

A black and white photograph of a wooden bridge over a pond, framed by trees. The bridge is arched and has a railing. The water in the pond is calm, reflecting the sky and the surrounding trees. The foreground is filled with the branches and leaves of trees, some in focus and some blurred. The background shows a dense line of trees under a bright sky.

Clarion
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE
Vol. 32 No. 6 March 25, 1983

The Borderline of HUMAN LIFE ₂

6. Heavy sedation

One other aspect we should like to mention is the use of heavy sedation. Sometimes people question whether the use of a heavy dose of sedation can be considered a treatment that comes very close to euthanasia. What is really the difference between giving a patient a mortal dose to cause euthanasia, and for a prolonged period of time giving an increasing dose of sedation, that might be too much for the patient's heart to take?

In this respect we have to be careful. We are dealing with a very emotional issue and with people in a very vulnerable situation. That means that we should not unnecessarily hurt the other's feelings, but neither should we ignore the real possibility of giving in to certain unacceptable wishes and practices of a family which can no longer stand seeing the suffering of a beloved one.

Therefore we have to be very precise in our formulation. What do we mean by euthanasia? It is an action or a treatment undertaken or used with the intention to terminate human life or to hasten death. It has to be clearly distinguished from an action or treatment that might have certain dangerous side-effects but that is intended to give relief or to cure an illness. Every medicine brings with it the risk of undesired side-effects. What risks we can take and what side-effects we can accept, depends on the seriousness of the case.

Today there is a tendency to use very strong medicines in cases about which people may wonder whether it is really necessary. Too many drugs are sold over the counter and too many tranquilizers are used today, and the side-effects do not remain unnoticed. But when someone has cancer, medicines can be necessary with side-effects that in other circumstances are unacceptable. It is the same with sedation in a terminal case. When someone suffers terrible pain, relief can be given and may be given by morphine, although morphine is a very strong medicine. An increasing dose can become too much for the heart. But still the treatment is given with the intention of relieving the pain, although the side-effect, humanly speaking, may seem to be a shortening of life. In such a case we are not making any decision about life or death, but we have to make a responsible decision concerning the way a person can live during the last part of his life, as far as we are able to.

We can also put it this way: the question of the length of a person's life is not up to us, but we try to improve the quality of life within the limits set by the Lord.

7. Telling the truth

An important point we have to face in cases of terminal illness is the question of telling the truth. Is a doctor supposed to tell the truth to a patient right away? And will he do so? Most people tend to say to the doctor: "Please, tell me the truth." In most cases the doctor is not prepared to tell the patient exactly everything he knows or expects to happen. When we believe in Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, we should be able to face the reality of death, and we need not be fooled or misled by a doctor who gives us false "hope."

Still the matter is not as easy as it seems to be. What is "the truth" in this respect? Almost every patient says to the doctor: "Tell me the truth." Even unbelievers say that. But often they only mean: "Please tell me that my illness is not malignant and that it can be cured." More often than not in such cases, when the doctor says in plain words: "You only have a few months to live," the patient becomes upset and says: "Why did you tell me this? You should not have said this."

That is what the doctor has to consider. He has to be very careful, because he is dealing with human feelings and emotions, which are not always reasonable and logical, but nonetheless a reality.

As far as believers are concerned it is a different matter, although the physician does not always know in how far his patient is a true believer and what his faith means to him. If he is not a believer himself, we cannot expect that he understands what faith means in human life. Moreover, what is "the truth" in this respect? A specialist can give his prognosis, but that is always his personal opinion about the course a disease will probably take. It can be considered as an expectation of what, according to him, is going to happen — a more or less reliable expectation. A doctor can never say exactly what the course of the disease will be. There are many examples where a physician expects a person to die within a couple of weeks or days, and that it takes more than a year — and sometimes it goes much faster than a doctor had expected. There are also cases where a doctor cannot make any prognosis whatsoever about how long a patient will live yet.

In all such cases a physician has to be very careful. He should not bother a patient or make him upset with a too-pessimistic prediction. Neither should he give a patient any false hope for recovery. Therefore an honest doctor, who is prepared to tell the truth, has to restrict himself to explaining what he, with a great degree of probability, really expects or knows. As long as he does not have sufficient evidence, he should not cause unnecessary worry.

There is another aspect we have to consider in this respect, and that is the process of acceptance through which the patient and his relatives have to go. When a fatal illness becomes manifest, the family usually first goes through a period in which they seem to ignore reality. Although they know better, they talk about the possibility of recovery and seem to grasp every straw to make others and themselves believe that it is not that serious. Later they go through a period in which they can speak about it and learn to accept reality. If the patient has to suffer terrible pain, there may even come a time in which they long for the end. But still it happens quite often that a terminal patient, on a day when he feels better, speaks about the future as if he really expects full recovery. We shouldn't call that self-deceit or ignoring reality. It is a natural human reaction, also for Christians. The Lord didn't promise to give us courage to die as long as we have a task to live. Death remains an enemy. Christ has taken away the sting of death, but death remains an unnatural thing. A Christian does not long for death. In Philippians 1:23 Paul says that it is his desire to depart and be with Christ. To be with Christ is far better, and that is his desire. That is also our comfort, and that can take away the sting of death, but death is still an enemy. We can be assured that the Lord will not forsake His children, not even in the hour of their death. But as long as we are alive and in good health, it is natural that we desire to stay alive and to do our work. The desire to die is not a healthy attitude, and not a Christian attitude for healthy people. That brings us to another point.

8. Suicide

Suicide is the act of killing oneself. It is a topic which is often shunned in discussions. Lots of misunderstanding exists in this respect.

The first thing we have to say is that an attempt to commit suicide can ripen only in a sick mind. It is a desperate action of someone who does not see any way out of his problems, and who is not willing or able to fight any longer; who is not even prepared to think about the consequences of his action. It also happens among believers, members of the Church, more often than we are aware of.

When we study such particular cases, it becomes clear that an attempted suicide is a cry for help and attention from someone who is desperate and not able to continue his fight. It is not always meant as a real attempt to commit suicide, or, at least, the person does not fully realize the consequences. Many cases are pretended attempts that have run out of control. It also happens that people are so sick of mind that they see it as the only way out.

Outsiders are sometimes very cruel in their judgment of someone who has committed suicide. They like to quote Ecclesiastes 11:3 "In the place where the tree falls, there it will lie," and the exegesis is then: his last act was murder, so there was no repentance and consequently no forgiveness. I have heard people say in such a case: "We do not judge: we leave it up to the Lord; but in the place where the tree falls, there it will lie." In this way they did not leave it up to the Lord, but they were ready with their own judgment: to condemn the person.

Of course, suicide is murder. We are not allowed to kill anyone, neither ourselves nor another. But we also know that there is forgiveness for murderers. When Christ died, a murderer was allowed to be with Him in Paradise.

Don't say that in cases of self-killing there is no time for repentance. We never know what happens in someone's mind in the last few moments, when he is no longer able to stop the process that he has set in motion. Moreover, the judgment of the Lord does not depend on our very last action, either good or bad, and certainly not on the consequences of an action caused or thought up by a sick mind. We should leave the judgment up to the Lord, but that means that we have to make no judgment at all, neither in a positive nor in a negative way.

At the same time we should try to give help to people who feel so desperate that they are almost ready for suicide. In many instances, they have secret problems which bother them, and which they neither can nor will discuss with others. It might be a matter of homophilia (homosexuality) or secret alcoholism. They are afraid to talk with others about their problems; they feel cast out or are afraid they will be expelled from society if people find out about their problems; and in the end they are not able to cope with their problems any longer.

We do have among our Church members hidden alcoholics; not only men but also women; young ladies as well as older members of the congregations. Also in our circles there are homophiles more than most people think. The word homophiles does not refer to people who practice homosexuality. We are now thinking of those who have different feelings than others, those who know that homosexuality is sin, and who do not give in to their desires, but who still have to fight against their homophilia their whole life long, always afraid that someone might find out about their different attitude and that they may be cast out. Such people do sometimes have a terrible inferiority complex. Their feeling of loneliness and desperation can drive them to suicide.

It is beyond the scope of this article to go into more detail as far as the problems of homophilia are concerned. That would require a special article.

May what has been said so far suffice to show that we should not be too hard and quick with our judgment of people who commit suicide or who attempt to do so. Instead, we should try to help them before it comes to this desperate action, and we should pray for them.

9. Organ transplants

Finally we will discuss an issue which is closely related to the borderline of human life, and that is organ transplants. Is that acceptable for a Christian? Some say that we are not allowed to mutilate our body intentionally by taking away some organs, not even after our death. Others consider it too great an infringement upon the nature of a human body as created by the Lord to change or replace parts, just as with a car or another mechanical device.

I think the first argument is not a very strong one. We have to respect the work of the Lord, also in the way we deal with a dead body. But if we can serve others, or save a life, by making a part of our body available for

Continued on page 122

“WITH LIFE AND LIP”

A Critique from Scripture and History 2

The Issue

From an article in *Clarion* on “Evangelism and Home Mission” we had to conclude that because “evangelizing” is preaching, and because a preacher must be “sent” (= mission), the common believer is forbidden to overshadow the official offices in the church by doing more than “confess Christ in his own vocation,” i.e. he is forbidden to actually “evangelize,” that is preach the gospel, in whatever form. I concluded that this would be the end of “evangelism” or “evangelizing,” because the existing offices (except the missionary’s) find their task *within* the already-gathered local congregation — unless we would create a new office and give it the name “evangelist.”

I thought it my task to point out that this position would bring us into conflict with Scripture, and that it contradicts the history of the church.

Having written about Acts 8:1, 4ff, we now come to

2. Acts 11:19-22

This passage was also mentioned in the Jan. 14th article, but the conclusion was that we cannot do much with it for a foundation in Scripture for “evangelizing” by the membership of the church, because in those days there were no established special offices yet. I reminded the author of the fact that there were *apostles* who got the mandate to preach the gospel, starting in Jerusalem, and then in wider circles to Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth, but they stayed in Jerusalem.

But let’s first again listen to what the Holy Spirit says here.

“Now those who were scattered because of the persecution . . . travelled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to none except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Greeks [or: Hellenists] also, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number that believed turned to the Lord.”

In the first article I have already quoted from GREEN, *Evangelism in the Early Church*, how we must envisage this richly blessed “evangelizing” by men and women who were “scattered” by the persecution and could not keep silent about the Lord Jesus. GROSHEIDE points to the fact that “preaching the Lord Jesus” is a unique expression. And . . . though not ordained to a special office, they *preached*. And . . . though not ordained, the hand of the Lord was with them. Thus the persecution became a blessing, and not even a blessing in disguise.

There is more! These common believers, possibly simple people, did not make such a big issue of preaching the good news to the Gentiles, as did Peter and the Jerusalem leaders. First they only went to the Jews; that’s what they had learned in Jerusalem. But when some men came and reminded them that Jesus was the Light of the world, they without further ado started evangelizing also among the non-Jews, i.e. the Gentiles. And a great number believed. They could only believe because the Holy Spirit worked faith in their hearts by the preaching of the Gospel. The article under discussion may create the impression (without saying so clearly) that the real result of this evangelizing had to wait for the arrival of Barnabas, but this is *not true*. Much, of course, had to be organized with such a great number of believers, and therefore, when “news of this came to the ears of the church in Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas who, seeing the grace of God, was glad” (vv. 22, 23).

3. I Thess. 1:7-8

This passage deserves our attention too. Although Paul had been there for only a short time, the results of his apostolic preaching were tremendous, and the church there became an example: “You became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia” (v. 7). Certainly not a small region! And then: the combination of LIFE and LIP, of WALK and TALK: “For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia

and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything” (v. 8).

Obviously, according to GREIJ-DANUS, the believers in this centre of trade and business realized that the good news should not be kept within the walls, but should be spread out. Again, Paul addresses the whole congregation here and speaks about the fact that from them “the word of



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 N1W 2W7
ISSN 0383-0438

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: J. Faber
Managing Editor: W.W.J. VanOene
Co-Editors: J. Geertsema, J. DeJong

IN THIS ISSUE

The Borderline of Human Life2	
— W. Pouwelse	118
With Life and Lip2 — G. VanDooren . . .	120
From the Scriptures	
— The Full Measure	
— J. DeJong	123
Paralipomena — Chronicler	124
CRAFTH — Fully Capable Work Force-Valuable Employees	
— E. Vander Weij	125
A Ray of Sunshine	
— Mrs. J.K. Riemersma	127
News Medley — W.W.J. VanOene	128
School Crossing — N. VanDooren	130
Patrimony Profiles	
— W.W.J. VanOene	132
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	134

SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 1983

	Regular	Mail	Air Mail
Canada		\$21.00	\$38.25
U.S.A.	U.S. Funds	\$24.00	\$38.25
International		\$31.75	53.25

the Lord sounded forth." "Obviously the believers in Thessalonica were aware of their calling to spread the Word of God" (Greijdanus).

It may have been the strategy of the apostle to concentrate on the big cities, the centres of traffic, etc. From there on the believers then had to do what those of Thessalonica did: "spread the Word." And you can only do that by "evangelizing," preaching, be it then often in a more informal way, as we saw it in the first article.

The author of the article under discussion does not read a command or mandate in the passages we discussed. He even goes as far as saying that common believers only were allowed to do this preaching because there was not yet a settled church life with a consistory, etc.

The answer must be that we see here a young and living church, which had not yet forsaken the first love; they were so filled with joy and amazement that God had become man to save them that they could not keep silent. They had to share this treasure with as many as they could reach, not only by their new LIFE but also by their "new" LIPS!

Women "evangelizing"

Although more could be said about the New Testament, we conclude with a remark about women partaking in evangelizing. "It was axiomatic that every christian was called to be a witness to Christ, not only by life but by lip. Everyone was to be an apologist, at least to the extent of being ready to give a good account of the hope that was within them, I Pet. 3:15. And this emphatically included women. They had a very large part to play in the advance of Christianity" (Green, p. 175).

We can trace this back to the ministry of Jesus who attracted many women as disciples, i.e. followers. They were there at the resurrection and on Pentecost. A woman was the hostess of the first church in Jerusalem. And then, a look through Acts and Paul's epistles tells us about Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla, the four prophesying daughters of Philip, the upper-class women of Berea and Thessalonica. Women are mentioned as fellow workers in evangelizing in Rom. 16, and Phil. 4. Green concludes: "The New Testament tells us of women labouring in evangelism, acting as hostess to the church in their houses, prophesying and speaking in tongues and acting as deaconesses. This continued in the second century, sometimes through public speaking,

sometimes through martyrdom."

This leads us to the post-apostolic age.

Evangelism in the Early Church

This, as said, is the title of Green's book with 280 pages of detailed information and 50 pages of notes. We would have loved to quote, via *Eusebius* and *Origen*, from an enemy of Christ like *Celsus* who ridiculed Christian faith because it was promoted by common people, slaves, and even youngsters; and mention names of some of the thousands of witnesses who, after having witnessed with their LIPS, witnessed with their blood, that is, became martyrs. But everyone knows about that. Let's quote the summary of this book, based on detailed study of all the available sources.

"One of the most striking features in evangelism in the early days was the people who engaged in it. Communicating the faith was not regarded as the preserve of the very zealous or of the officially designated evangelist. Evangelism was the prerogative and the duty of every church member. We have seen apostles and wandering prophets, nobles and paupers, intellectuals and fishermen all taking part enthusiastically in this the primary task committed by Christ to the Church. The ordinary people of the Church saw it as their job: Christianity was supremely a lay movement, spread by informal missionaries."

After having remarked that this witness was backed up by the "quality of their lives" (think again of Lord's Day 32!), Green continues,

"Unless there is a transformation of contemporary church life so that once again the task of evangelism is something which is seen as incumbent on every baptized Christian, and is backed up by a quality of living which outshines the best that unbelief can muster, we are unlikely to make much headway through techniques of evangelism" (p. 275).

Following Ages

It would not be hard to provide similar pictures of those periods of church history when there was a return to the first love; these pictures would prove what the article under discussion tries to take away: that the "evangelizing" time and again was done by what Green called "informal missionaries." G. DONALD-

SON, in his *The Scottish Reformation* (1960), tells us about the beginning of the Reformation in Scotland, "As the Scottish east coast ports were in constant communication with Germany, the Low Countries and Denmark, it is not surprising that the bishop of Aberdeen at once took steps to have the new statute proclaimed in his diocese, on the ground that several strangers and others had in their possession heretical books and were propagating the errors of Luther" (p. 29). Fishermen, sailors, and salesmen came from the continent and "evangelized" in the ports of Scotland, thus giving the first impetus to the Scottish Reformation.

Similar things could be said about the common believers who by their evangelizing in the apostate Romanist church, often at the cost of their lives, propagated (proclaimed) the gospel of Jesus Christ, and thus laid the foundation for the Reformers who came after them. The books of L. PRAAMSMA and H. ALGRA on *The Miracle of the 19th Century* and *The Foolishness of God* in that century tell us the same as Eusebius and Origen and . . . the New Testament. But this brief reference must suffice, in order to keep some room for

Closing Remarks

1. These articles were not written to fight against persons. Names were left out. Nor was it our purpose to write about "evangelizing" in general. For that I may refer to the second printing of my book *Get Out!*

2. The author of the article on "Evangelism and Home Mission" tried to make impression for his viewpoint with a reference to Ephesians 4: the well-known matter of that *comma*. The impression is made that a *liberal* theologian came with the suggestion to read that Christ gave apostles . . . , pastors and teachers to equip the saints for *diakonia*. He should have read the many publications by Bible-believing authors on it, who come to the same conclusion as I did in my book. I did not and do not need a "liberal" for that. As to the word *diakonia*, one should be careful with limiting its meaning to "service" in the sense of charity, with exclusion, for example, of "preaching" and "evangelizing." The author knows very well that the department in our College that bears the name *Diaconiology* includes as its foremost discipline the training in preaching and teaching, and also instructs in "evangelizing." It is all *diakonia*; that's why this name has been accepted internationally also

for preaching and evangelism! Finally, on this chapter (Eph. 4), the reference to *Greijdanus* doesn't mean much here. *Greijdanus* posits various possibilities in reading this text. Then he remarks: if it is understood that, with the comma, the task of building up the body of Christ is assigned exclusively to the ordained men, then . . . indeed not only the edification of the church but also its expansion is the task only of ordained men. That I do not believe this has sufficiently become clear on the basis of Scripture and the history of the Church, from which we draw our lessons.

3. While writing these two articles as a protest against the Jan. 14th article, I have honestly been bothered by those "conclusions" quoted in the first article, and then especially by the third one, which wants us to believe that in Art. 31 of the Confession of Faith we confess that "evangelism" (evangelism is preaching!) is the prerogative *only* of ordained ministers and missionaries, and that there the

Lord *forbids* others to (yes, I quote . . .) "*overshadow*" the office of the minister of the Word by "evangelizing" as common believers, ordinary members of the church.

With all respect: I call this nonsense! What is this? Is it *fear* for competition, that the ministerial office would be "overshadowed," pushed in a corner, if and when several members of the congregation carry *outside* the church building what they have heard *inside* from their minister, God's messenger? Is this not the normal situation: the minister preaching *inside*; the congregation carrying the sermon *outside*? — "*Instructors and front soldiers.*"

Is there one single full-blooded preacher under the sun who would not be "awfully" happy if his sermons were so impressive that his members on Monday and following days could not keep silent about them, but had to share their joy with others, i.e. to "evangelize"?

You may hear in these words a

measure of indignation. Okay, I do not deny it. The tenor of this article would spell the end of "evangelizing." But it will not, it cannot, as long as there is "a chosen race, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, God's own people, that you may declare (Greek: *exangelloo*, i.e. proclaim, tell forth, carry to the outside world) the wonderful deeds of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvellous light" (1 Pet. 2:9). That's what God's own people did, right after Pentecost, and in the first centuries, and, again, around each reformation period in church history.

God forbid that any ideas like the ones we have been criticizing would lead us back to the Romanist distinction between "clergy" and "laity." The clergy will do all the preaching, evangelizing, witnessing; the laity may not overshadow that by also starting to proclaim . . .

Imagine . . .

G. VANDOOREN

Continued from page 119

transplant after our death, we do not disdain our body but rather fulfil the commandment of the Lord in serving others with our body. That counts for helping the blind with our eyes as well as for kidney transplants.

As far as heart transplants are concerned, the second argument mentioned above has to be considered. Is that too great an infringement upon human life? There is an even more pressing question in this respect, and that is: When does a heart become available for transplanting? After the donor has died, of course. But when the heart has been stopped for too long, it cannot be used for transplanting any longer. It should be taken away when it is still beating. The patient who is waiting for a transplant needs a healthy, beating heart without any damage. But as long as a patient is alive, his heart cannot be taken away; that would kill him instantly. In such a case it becomes very critical to determine the exact moment of death. Taking away the heart of the donor too early means murder; taking it away too late makes it useless for transplanting. Even the previously mentioned method of a flat EEG is not expedient in this respect; it takes too much time. The only way to get a heart for transplant is to wait for a patient who is so seriously injured in a car accident that, although his heart is still beating, he cannot survive (e.g. because his head is crushed). It is clear that in such a case decisions have to be made quickly, and that we have to face the risk that there are conflicting interests in pronouncing someone dead. Therefore it is a leading condition that the physician who pronounces the patient dead, is in no way involved in or related to the team that performs the heart transplant. All this makes heart transplanting a precarious matter.

Nowadays we hear futurists speak about brain

transplants. They say that, technically speaking, it is possible, but the technology of the operation has to be further developed, especially as far as the microsurgery is concerned. We don't know whether such an operation will ever be performed. It is, however, perfectly clear that the points we have mentioned above in respect to heart transplants count even more with respect to brain transplants. If this would ever become possible, we would have to consider the ethical implications. Who is who? Does a patient receive another brain? Or is someone's personality considered to be located in his brain, so that the donor of the brain basically lives further in another body? Whose mind is alive?

If this trend continues, we almost reach the point where, as someone predicted, they will put together two severely injured people and make one survivor out of them.

We don't know what will happen in the future. It is important to be on the alert. Human beings will be able to perform almost unbelievable things. They will try to get control over every form of human life, to manipulate it, to bring forth life and to get rid of it, just as they like. But we know and confess: human life is created by the Lord, our God. He is the only One who decides on the beginning of it, and He also is the only One who has the right to bring life to an end. We trust in Him, our God. Whatever human beings may do, our God and Father has everything in His hand. Under His protection we are safe. We don't have to worry, even when we reach the borderline of human life. His sovereign government extends over this borderline, because we are Christ's own in life and death, for ever.

Burlington, ON

W. POWELSE

FROM THE SCRIPTURES

“Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers.”

Matt. 23:32.

The Full Measure

So forceful are these words of the Lord Jesus directed against the scribes and Pharisees that we might wonder where we find the *gospel* in them. The Lord Jesus quite literally commands God’s law to be defied, to say nothing of the laws of men. How can He who shows the perfect fulfillment of the law simultaneously demand the worst and most complete transgression of it? How does this word of clear rejection fit into the gospel of love? And where can we find the good news in these words?

The context unlocks these difficult words for us. Here the Lord Jesus speaks His final words to those who had rejected both John’s preaching and His own, to those who would crucify Him. Although He came in the fulness of the Spirit, revealing the grace and reconciliation of the Father, He was rejected. Although He spoke heavenly things, He was judged as being from below, from the evil one. That rejection was now complete. The Lord’s work was drawing to an end. And now the words of judgment must come.

This rejection of the Lord Jesus was so complete that He could only place Himself in the line of those who had been killed for the cause of the gospel throughout the history of the Old Testament. From the very beginning there were *martyrs* for the faith, those whose blood was shed because of their faithfulness to God. Although all the righteous are persecuted, only some are actually murdered for their confession. Abel was the first, and as one of the last ones the Lord Jesus mentions Zechariah the son of Barachiah, who is usually identified with Zechariah the son of Jehoiada in II Chron. 24:21. Both of these martyrs, and presumably all the martyrs between them, died praying: “The LORD look upon it and require it.” Their confession was, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the LORD.”

Their prayer was a cry for justice, and if we wish to learn anything about the application of justice in the world, we must remember the substance of their faith. In answer to their prayer, founded on God’s promises, the LORD had to send His Son, the last Prophet, the last Speaker of His Word. He was sent to lay the judicial foundation for God’s judgment of the world. He was sent to bring justice to the martyrs and prophets. He was able to do this, being God’s Son, sent from above; He was also willing to do this, as He showed throughout His life on earth. For He lived in perfect obedience to God’s law, and also took the curse of sin upon His shoulders.

We are thus at a very critical moment here when Christ

speaks these words. Christ’s blood is the precious sacrifice that God desired and promised from the beginning. This is the *crucial* blood, and without the shedding of *this* blood, the blood of the martyrs from beginning to end is senseless and without any basis or foundation. But with Christ’s blood, the blood that speaks better things than the blood of Abel (Heb. 12:24), the reality of what the prophets hoped and prayed for is revealed. That must now happen. The measure must be filled, and so Christ actually *orders* it to be filled. He commands His opponents to make Him the Victim, the sacrifice that is most pleasing to God.

We stand here before an awesome and unfathomable reality. Here Christ commands sin that is full-blown to bring forth death; He commands that those who rejected both John and His message *follow through* on the course they have chosen. In actively and responsibly doing so, these opponents fulfil the eternal counsel of God for our redemption. The Pharisees obey this command — the Word *drives* them to it. In obeying it, they seal their own fate, v. 33; but at the same time, the redemption of the Church, the martyrs, prophets, and company of the faithful, is sealed. Their blood is avenged.

So we see the *gospel* in this awesome command of the Lord. In filling up the measure of their fathers, the Pharisees and scribes of Christ’s generation effectively bring judgment upon themselves and all who murdered the prophets and all who still dare to do it, until Christ returns. But they guarantee the salvation of the believers! For this sacrifice is the way of access to the Father, and through the shedding of Christ’s blood, mercy and grace are revealed to those who in faith cling to the promise.

But the way is the same for us today as well. Christ willed His sacrifice, and so orders it to take place. He was faithful and obedient. And we, too, are called to build on the legal foundation of this sacrifice in true faith. No one can stand neutral with regard to this blood. We either share in it or stand guilty of shedding it. We either join in communion with it or crucify the Son of God anew, Heb. 6:6.

So we must have no doubt where we stand. The blood that speaks more graciously has been shed, and its blessings have been scattered abroad. Therefore, along with the blood that speaks better things, let also better things be spoken of us, “things that belong to salvation,” Heb. 6:9.

J. DEJONG

PARALIPOMENA

THE ECCLESIASTICAL WAY

Farce of History

Younger people may not understand this term, but the older will! It seems to me that since the struggles of the Liberation in 1944, "the ecclesiastical way" has become Art. 31, an article of faith. What is it? Something like this: you have a problem with your consistory (or they with you), and you do not agree; you do not submit. You know better. So you make use of your highly valued "office of all believers" and even more highly valued "Christian freedom" to say no! You reject whatever was decided and you go the ecclesiastical way, according to that Article of the Church Order that for a time was even "our name": "Art. 31." You let the stencils run and appeal to classis. You use every bit and bite of argument under the sun that is in your (imagined) favour, and . . . get "no" for an answer. No problem: you go "higher up," to provincial or regional synod, having multiplied the documents. But your prayer is, "My will be done." So, already in advance you say: "If I don't get satisfied, I can still go to General Synod." And you do just that. The tree has become thicker and thicker. Never mind. Even though the cause of the conflict is by now buried under arguments and counter arguments, you go to the end. And again: "no" for an answer. Then you can still try for a "revision" by the next synod. You can also break away from church and federation and try to find the sunshine somewhere else. Of course, you can also bow your head, but on "the ecclesiastical way" that doesn't seem to be the thing to do.

Exaggerated?

No "betting" in this corner! — but I would like to know how things have fared with the ecclesiastical way since that year 1944. I am pretty sure that many cases were "solved," but how? By discipline, excommunication, withdrawals, break-ups, splits in a local church, even in the federation. Hardly any were ever solved in the spirit of humility (assuming; I may be wrong . . .) and of brotherly love that covers a multitude of sins and miseries.

The Biblical way

No, I do not plead for denying the right of appeal to a true victim of real injustice. But I do not believe that, if brothers of the same house (= local congregation) cannot find a solution in love and wisdom, a handful of classis members, away from the local scene and without seeing and hearing the persons-behind-the-documents, will be able to extinguish the fire. Synods are even farther removed from the scene and become — have to become — more "formal" in their observations, considerations, etc., that never produce a tear of repentance. Sure, they may be logically right in their well-formulated, pages-long decisions, but they do not touch hearts, because they can't even go on their knees together with the parties in the conflict. As a rule those parties have to keep silent in such major assemblies: "The documents should be clear!"

This is clearly not the Biblical way. The Biblical way is, for example, Matthew 5: You, on your way to the altar — let's say, the supper — remember that your brother has something against you. Read well: the Lord does not even speak of you having something against your brother: you're not supposed to! What then? Stop! Go and first be reconciled with your brother; then come back, come back together.

The Bible knows that if HEARTS do not break, all appeals and major assemblies in the world cannot solve one single conflict except by cutting through the Gordian knot. Reconcile! If you can't do that locally, you may as well forget it. "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?" So says Paul in I Cor. 6.

I once heard a minister say in a sermon on Lord's Day 33: in the church the "old man" ("old nature") has NO rights. All too often it's a matter of getting things your way, even while calling upon the name of the Lord.

"If you do not forgive, you will not be forgiven."

That is the ecclesiastical way; that is the Biblical way. Simple. Difficult. Easy!

CHRONICLER

**Consulaat-Generaal
Der Nederlanden
NETHERLANDS
CONSULATE GENERAL**
1 Dundas Street West
Suite 2106, Box 2
Toronto, Ontario M5G 1Z3
Tel. (416) 598-2520

OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

VAN EIJK, Hendrik Willem, geboren 22 september 1917 te Boskoop, laatstbekende adres: R.C.B. v.d. Brinkstraat 18 Gouda, naar Canada vertrokken op 22 september 1954.

HENSTRA, Tjeerd, geboren 14 december 1917 te Smallingerland, laatstbekende adres: Bloemluststraat 40, Wassenaar, naar Canada vertrokken op 8 juli 1953.

HOOGENDOORN, Johanna Margaretha, geboren 21 april 1958 te Maartensdijk, laatstbekende adres: Buitenveen 71, Weesp, naar Canada vertrokken op 16 juli 1980.

LANDKROON, A., geboren 4 augustus 1919 te Den Haag laatstbekende adres: v.d. Vennestraat 12, Den Haag, naar Canada vertrokken op 13 oktober 1956.

SOREL, L.D., geboren 19 augustus 1919, laatstbekende adres: Koningstraat 605, Den Haag, naar Canada vertrokken op 23 april 1956.

WOELDERS, Geertruida Jacoba, geboren 28 maart 1923 te Heemstede, laatstbekende adres: Landzichtlaan 20, Heemstede, naar Canada vertrokken op 12 mei 1955.

BOSCH, Eibert Jan, geboren 10 juni 1954 te Oldebroek, laatstbekende adres in Canada: 110 Main Street, Nobleford, Alberta.

JANSEN, Johannes Theodorus, geboren 1 maart 1918 te Aalten, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Oranjestraat 11, Bredevoort, naar Canada vertrokken op 4 maart 1952.

KOK geboren Bakker, Elisabeth Anna Maria, geboren 4 augustus 1951 te Amsterdam, naar Canada vertrokken op 20 juni 1978.

TERPSTRA, Sjoerd, geboren 17 maart 1918, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Raamsingel 18b, Haarlem, naar Canada vertrokken op 1 mei 1954.

VERMEULEN, Elisabeth Johanna, geboren 7 april 1931 te Hof van Delft (thans Delft).

NIJMAN, Johan, geboren 11 oktober 1939, laatstbekende woonplaats in Nederland: Wildemaetstraat 11, Elburg, naar Canada vertrokken op 29 juni 1982 bestemming Burlington.

De Consul-Generaal,
voor deze:

Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER

Fully Capable Work Force Valuable Employees

A person who has two legs can move more quickly than a person who is missing one leg. This lack can be called a handicap, in this case referring to a handicap in walking, for the person in question may be able to do various other things more quickly than someone with two legs. Similarly, a seeing person indeed has certain capabilities which a blind man lacks, a hearing person absorbs more of a conversation than a deaf one, a young athlete achieves greater physical prowess than a paralytic, and the mental abilities of one may differ obviously from those of another.

However, are properly functioning senses and good muscular power the most decisive factors by which human existence is to be gauged? Is it indeed true that slightly greater mental capacity is our criterion for placing the so-called gifted above the so-called feeble-minded? We have become so accustomed to the word handicapped that our attitude towards people who lack certain qualities possessed by others, has more or less become regulated by this terminology.

Our needs

In Lord's Day 50 of the Catechism, which deals with our needs, it suddenly becomes evident that we ourselves do not even know our needs; only our Father knows. That is why we ask Him: "Give us what Thou knowest we need." By praying, "Thy will be done," we request from Him all that we need to practise our office and calling, Lord's Day 49. Our Father knows what those needs are, even though we ourselves do not. Do we not often imagine that we have all kinds of needs related to health, muscular strength, mental abilities, and fully functioning senses? Those things indeed are necessary to practise certain occupations; however, our Father gives what we need in the position where He has placed us. Those are His gifts, presents from our heavenly Father, which He does not give for nothing. He demands interest on His gifts. With His gifts of eye and ear, strength and mind, He enables us to

do what is pleasing to Him. The request for bread and all that is included is bound by the Giver to valid rules. He gives because we need . . . we need in order to serve Him.

Blessings in abundance

Our life is to be a song of praise; that is the reason for our being. In order that we may be such singers, our Father gives exactly what we and our children need. Never think that our Father would cause one of His children to come short of anything. He will never withhold from any of them whatever is necessary for the discharge of their duty and calling. No one will be short; that is impossible! He gives what is needed. He has all the gifts and talents at His disposal. With majestic power and unsearchable wisdom He picks out the places where His children may and must sing His praises. Together with those specifically indicated positions He gives the exact mandates and He adds — complete to the last detail — all the abilities which are required for that mandate. Eph. 4:7: "But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of God's gift," i.e. as it pleases God to measure out gifts to everyone in his calling to complete and unite this body. So Christ measures out, using a full measure, to give to every one what he needs. Everyone, also our children. Now God receives the glory. Now He receives the fruits of His own gifts. Now the gifts return to the Giver. And so He ensures that He has a capable work force.

This is a soul-warming truth. Parents of handicapped children suddenly realize that God has no useless workers in His service. The service of God does not centre around muscular strength or so-called mental abilities. Someone once said: an old person who at his death sighs towards heaven is stronger in the Kingdom of God than an athlete with gold medals who refuses to acknowledge God as the Giver of his strength. God is never skimpy towards His children. He always gives in abundant measure according to their needs. With Fatherly

care He protects and preserves His own and even sends out His angels so that they will not stumble. When the attacks of Satan come to try to lure God's children away from Him, then He will protect especially those who are less gifted from many temptations in which others may fall. Father always gives abundantly.

Is this in accordance with reality?

Yes, even to the smallest detail for God has work and provides employment. He has places of work and labourers so that there are no unemployed. Every worker has his own specific mandate which deals with necessary work to be done. The necessity of the work and the extremely precise extent of the mandate is determined by God. Everything has already been provided for to the smallest details for the intended task of a certain labourer. When necessary, He gives a totally new mandate from one moment to the next. The unskilled muscular worker receives a completely new task when he loses a leg after an occupational or traffic accident. It is very well possible that a busy mother receives a different calling because of a necessary operation and ensuing hospitalization. When the tasks are altered, the mandate-Giver adjusts also the required capabilities. Along with each mandate and with each change He supplies the instruments and the abilities needed to fulfil those mandates. For this reason there are in His service only fully competent employees.

A blind person lacks sight. Is this a handicap? Once a blind person said, "If you do not believe that God has your ultimate good in mind, you are lost." This is already part of the answer: God has His children's good at heart. However, there is more: Father also gives His children all they need to be His thankful children, to be obedient children who do not accuse their Father but praise Him. The question arises: But what about blind eyes? Well, those are precisely what the blind person needs to perform his task. Whereas for many there is only a dark world, he sees the great deeds

of God. That is how he learned to say: "If you do not believe that God has your good at heart, you are lost." God is *Father*, and so He will protect the blind person from the sins of the eyes, from the enticements which are introduced into human hearts via seeing eyes. Is that not marvellous? How dear our Father is! And what about a deaf person? Someone once had the privilege of dealing with both a deaf and a blind person for some months, which made an unforgettable impression on him. The deaf person said: "How terrible that she cannot see anything. I enjoy nature so abundantly." The blind person said, "It is so sad that she can't hear. I can take part in conversations and heartily enjoy good music." How beautiful. The blind and the deaf can fulfil their calling in their own world, in their own situation, and in the manner that God has willed. For this purpose they receive everything they need, nothing lacking. They are fully equipped workers.

The mentally handicapped

Especially in their case we are struck by terminology such as "retarded" or "mentally deficient." If thereby we mean "less useful," we hold an un-Scriptural viewpoint. God has no people of less value in His service. When we mention gifts and talents, we refer to God's gifts, thinking of our needs to be happy, playful children before our heavenly Father. And for that playing before God's face also these children receive all that they need. Is not God also the Father of these children, and would He then forget to shower His good gifts on them? Impossible! He surrounds them with divine patience and guardian angels. And when, driven by His Spirit, they stammer a prayer, or only fold their hands, or in an unconscious existence rest in Christ's work of redemption, they are through God's grace powers that repulse Satan. Father is so good to His dear children that He caused His own Son to obtain all the powers which those little ones need. Such joy, such abundance. Everyone is a capable worker.

Look at the paralytic, robbed of his muscular strength singing psalms night and day; look at the sufferer of a prolonged illness who speaks about the increased rest and time in which to receive the shower of God's gifts; look at the chronic bed-ridden person who shouts for joy and thankfulness when enabled to sit in a wheelchair; look at the patient recuperating from an operation who now understands

even better that God is his Father; look at the person discharged from a sanatorium who would never want to do without that period of his life.

Do you still not see that God gives everything that His children need — everything? Then look with amazement at those parents who after the funeral of their young child are dumbfounded by the strength they have received; look at the young widow who can still speak, who can say "Father"; look at the deserted wife who still seeks and receives strength from the giving Father. How is it all possible? Sadly enough, we weak mortals see so little of the Father's good care for His children. Our standards are so inferior, so earth-bound. Our Father hands out well-balanced heavenly powers to all His children to enable them to fulfil their mandate on earth.

Without hindrance

All of God's children receive work adapted to them. The mandates always conform to the possibilities; a functional relationship exists between task and capability. This is because each child of our heavenly Father is a member of Christ's body. In that body each member has his own specific place, his own valuable existence, a worthwhile function. For this reason all the members receive abundantly what they need so that together they may form that body of which Christ is the Head. And Christ desires that all those members unite their powers to assist and help each other. Even the sense of the one may be the helping power for another. Each one has his own task: the patient in bed and the helper beside him; the one not greater than but different from the other. Each has his own calling. Then Father in heaven and also Father's angels both in heaven and on earth pay close attention and ensure with protective powers that not one single member is lacking in anything. The word of Christ, "It is finished," still sounds in Father's ear, and for that reason He also hears a sigh arising from a little child's heart.

Praise God in His sanctuary. Praise Him for the works of His hands. We are the works of His hands; He has formed us all by His hand. Now we have great confidence for the future, for He takes care of everything. He says in Isaiah 45:11 (KJV), "Ask Me of things to come concerning my sons, and concerning the work of My hands command ye Me."

E. VANDER WEIJ

PRESS RELEASE

Board Meeting of the Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped held in the church at Hamilton at 8:00 p.m. on Jan. 21, 1983.

The chairman, br. P. Feenstra, opened the meeting by asking the board members to sing from Psalm 87:1 and 2, after which he read from the Scriptures Phil. 2:1-19 and led us in prayer. All the members present were welcomed by the chairman, and the minutes of the last held meeting were accepted as presented.

A letter was received requesting information about our association and regarding work as a counsellor for the mentally retarded.

Another letter was received from The Netherlands with detailed information on the organization "Dit Koningskind."

An information sheet was adopted and will be used to gather general information on the handicapped in our community.

The treasurer, br. W. Sipkema, presented the Statement of Revenue and Expenditures and the Balance Sheet and gave us a detailed explanation of both. These statements will be presented at the next general membership meeting which is tentatively set D.V., for March 25, 1983, at 8:00 p.m. in the Hamilton church.

We decided to postpone the voting for positions in the board until all chapters have delegates to the board.

We then enjoyed a short intermission, after which the chairman called the meeting to order again.

An agenda was then set up for the upcoming general membership meeting.

There was a suggestion from someone concerning a name for the association. This was briefly discussed.

There was some discussion concerning the establishment of a home and also about couples that were approached with respect to a "foster" type home.

It was unanimously decided to keep the membership dues unchanged at \$65.00 per year for 1983.

Our next board meeting will be, D.V., on Feb. 25, 1983.

General question period was held during which we discussed various minor items.

Br. G. Wanders closed with us in prayer, and the chairman adjourned the meeting.

For the Board,
KEES BROUWER, Vice-all

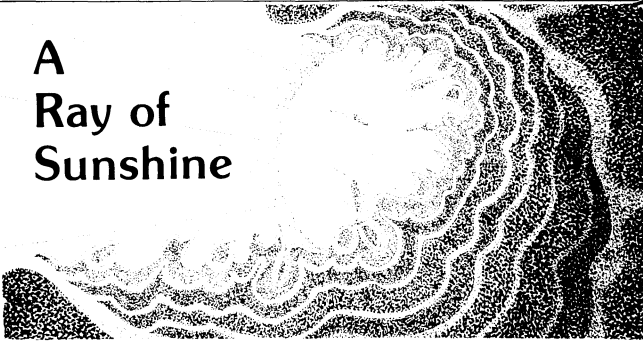
PRESS RELEASE

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

Saturday, February 12, 1983, marked the official Open House of Ebenezer Villa at 337 Stone Church Road East, Hamilton, Ontario. The response was gratifying and encouraging, to say the very least.

Shortly before 2:00 p.m. on this bright

A Ray of Sunshine



“Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13

The Lord Jesus spoke these words to His disciples in order to prepare them for His crucifixion. He told them that He no longer would call them servants, “for the servant does not know what his master is doing,” but that He would call them friends, “for all that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.” They (the disciples) did not choose Christ, but Christ chose them and appointed them that they should go and bear fruit . . . He gave them confidence by calling them friends. By telling them that no greater love could be found than that a man would give his life for his friend, He made them ready for what otherwise would seem an impossible, incomprehensible situation. Their Lord crucified? Jesus instructed and prepared His disciples for this difficult situation, so that it would “keep them from falling away” (John 16:1).

We notice that after Christ’s resurrection the relationship between Christ and His disciples changed again. He now addressed them as “brethern” (John 20:17) and “children” (John 21:5).

In Galatians 4:7 we read, “You are no more a servant, but a son, and an heir of God through Christ.” And in Romans 8:14 we read, “For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God . . . and if children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ. . . .”

We are children of God by adoption: “Branches were broken off so that we might be grafted in” (Romans 11:19). God is our Father. Our Saviour is our Brother. Christ, our Saviour, our Friend, and our Brother. Do we always realize the significance of this relationship? Do we stand in awe as Romans 11:20 recommends us to do?

Friends With God

Friendship is a thing
Which is thought about often
And cherished,
It’s a smile when you’re down
A warm and tender feeling
that is an experience in itself.
A mutual love and respect
Between two people who care
for one another.

The first bright appearance of
the man, not recognizable,
a stranger,
An enemy of the Jews,
rescuing the badly beaten man
Helplessly lying on the side of the road.
Truly a good Samaritan!
Truly a friend!

Friendship is an exquisite being
Who walks about our race
with the utmost
superiority ever bestowed.
It shines down upon us
with tenderness and radiance
“Henceforth, I call you not servants,
But I have called you friends.”

God grants us many bountiful gifts,
He guards and guides us
And bestows His love
upon us,
When we are lonely
He always lifts us up,
Each individual, unique in their own way
Mounted on their own pedestal.

by Carla VanderSluis
Friday, December 24, 1982

Please send your requests to:

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

afternoon, the cars started to fill the Villa’s parking area and the adjacent church parking lot. Before long one could find people almost everywhere throughout the building. They came from places as far away as Port Colbourne, Dunnville, and Woodstock, to mention only a few. Some of the people enjoyed guided tours, others just browsed around on their own, while still others just came to visit a relative or friend in the Villa. Many of the tenants opened the doors of their new living quarters for all to see.

The purpose of this Open House was two-fold. The first was to show to all the Home in its completed form, and the second, to obtain tenants for the remaining

vacant units. It appears that these units will not be vacant for too long, especially when one sees an elderly person figuring out how they might arrange their furniture in an apartment. It was interesting to note the many positive comments about Ebenezer Villa from tenants and visitors alike. These included comments about the well-planned layout of the Home in general, the spacious apartments, the beautiful library area, the nice view, and the “gezellig” lounge area.

It was well after 5:00 p.m. before the last visitors left the Home. We now look forward to the Grand Opening to be held, D.V., some time in June. All in all, we are thankful for such a successful turnout.

We thank all the tenants for being so helpful in every way. We realize that such an event, no matter how enjoyable, can also be quite tiresome for older people (and perhaps even younger people). A special thank you is also in order to our caretaker and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. P. Knooihuizen for their extra efforts in making this afternoon one to be remembered. But above all we are thankful to Him who has made this all possible.

P.S. For any information or a personal viewing for prospective tenants, please contact Mr. P. Knooihuizen at 383-0097.

For the Coordinating Committee,
C. FEENSTRA

news medley

A few words about celebrating couples should open our news medley today.

Brother and sister W.H. DeVries of Fergus come first.

On March 25 they will celebrate their fortieth wedding anniversary. I can assure you that I tried to get a picture, but have not succeeded as yet. Perhaps in a future issue?

I have known this couple for as long as we have been in Canada, because they belonged to the New Westminster Church first. Later on they tried farming in the Kootenay Valley, in Slocan City, but after about a year — I think — decided to move on to Ontario. When we came to Fergus we met them again.

On this occasion we offer our congratulations to them, their children and grandchildren and express the wish that the Lord may add more years to the ones they have already received. They both enjoy good health as far as I know, and this, too, is a reason for gratitude.

Somewhat farther away is the 50th wedding anniversary of brother and sister P.J. Huttema of Clearbrook, B.C. They will have this celebration, the Lord willing, on April 11. Them, too, we have known from the time we arrived in Canada, for they belonged to the New Westminster Church as well and have resided in the Fraser Valley ever since. The last time we saw them — this was when they visited us here last year in their camper-truck — their health was better than we sometimes saw it in the past. They were enjoying their trip immensely and we were happy to see them here. It is our wish that the Lord may grant them a good day of celebration with children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and many brothers and sisters. We cannot be present in person but certainly will think of you.

This was the only news I can tell you about anyone in the West. Our information this time does not go beyond Ontario except a brief item which I will quote from the Edmonton Providence bulletin, because I think it is something which could have the attention of members everywhere.

Well, let me start with this.

In the above mentioned bulletin I found a little piece on behalf of the Funeral Fund. Perhaps I would have skipped it if not a member here had approached me a few days ago with the very same point. It is the point of forming a society as a sort of mutual fund to reimburse families who had to face the expenses of a funeral. I know that in various regions and places there are such funds or societies. The one in the Fraser Valley has been operating for many years. Seeing that we all will have to bear this burden one day or another, it would be good to pay attention to the following little piece from the Providence bulletin.

"You know a funeral costs money. In this day and age everything is going up and up. I do not think that I say too much when I state that a funeral costs, let me say, from \$1800 to \$2000.

"The Society pays for the members the amount of the total funeral costs. The total costs consists of: the sum of money to be paid to the Funeral Home (contract) plus the costs of a plot at the cemetery, and a small amount of money to the family. The memorial stone is not paid for by the Burial Fund."

In Edmonton, the families pay \$24.00 yearly, single persons \$12.00. An entry fee is required, as is logical and fair.

We return to Ontario. There is not much news from that region either.

The other time we mentioned the average age of the new Burlington South Congregation. This prompted the Rev. Pouwelse to write the following in the Rehoboth bulletin.

"In the South bulletin we read that they have a very young congregation. The average age is 23.07 years. That means, if I understand it correctly, almost 23 years and 1 month. This is younger than our congregation. I don't know as of which date they have made their calculations, but the average age of our congregation as of February 1983 is 23 years and 9 months."

Anyone else who wishes to try his hand at it?

In the Consistory report of the Rehoboth Church I also read the following: "It was decided to present the congregation of Burlington South with a Lord's Supper Set as a gift from our congregation." What better gift can be given than such a set, expressing thereby the unity of the Church which we confess specifically at the table of the Lord?

In the same bulletin information was given about the plans of the Home Mission Committee of the Ebenezer Church (East). The Evangelization Committee of Burlington East "has engaged a theological student to coordinate the programme. This co-ordinator will be responsible for arranging functions that will both teach and involve effective outreach."

We go to Smithville.

There the deacons, too, publish a report on their meetings, and thus the Congregation is more aware of the fact that the deacons are doing something. From this report we pass on this passage.

"Letters were sent to all deaconries of the Canadian Reformed Churches (to what other deacons would they have sent one than to the Canadian Reformed Churches? Why is it necessary to put it this way? VO) regarding the possibility of establishing a foster home. Although all deaconries were willing to support this, if necessary, there seems to be no urgent need. The deacons with the consistory came then to the conclusion not to proceed with this matter at this time."

It appears important to pass on to our readers something I found in the bulletin of the Grand Rapids Church. First I shall pass it on and then make a few remarks in connection with it.

"Here follows some information about The Reformed Church in the U.S. It is taken from a pamphlet published in 1979 by Permanent Publications Committee Eureka Classis, The Reformed Church in the U.S., P.O. Box 406, Eureka, S.D. 57437.

"We give this information because our consistory received an invitation to introduce the American Reformed Church to their Classis to be held March 14 through 17 in Sutton, Nebraska.

"The consistory appointed your pastor to go there. It is therefore important to pass on to you what this pamphlet says about the name, background, history, and doctrine of this church.

"The Reformed Church in the U.S.

"This pamphlet is intended to introduce you to the Reformed Church in the U.S. with the hope that you will be desirous of getting better acquainted with us.

"Our Name and Background

"The term *Reformed* denotes that stream of Protes-

tant Christianity which had its impetus in the theology of the influential Genevan Reformer, John Calvin (1509-1564). *Calvinism*, as this biblical theology was nicknamed, was adopted by the French Huguenots, the Scotch Presbyterians, the English Puritans, and our Pilgrim forefathers. Calvinistic denominations sprang up early in various European countries, including France, Germany, and Holland. To distinguish them from other protestant denominations, these churches are officially known as *Reformed*.

"The Reformed Church in the U.S., therefore, has a history reaching back to the Calvinistic reformation of the Church in the sixteenth century. A brief history of our denomination is included later in this pamphlet, but we may note here that by the time of the War For Independence the German Reformed Church was the sixth largest denomination in America, being larger than the Lutheran and Roman Catholic communions. The adjective *German* was dropped from our name in 1863, although the constituency of our denomination is still largely of German extraction.

"The year 1934 was a year of great crisis for the Reformed Church in the U.S., and this we must sadly relate. Despite much protest, certain unsound leaders of our denomination managed to bring about a union with the Evangelical Synod of North America. The name given to this new non-Reformed body was the Evangelical and Reformed Church. This latter group has since dissolved itself into the United Church of Christ by merging with the Congregational Christian Churches. Needless to say, these mergers have left thousands of church members — on all sides — completely confused as to who they really are and what they are supposed to believe.

"In that critical year of 1934, however, there were a number of Reformed congregations and an entire classis (Eureka) which refused to give up their Reformed confession and principles; and on this relatively small group (Eureka Classis) fell the responsibility of continuing the witness and ministry of the Reformed Church in the U.S. Admittedly, we are not a large denomination from a statistical and comparative point of view, but by the grace of God we are advancing the cause of our Lord as He opens doors of opportunity to us. Our chief concern is to remain faithful to Christ in the midst of unbelief and religious confusion which abounds on every hand today."

Thus far the quote from the Grand Rapids bulletin.

It is very gratifying and a reason for rejoicing when we discover faithful communions who endeavour to preserve the Reformed heritage, not because of traditionalism but because therein the Truth is being preserved and the Church kept with her God and Father and with her Head and King.

Some time ago the Rev. Cl. Stam wrote in the Smithville bulletin that, together with brother G. Kuik of Winnipeg, Man., he attended a conference in Tyler, Texas, where he came into contact with various brothers from various regions, and I would not be surprised if the contact which the Grand Rapids Church now appears to have with the Reformed Church in the U.S. is also a result of the contacts established at that conference.

Rev. Stam promised in the Smithville bulletin that he would write about this conference, and thus we can look forward to some further information.

I may assure our readers that we are happy with these new connections and can also tell you that even more may be expected in the future. It further appears that our College becomes more widely known and, under the blessing of the Lord, may prove to be a valuable tool

for the preservation of the Reformed heritage on the American continent.

In his closing address at the Synod of Orangeville 1968, the chairman said, among others, the following.

"One might wonder whether we are not taking upon ourselves burdens too heavy and responsibilities too great for us by trying to establish a College and by endeavouring to complete an English Calvinistic Psalter. Are not these causes too great and too high for us? Are we not trying to walk on stilts that are too tall and in boots that are much too large for us?"

We may say that in the course of the almost fifteen years that have passed since then the Lord has greatly blessed us and also, to a certain extent, caused us to be a blessing. We do not boast, for what we have received of grace; it renders us rather humble that in our small way we have been enabled to do the things we set out to do. They may prove to be of greater importance than we could ever have envisaged or dared to hope.

The possibilities I see for our College is one of the reasons why I have advocated for years the acquisition of another building, with more room and better accessibility from the street. I repeat my wish that finally some action may be taken. Our Women's Savings Action members are most eager to provide us with a splendid and functional library building!

Keep working, keep saving, keep praying and remain alert.

Remain faithful above all.

Hoping to be able to give you more good news in the future.

I remain
Yours faithfully
VO

Church News

A NEW ERA

On February 27, 1983 Rev. C. VanSpronsen was installed by Rev. G.H. Visscher as home-missionary for the native people of the Bulkley Valley Area.

The congregation of Smithers, BC would like to take this opportunity to thank the Lord for all He has given us in Rev. C. VanSpronsen over the past 4½ years.

We also wish him God's blessing in his new calling.

On behalf of the Congregation
of Smithers, BC

Willy and Greta VanderGaag

The Faculty of the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches invites students who obtain their B.A. degree or its equivalent this spring, to contact the Registrar with a view to the requirements for application.

Students who graduate from high school and are considering to study theology after completion of an under graduate program, are also requested to contact the Registrar to be advised as to the B.A. program which provides the best preparation for their future study at the College.

The Registrar, L. Selles
374 Queen Street South
Hamilton, ON L8P 3T9

school crossing

A. On the Aim of Education

The following article has been printed in its entirety. The issues which are raised seem to be very relevant to our schools. It was written by Mr. E. Vanderboom, principal of Credo Christian High School (Langley, BC).

A clear formulation of the aim of education often seems like an elusive dream. Education is a term that is wide in scope, and so, by its very nature, such a formulation will be general, as it attempts to cover all the dimensions of life. In doing so, we often find that we have merely written the aim in terms of a series of other words that themselves need further clarification. A common criticism against such formulations is that they have omitted key ideas, which to one person may be implied but to another need to be specified. In spite of this type of confusion and criticism, I believe it is important that we ask ourselves time and again what we are attempting to do. Often, by asking the question, we are forced to focus more on certain elements of our task in educating that otherwise may be overlooked.

I believe we could argue that the child is at the centre of our education. This is not because we too believe in the goodness of mankind and consequently in some modern notion about child-centered education. Certainly, in our modern world, there is an over-emphasis on the child to the point where rights receive more attention than responsibilities. However, in spite of this influence around us, we may with confidence focus on the child as we build our curriculum and formulate our objectives. Our motivation for this is not based on a recognition of rights, but on an understanding of parental responsibilities according to Biblical norms which show clearly the needs of our children, based on their natural condition.

So we would do well to ask ourselves what educational plan we envisage. What objectives or goals have we established that may give shape to our daily activities? What are we doing with our students, be it in Mathematics or History, English or Art, that is not specific to the subject but general and applicable to a life of

service in the kingdom of God? I would suggest that the following might be included among such objectives.

To recognize that each child, as a covenant child created in the image of God, is a unique individual with his own particular needs.

I think it is important that we recognize the uniqueness of each child. This will help us to be sensitive to the learning needs of different children. It reminds us that as the talents are distributed in different ways, so too the responsibilities will vary and our teaching may need to be modified. We're all cast from the same mold, yet we are so marvelously different. We may be unique, yet this uniqueness may not become an excuse for employing less than our best.

As we recognize this, through our actions in the classroom, perhaps in some small way, the students will more and more learn to know what it means to be a hand and a foot to each other in the classroom community and even beyond.

To direct a child's education so that he learns to live as a faithful child of God, responding more and more from the heart.

In all areas of life, the Lord demands our heart. This is no less true at school than it is in the home or the church. We're thankful that we don't have to build this heart commitment by ourselves, for then we're sure it would be doomed to failure. But the Lord has given His sure pledge and promise at baptism that He will work in the hearts of His covenant children. Such a promise demands thankful obedience, lays on responsibility. And so the home, together with the school, fed by the preaching of the Word, directs its efforts to raising a generation of covenant children with visionary zeal for the kingdom of God.

To direct a child towards a sense of self-discipline.

Discipline for a young child may take on a different form from that meant for older children. For a young child, reproof is often more direct and the effects may even be felt. For older

children, there is a shift toward internalizing discipline. The consequences for disobedience may not be as immediate but may be of more consequence in the long run. Directing children to hear and respond to that "inner voice" which is fed by the Word of God, should be our aim.

To foster a sense of critical inquiry by which today's philosophies of life may be measured against the truth of God's Word.

We must teach children to think, on their own, and on their feet, armed with "the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God." Our world is decaying around us; there is social unrest, political injustice, economic ruin, environmental destruction, and moral decline. These influences are making their mark on the young lives of our covenant children through modern song, advertising, the newspaper, the film industry, and no doubt through such widely watched T.V. newscasts as "The National" and "The Journal." We must combat these effects and teach our students that just as salt can be used to prevent the spoilage of food, so too the Word of God is a healing balm for a world full of broken lives. This means our students will need to learn to analyze, to hunt for hidden meaning, to discern, to be critical. We will need to challenge them to look deeper, to go beyond the surface and the obvious, to probe and to apply their learning in concrete ways. Such a challenge will require us to constantly evaluate our curriculum, to ensure that critical inquiry is more than "saying," but also "doing."

To enable the maximum intellectual development of each child so that the God-given talents may be employed to their best advantage in the service of our King.

We must provide for curricular variation so that our students may more and more develop their own talents. This development must first of all recognize the central place of Scripture to the knowledge of the various disciplines and so gain true knowledge. Informed Christians of this calibre will be better able to employ the skills of critical inquiry and

apply what they learn long after they leave the classroom.

To provide a distinctive Christian atmosphere where a child can interact with fellow students and thus with them grow into a school community.

Effective learning requires an orderly and structured learning environment. We cannot expect self-discipline, communal sensitivity, and intellectual pursuit to arise naturally out of the heart of sinful man. We need boundaries and limits, and again the Word of God has provided these with the proper perspective on authority. It's not always easy to apply these norms. Students may think that an easing back of the boundary is an opening of the way to freedom and license, rather than an invitation to hear the voice of the Lord speaking to us from the inside out.

We need to build our school environment so we impart a sense of sharing, tie firmly the bonds of belonging as we in recreation and play, and in whatever we do, create communal fellowship. Such an atmosphere will complement learning and will spill over into the community.

B. Discipline Revisited

A lot of school bulletins deal with this topic. It probably ranks as the most popular P.T.A. topic of all times. I recently read the following "historical overview" in a teacher's magazine.

In the 1910's — you had to spank a child

1920's — you deprived him as punishment

1930's — if a child was bad, he was ignored

1940's — was a period when one reasoned with a child

1950's — discipline meant an abundance of love

1960's — changed it to spanking a child lovingly

1970's — saw a decade of child self-expression

1980's — emphasizes that a return to the basics is a viable alternative

In other words, "discipline" means many things to many people. Interpretations change rapidly and educators have a field day developing new concepts and philosophies.

In the United States, for five of the last six times, the annual Gallup Poll of Public Attitudes Toward Education has found that in the minds of most Americans, discipline is the single greatest priority for the schools.

Although few of the proponents of renewed rigor advocate a return to the hickory stick and the dunce cap, many school systems are now developing strict enforcement mechanisms.

Some notable quotes on this topic:

(a) Dr. Kenneth Clark, a respected social psychologist: "Without apology, I say that I am a traditionalist. I do not see any substitute for the elementary school's teaching reading, writing and arithmetic as the base upon which all other forms of education must rest. I don't believe a child can play any constructive role in this society if he is unable to spell or to read, or if he does not have any sense of discipline and responsible action."

(b) Charles Silberman, author of *Crisis in the Classroom*: "A lot of people tried what they call open classrooms. They literally broke down walls out of a mistaken belief that "open" means "open space." The noise level got so high that nobody knew what he or she was doing. The kids didn't learn a thing while listening to teachers giving them a lecture on not being so uptight about basic skills or traditional rules."

(c) Dr. Benjamin Spock, the pediatrician whose *Baby and Child Care* has influenced millions of families, now speculates that experts like him may have encouraged a generation of parents to evade their own responsibilities, letting others decide what was best for their children.

I suppose that many things can be learned from these and other reflections. One point is clear, however: school is for *learning*, and that cannot take place without a number of rules and expectations.

C. Parkland Immanuel Christian School Expands

In a recent school bulletin, the board of the Edmonton school society announced that it would add Grade 10 for the 1983/84 school year. To quote the principal, Mr. VanDelft:

As far as student population, staffing, and facilities are concerned, our goals for the future call for the addition of more staff members, the addition of the remaining senior high school grades, and the "sub-division" of the facilities by moving the high school component (Grade 7 to 12) into the Addition as the Elementary Wing fills up. Projecting about three years into the future, we anticipate a student

population of about 185 students (elementary 125; high school 60) with about five teachers in each division. The school has been built for the future and the future looks good, humanly speaking. May the Lord continue to bless that which was begun in His Name and that, the Lord willing, we may be able to see the fulfillment of our plans.

To these comments we may add our best wishes and most of all our prayers, for the expansion of Christ-centered education in various places of our country!

D. Postscript

I received a call on March 1 from a board member of one of our schools. He wanted to know if there were still any teachers available. To quote him, "Most of our teachers were signed up quite a while already." That seems to be a strange situation! I thought that the schools (at least in Ontario) had agreed not to offer contracts until March 1, with a deadline of March 31. This is another item for my file marked "The Annual Headache."

Until next time, the Lord willing.

NICK VANDOOREN
John Calvin School,
607 Dynes Road,
Burlington, ON



ACCEPTED to Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church of Burlington, ON:

REV. D. DEJONG

of Calgary, AB

ACCEPTED to Orangeville, ON:

REV. M. WERKMAN

of Lincoln, ON

CALLED to Ottawa, ON:

REV. G.H. VISSCHER

of Houston, BC

OUR COVER

Spruce Woods Provincial Park,
Manitoba.
Photo Courtesy Travel Manitoba.

PATRIMONY PROFILE 9

By Rev. W.W.J. VanOene

II The Secession of 1834

P. Hofstede de Groot

The village of Ulrum is situated in the northern part of the province of Groningen. Its name is known throughout the Reformed Churches, because out of that place came the trumpet sound that awakened many not only in the vicinity of the village of Ulrum, but in a wide circle which expanded rapidly. In Ulrum the reformation of the Netherlands Reformed Church began.

The man who was deemed worthy to lead the Church back to purity of doctrine and obedience to her Lord and Saviour did not come from the distinguished group of men who promoted the Reveil, but was a simple minister who only gradually learned the Truth himself and then also began to preach it to others.

In 1826 the Church at Ulrum received a new minister. Candidate Petrus Hofstede de Groot had been appointed by the king from a nomination and, although he was only twenty-four years old, he already had the reputation of being very learned and very serious.

The people were not disappointed, and during de Groot's ministry in Ulrum a solid bond grew between him and the Congregation, and the majority of the members were well content with their minister and his sermons. There were, however, some members who did not find that certainty and assurance of faith for which they longed and for which they were searching earnestly. The minister's sermons did not help them in this search either. Quite a few could not come to making public profession of faith and were not guided by their minister's preaching in the old, Reformed doctrine. Thus they consulted the favourite "old writers" and thereby ran the risk of getting into mysticist waters. One of those who faithfully attended catechism classes but did not come to public profession of faith was Klaas Pieters Kuipenga.

What was it in de Groot's preaching that caused many members to have an unsatisfied feeling and an awareness that something was lacking? We shall not be mistaken if we take for granted that the sermons had the same contents as the writings by this minister; I therefore quote a few lines from the latter. "Christianity," he wrote, "is no doctrine; it is

power, spirit, and life, for the enlightenment, warming, sanctification, and perfection of man. That is so because it is the revelation of God's love in Jesus Christ, of which the gospel is for us the glad tidings, and theology the explanation and recommendation. . . . But since the doctrine or theory about Christianity is a matter for the scholars and not for the church, let those things be left to the scholars. What is truth will gain the upper hand in spite of all errors, if only both truth and error may be proclaimed freely. Freedom is the only favour which truth requests, or rather, the only thing which it asks. If only it can utter itself, it will gain the victory among people who have been created for the truth and, feeling a need for it, will be unable to resist it in the long run."

What is lacking here is the awareness of man's total depravity. Here we do not hear sounds that are in accordance with the confession of the Church. The result was, of course, that the reconciliation through the Lord Jesus Christ was not preached in all its riches, and that the total renewal by the Holy Spirit was hollowed out: more and more it became purely an improvement, a growing in virtue and decency.

Hofstede de Groot did not hold the confessions of the Church in very high esteem either. When he was asked whether the Church can be without a confession and whether the doctrine should not be maintained, he replied, "That confession need not consist in concepts, in dogmas, in doctrinal theses. It can consist in the testimony, 'I love the Lord Jesus and will live and die for Him.'" And on another occasion he declared that it was not necessary at all that one should be "Dort-Reformed," meaning that one does not have to agree with the Canons of Dort to be called truly Reformed.

De Groot's ministry in Ulrum did not last all that long. He was appointed professor at the University of Groningen, and thus Ulrum's Church became vacant again in 1829. However, Hofstede de Groot showed that he had the interest of the Church at Ulrum at heart. He was convinced that one who would continue in his line was his friend from his student days, Hendrik de Cock. He knew de Cock as a serious man, careful and tactful.

Since 1818 men had been forbidden to go and preach somewhere with a view to receiving a call, and thus Ulrum could not invite de Cock to come over for a Sunday so that the Congregation could hear him and judge for themselves. Thus a committee was sent to Noordlaren to listen to de Cock's sermons and, if the brethren should find them satisfactory, they had the right to hand over the letter-of-call (which they had with them already), upon the condition that the king would approve of it.

Hendrik de Cock was called and accepted the call. That was in October 1829. He was installed in his service in Ulrum by his friend, Professor Petrus Hofstede de Groot.

Hendrik de Cock

Who was Hendrik de Cock? He was born at Veendam on April 12, 1801. Shortly after his birth his parents moved to Wildervank where his father later became burgomaster. When it appeared that young Hendrik had the ability and the desire to study, he received lessons from the minister in Wildervank and from a teacher of catechism, Hendrik Nieman. Especially the work of the latter resulted in the fact that de Cock never felt perfectly at home with the liberal theology to which he became exposed at the University.

On May 14, 1823, then twenty-two years old, he was declared a candidate by the Provincial Church Board of Groningen, and on March 7, 1824, he was ordained as minister of the Church at Eppenhuisen in the province of Groningen. Before his ordination he married Frouwe Venema. During their years of marriage they received seven children, of whom two died at a young age. One son, Helenius, was to become the first professor of dogmatology at the Theological College of the Seceded Churches.

De Cock served Eppenhuisen until October 28, 1827, when he left it for Noorderlaren, in the hope that that would improve his own health and the health of his family.

Then, in October 1829, he went to Ulrum, where he was installed (stated earlier) by his former student-friend and predecessor in Ulrum, Hofstede de Groot. On Sunday, October 29, 1829, he delivered his inaugural sermon on the words from I Sam. 3:5a: "Here I am, for you called me." Leaving the exegetical aspect of the choice of text out of the picture, we must say that the use of those words was more or less prophetic: Ulrum will have blessed their decision to call this man who became an instrument in the Lord's hand to give them food to still their hunger and the water of life to quench their thirst. De Cock considered the call to have come from the Lord Himself.

It certainly was not so that de Cock did just that right from the outset. Hofstede de Groot was correct in looking at Hendrik de Cock as a worthy successor; de Cock himself considered it a privilege to be de Groot's successor. The new minister was different though, and that was evident almost right from the start. Already at the first consistory meeting which he chaired, he introduced prayer at the consistory meeting, even though it meant only that the first meeting of the year was to be opened with prayer and the last one of the year closed with prayer. Before his coming to Ulrum an opportunity was given four times a year to have children baptized; de Cock succeeded in having that changed to eight times a year. A year later he abolished the custom that illegitimate children should be baptized in a special service.

In the course of his work in the congregation, he also came to talk with Klaas Kuipenga about making profession of faith, and he urged the brother

to come to the parsonage an hour a week for further instruction. Kuipenga complied, and the weekly get-togethers resulted in his making profession of faith after not too long a time. It is, however, a big question who benefited more from those conversations, Kuipenga or his minister. The student emphasized repeatedly the total depravity of man and his inability to do any good by nature. "If," Kuipenga declared, "I had to add even one sigh to my salvation, I would be lost for ever." For his minister this was unknown language, and it made him think more about things.

A further factor in de Cock's development was that he learned to know Calvin's *Institutes*, even though it was not the complete edition. During a visit to his colleague Wormnest in Warfhuizen in 1831, the discussion turned to the doctrine of faith. When a difference of opinion became obvious, Rev. Wormnest said, "Let us consult father Calvin about that," and he took the *Institutes* out of his bookcase. At the end of the visit de Cock asked for permission to take the book home with him, and through his study of the work he became acquainted with Calvin's thoughts and was further instructed in the truth.

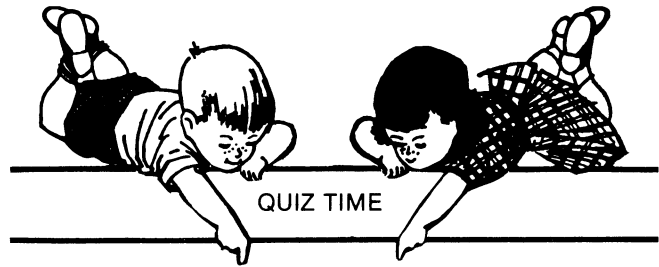
It is clear that any development in his own thinking could not but have an effect on his preaching. The congregation noticed this as well — with gratitude and growing appreciation. Not only the people in Ulrum noticed it; far and wide the word was spread that the minister in Ulrum was changing, that he was preaching the Scriptural truth more and more. Thus the services began to be attended by people from a wide circle around Ulrum. Soon the church building could no longer contain the multitude. More about that later.

We must mention one more factor in the growth of de Cock in spiritual respect: that is his becoming acquainted with the writings of a pious nobleman: C. Baron Van Zuylen van Nijvelt. It was especially a booklet by the latter, entitled *The Reformed Doctrine*, that greatly appealed to de Cock. In that booklet the baron points to the unashamed propagation of all sorts of errors from the pulpit as well as in publications. As for the latter, de Cock found further proof of those deviations in an article appearing in a theological journal under the title "Good News from Heaven, That There Is No Hell." In this article, the statement was made and defended that death is not the result of sin, no punishment; at least, it cannot be proved that it is.

And — to mention a final element in the development — in those days a member of Ulrum's Church gave de Cock a copy of the Canons of Dort. Although he had been a minister for almost eight years, Hendrik de Cock was totally unfamiliar with them and read them with increasing surprise and agreement.

(To be continued).

our little magazine



Dear Busy Beavers,

Can you imagine how very sad the disciples were that first Easter morning?

Their dear Master dead and buried.

They were full of grief.

It was all they could think of.

Gone was all their happiness.

Gone were all their hopes.

All they could do now was to bury their dear Master properly.

And that's just what the women were doing . . . going to bury Him properly.

Can you imagine their joy and surprise when they met *Him*, the Lord Himself?

Can you imagine?

How they must have laughed and cried and talked a mile-a-minute!

How they rushed back, back to the city to tell the disciples!

How excited they were . . . they talked all at once!

Any wonder no one believed them!

But the Good Shepherd Himself was busy gathering His scattered, sad sheep.

One by one they saw their Risen Lord.

And that night they were all joyfully together.

"The Lord is truly risen!" they cried.

How great was their joy now!

And that same joy is ours, too.

Joy at Easter. But joy every day of our lives.

That's what makes us Christians, right?

Time for birthday wishes! To all the Busy Beavers celebrating their birthday in April we wish a very happy day celebrating with your family and friends. May the Lord guide and keep you all in the year ahead. Many happy returns to you all!

April

Karen Wiegers	1	Joyce Jonker	18
Rose Barendregt	2	Lisa Lodder	18
Kenneth Wendt	3	Kimberley Vander Zwaag	18
Denise Dijkstra	4	Christine Riemersma	19
Evelyn Hamoen	5	Marie Hamoen	21
Marion Overbeek	6	Cindy Oosterveld	21
Angela Van Laar	7	Emma Bosma	22
Gerald Van Woudenberg	9	Annette Haan	22
Erica Blom	12	Carolyn Kok	24
Marion Vandenbos	13	Carl Dorgeloos	25
Brian Vandenbos	13	Adrian Hamoen	25
Richard Slaa	14	Karen Stam	25
James Teitsma	14	Melina Veldkamp	27
Irma Van Ellenberg	15	Ralph Van Eerden	29
Geoffrey Hoogstra	16	Paul Kuntz	30
Annette Bosscher	17		

EASTER QUIZ: The Lord Jesus says "I am . . ."

1. *John 11:25* I am the resurrection and the _____; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live . . .
2. *John 6:35* I am the _____ of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger.
3. *John 8:12* I am the _____ of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness.
4. *John 10:14* I am the good _____; I know my own and my own know me.
5. *John 15:1a, 5b* I am the true _____ . . . you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit.
6. *John 10:9* I am the _____; if any one enters by me, he will be saved . . .
7. *John 14:6* I am the _____, and the _____, and the _____; no one comes to the Father, but by me.

Picture by Busy Beaver Sylvia Leffers

We're Waiting
For Spring and
Here Are The
Robins!

