjoy your HOLIDAYS? They're nearly gone!

Best wishes for a happy school year! But before that starts — don't forget to send in your SUMMER CONTEST entries!

Bye for now.

With love from your
Aunt Betty

AMOS

Word Search Puzzle

R V I C F J U S T I C E K S D N A M M O C
 O D D D R E S S E R P P O D E V O U R I E
 O E C N E L I T S E P T N E M H S I N U P
 P L O W E Y T W I N R U T E R N E E D Y J
 R I F U W S O G T T A A L M O R N I N G T
 O V O A I C N R A E H S L I D L E W V H H
 P E V I L I V E T K E E S A B H O R G E A
 H R W A L L E A R S I S S E N R S I T S I
 E T Z I O N R E P A E R A U M D L I B S Z
 S N A C D N F O U R E D S W I B U P A T A
 Y W U U S O M A G E E K O V E R L N S R M
 S S S T E I G S R E N O Y O F U T E K O A
 T J E O T T N H A S D F W W N Z G E E N D
 E E I F I A T E E L I X E D G Z R N T G V
 H R T F R T E P A T A P E R A I N I H H E
 P O I T I N R H S P P R O C L A I M I O R
 O B U N Z E D E M N E W N I E H D A R L S
 R O Q A A M T R I D T R O R S S M F S D A
 P A I L N A S D T H U N I K C O L F T S R
 A M N P I L E S E T W F I S L W N S L A Y
 P R I D E E R N A M S D R E H S S A R G L

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|-----------|----------|-------------|------------|-------------|----------------|
| abhor | end | idle | not | reaper | tithes |
| adversary | evil | iniquities | oppress | restore | transgressions |
| alas | exile | Israel | | return | turn |
| Amaziah | | | | revoke | |
| Amos | fall | Jeroboam | perish | | Uzziah |
| assemble | famine | justice | pestilence | seek | |
| | fire | | plant | seer | wailing |
| basket | flock | lamentation | plow | shepherds | wall |
| blight | four | land | plundered | slay | woe |
| | freewill | lie | poison | smite | wormwood |
| commands | fruit | lion | poor | sows | |
| cows | | live | pride | strongholds | Zion |
| cut off | grass | locust | proclaim | sun | |
| | growth | | prophecy | | |
| deliver | | morning | prophets | Tekoa | |
| destroyed | hate | | punishment | testify | |
| devour | hear | Nazirites | | thirst | |
| dresser | herdsman | needy | rain | three | W. AIKEMA |