

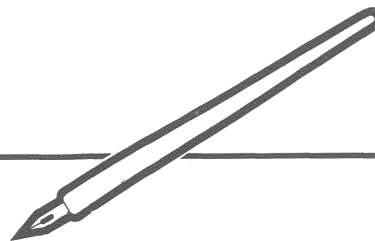


Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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A letter and a reply

I was not surprised when I received a letter addressed to me as editor of *Clarion* since he who writes in public must expect comment. I can also quite well understand this letter with its complaint, and can accept it without the least bit of rancour.

Sometimes it can be better to reply to a letter privately but in this case a response can only be made publicly, because the writer wishes to remain anonymous, signing his letter with the words "a former member, and the rest of the Christian Reformed members worldwide." From the letter it is clear that he is "a former member" of one of the Canadian Reformed Churches, who joined the Christian Reformed Church.

Now, I feel no obligation at all to reply to anonymous letters, whose authors are not "man enough" to reveal their identity. However, in this case I do not mind at all to respond, and to do it publicly. And the anonymity of the letter prevents me from becoming personal which is good, for only the matter itself is important. It is not necessary to quote the whole letter so I will give the essence.

"I have a few questions I would really like to see answered by you, the editor of this *Canadian Reformed Magazine*. If you find yourself man enough to be able to, since you find (the) *Canadian Reformed Church* 100% pure, perfect, and righteous in every way, sin excepted What I would like to know is why do you detest our outlook and why are we (the Christian Reformed Church) so wrong, *always*?" The writer, continues, "I was a member of the *Canadian Reformed Church* for a number of years but recently withdrew and joined the Christian Reformed Church, (where) I find the people a lot more open and above all God-fearing Christians; not perfect, due to sin, but Christians, not out to prove that they are the perfect Christians by being Christian Reformed, but because we, too, believe that Christ died for us and not only (for) the oh so perfect Canadian Reformed congregations only. Think about it: is the Canadian Reformed Church perfect in every way, sin excepted . . . ?" The writer, then, says that he could write a lot of not so good things about the Canadian Reformed Churches, but will not do so, because in that case he would become just like I, namely, putting down the other church.

Here is my response.

Dear Anonymous,

I feel badly about the fact that you left the Canadian Reformed Churches, although I do not know your reason for leaving. You say that there are many friendly, open, God-fearing Christians in the Christian Reformed Church and am sure that you are right in this.

I am also aware, that there are stubborn, staunch, strict, often seemingly un-friendly Canadian Reformed people who just maintain their "this is right and that is wrong attitude." However, one thing I must say. The Canadian Reformed Churches do not teach that only Canadian Reformed people are saved and go to heaven. To say that would be almost the ultimate arrogance. I do admit, we are church people who are far from perfect. And I also say that the Canadian Reformed Churches are far from perfect. We have a lot of weaknesses and if salvation would depend on us and our Canadian Reformed good works, we would be lost forever.

But is this the point? No, it is not. We are not talking about or condemning persons. Judgment is up to the LORD. I know that the Lord has warned us to take the log out of our own eye, so we can clearly see the speck in our brother's eye. But the same Christ has also ordered us, in the very same Matthew 7, to test the spirits. The norm for this testing is the Word of God. And when we are Reformed, we do not hesitate to use, at the same time, our Reformed standards for this testing, since we are convinced that these standards faithfully summarize the truth of the Word of God.

The point is this: do the Canadian Reformed Churches, and does the Christian Reformed Church faithfully adhere to these standards? So far, by the grace of God, the Canadian Reformed Churches do. From what we can read in black and white, there are dangers just here in the CRC. Let me give a few examples: some openly challenge the doctrine of reprobation as confessed in the Canons of Dort. Others strongly promote an opening of the offices in the church for women.

Then, there is the issue of the ecumenical relations; the ties with the (synodical) Reformed Churches in The Netherlands are still maintained which churches are not Reformed anymore; and voices are heard which call for a joining of the liberal organization of the World Council of Churches.

After this long introduction, I come to your basic question: why do I always say that the CRC is wrong? It is because this development causes me concern and grieves me. It is for the sake of all those fine, open, God-fearing Christian believers in the CRC and also to warn the weak and sinful Canadian Reformed Christians. Perhaps my writing will help some Christian Reformed believing children of God to see what is going on. Hopefully Canadian Reformed readers of *Clarion* will be alerted and discuss these things with Christian Reformed friends and neighbours.

The church has such an important, central place in the life of its members. Paul calls the church our mother (Gal. 4), like Israel as the Old Testament church is called a mother (Hos. 2 and 4). In this same line our church fathers said: he who has God as Father, must have the church as mother (Cyprian).

A mother brings forth children. She feeds, nourishes and nurtures them. These children will be (mostly) the result of her upbringing.

This is also true for the church as mother. The church bears children through the preaching of the Word of God. I am now speaking about the church that has the pure preaching of the gospel. An adulterous, unfaithful woman can also be mother. She will bring forth unfaithful, adulterous children (Hos. 1 and 2). In general, when the church mother is faithful, her children will be the same. But when the church mother becomes unfaithful and starts deviating from the way of her "Husband," the children will too, because they are brought up in the way of their mother. It is: so mother, so children.

Do you not agree with me that we can see this truth in the reality of life? You know, just as well as I do, that there are liberal "denominations." Are not their children mostly liberal? Have the false teachings of the Roman Catholic Church not led her children away from the truth? You also know that

whenever the church was re-formed, as in the days of the Reformation and afterwards, and became again truly a faithful mother by returning to the Word of her "Husband," she brought forth faithful, true children.

Therefore, since we are so close, having the same roots, the same background, the same confessional standards, should we, then, not warn and alert one another? Reading the Old Testament, we learn that God's people Israel and Judah (Ezekiel calls them two unfaithful sisters), time and again deviated from God's ways, and ended up in exile. We also know that the New Testament church is not immune from falling away into unfaithfulness. Should we, then, not alert one another and

show what is wrong? I wish that the CRC will stop going in the wrong direction.

And when you see wrong with the Canadian Reformed Churches, (not with its individual members in as far as we are all sinners, but with our churches as such) please tell us, that we may be corrected according to the Word of our God, for what I seek to promote is that the Canadian Reformed Churches remain faithful to their Lord, and so a faithful mother for her children. Thank you for writing and listening to me. I hope you understand.

Your (not anonymous)
J. GEERTSEMA

Labour movements

Some remarks on the labour organizations:

1. A burning issue

In almost every newscast and in every newspaper we can hear and read about labour unrest. Strikes and lockouts are the order of the day. Picket lines can be seen everywhere. The people who are on strike not only picket their "own" company, but also set up "secondary" pickets. Workers in other factories are forced to stay away from their work site. The tensions sometimes run high and violence is the result. Workers who are glad that they, after months of unemployment, can go back to work, are sometimes forced to go home again. Many families suffer financially and cannot make ends meet. Some have lost thousands of dollars in family income in a couple of months, not to mention the damage done to the national economy. Millions of dollars are lost and sometimes lasting damage is done by losing a market or missing some badly needed orders.

What is our attitude in this respect? How do we as believers approach these problems? Most of our church members will never become involved in a strike because they are not members of a labour union. They have their own business or work in nonunionized shops. However, as we recently have seen, the picket lines are extended also to non-union job sites and the attack will be intensified in the future. Nonunion contractors have to be excluded from bidding on government orders and mega-projects. The troubles with respect to the World Fair "Expo 1986," a multimillion project, are a clear example of this.

In this way also nonunion workers can easily get involved in the struggle and have to take a stand in these matters. The



picket line is considered to be "sacred" and crossing a picket line seems to be the most serious offence a worker can commit.

We have to consider our attitude and our response with respect to these problems. The question of unionism is more

and more becoming a burning issue. To be "against" unions is just not enough. We have to give a clear testimony *why* we are against it. An increasing number of people start questioning what we have against membership in the unions. Some even reason: it is law in some sectors of

business life and therefore we have no choice. As law-abiding citizens we have to submit to the laws of the country.

Another point of discussion, and sometimes disagreement, is the question of the difference between labour unions, trade associations and products or marketing boards. Do we condemn membership of the one and condone membership of the other? Are the "blue-collar" workers not allowed to have their own unions while the "white-collar" workers can have their organizations, associations and boards to protect their rights, benefits, and profits?

In this respect the question comes to

"The younger generation is not served by telling them only that something is wrong, that we always have been against it and that it should stay that way. We have to convince our youth and we have to sharpen our own mind, to be able to speak with the enemy in the gate."

the fore what the relationship should be between the employer and the employee. Is that a relationship of authority, given by the Lord? Is what we read in Romans 13 and in Lord's Day 39 about authority and obedience applicable to the relationship between the employer and the employee? Do the workers have the right to organize themselves in order to have a stronger position in collective bargaining and to reach a more favourable contract or is that disrespect for the "authorities" which are set over them? Do they have to obey "without gainsaying" the rules set by the "boss," with no other choice than to accept the wages and benefits offered by the employer or to leave and try to find another job?

These questions are very fundamental and we better try to find an appropriate answer and take a clear stand in these matters. We should not just say "no" to a certain development, neither should we silently "accept" a certain obviously unavoidable course of action. We have to consider by the light of the Word of God the present situation, and we have to prepare ourselves to explain and defend our position. Especially the younger generation is not served by telling them only that something is wrong, that we always have been against it and that it should stay that way. We have to convince our youth and we have to sharpen our own mind, to be able to speak with the enemy in the gate. We have to give a clear testimony, also to those who are of a different opinion. We are supposed to be witnesses in this world. We are different than the people of the world in many aspects, but we should be able to explain why we are different.

In what follows we will try to give a contribution to the study of these social issues.

2. The purpose of our labour

When we try to determine our attitude and to formulate our point of view with respect to the actual social issues we first have to consider the meaning and purpose of all our labour. Why do we work? Why do we exert ourselves in our daily job as well as in all other activities? Is it just to make as much money as possible? Is it to get promotions and to reach the top rank in social life?

We, as believing Christians, should

see our work and our daily task in a different way. It has to be, in the first place, the fulfillment of a divine mandate. The Lord has created us and has given us a place on this earth to serve Him, to glorify His Name, and to promote His Kingdom which is to come. Our labour must bear fruits and must be of value, and of value not only in this life. It must be part of the service of the Lord and has to be brought into the New World. In Rev. 14:13 we read: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them." In the fifth

"The picket lines are extended also to nonunion job sites and the attack will be intensified in the future. Nonunion contractors have to be excluded from bidding on government orders and mega-projects. The troubles with respect to the World Fair "Expo 1986," a multimillion project, are a clear example of this."

petition we pray: "Give us this day our daily bread." That means, according to Lord's Day 50: "Be pleased to provide for all our bodily needs, that we may thereby acknowledge Thee to be the fountain of all good, and that without Thy blessing neither our care and labour nor Thy gifts can profit us, and, therefore, that we may withdraw our trust from all creatures and place it alone in Thee."

Without the Lord's blessing neither our care and labour nor His gifts can profit us. All our labour is in vain when it is not done in obedience to the Lord and to His honour. The Lord provides for all our bodi-

ly need. We have to acknowledge Him as the fountain of all good.

That puts our daily work in the right perspective. If we exert ourselves, spending all our time and energy in our work to reach our own goal, without asking what the Lord wants us to do, we cannot and should not expect His blessing upon it. It is in vain. Although it might have great results and seem to give us (much) profit, it does not really make sense nor serve any real purpose.

We have to keep in mind this most important purpose and goal of life when we are discussing our attitude with respect to our daily task and responsibility in this world.

3. Authority and obedience

Another aspect we have to consider is the relationship between the employer and the employee. In a previous series (see *Clarion* Vol 32, No. 14-19; July-Sept. 1983) we already pointed out that the relationship between employer and employee in our modern society is a completely different one than the relationship between the slaves and their masters in the time of the Old Testament and the position of the slaves in the time of the Apostle Paul. The slaves were members of the household of the master. They were subject to the authority of their masters as head of the family and, often at the same time, as the head of the community in legal and judicial matters. The authority of the master was a combination of what we nowadays see as the Governing Authorities according to Romans 13 and the authority given to the parents referred to in the fifth commandment.

In our modern society we have an agreement which is the result of free negotiations. Such a contract can be continued or terminated by both parties, according to the terms set out in the contract itself.

Every unfaithfulness, disobedience or other breach of contract is sin against the ninth commandment: we should keep our promises and stick to our commitments. It is also sin against the eighth commandment: we should further our neighbours' profit and deal with him as we would have others deal with us. That goes both ways. The employee has made

a commitment to do his work according to the instructions given by his supervisor. Every disobedience, going on strike or showing unfaithfulness in any other way, is a breach of the contract. The employer has the duty to provide proper work conditions, protection of his workers against any danger on the work site, and a fair wage. When an employer fails to provide these things, or is unfaithful in any other way, he is also guilty of breaking the contract.

Unfortunately, both parties have not always been and are not always willing to do their share. Sometimes one of the parties involved might abuse its position to force the other to do something which is not according to the contract. This has led, and still leads, to a situation of conflict and a fight between employers and employees. Both seek their strength in cooperation with their colleagues in order to join their powers either in an organization of employers or an organization of employees.

4. Abuse of power

Many examples can be mentioned with respect to the abuse of power. In the nineteenth century labour was very "cheap," readily available, and the workers had little choice but to accept terrible working conditions and extremely low wages. The employers had all the power in the world and in many cases they abused their position to make great profits at the cost of their employees. In some industries people had to work sixteen or eighteen hours a day and even

children had to work fourteen hours a day. The working conditions were sometimes very bad and unhealthy and the wages so low that the parents could hardly keep their children alive and provide food for them, let alone pay for proper housing and clothing. However, they had no choice but to accept. The employer and owner of the company could use his powerful position. Fortunately, there were also cases in which an employer really cared for his people and provided them with proper wages and benefits. However, in general, it was a very difficult time for many workers. We should not ignore these past developments. They have been a stimulus to the organized labour movement.

5. Labour organizations

5. How is our appreciation with respect to labour organizations? Do we condemn every organization of workers to defend their rights over against the position of the employer? Certainly not!

The organization of the labour movement in this part of the world has followed a different route than in Europe. In the beginning of this century, to be more precise, in 1905, a Christian Social Congress was organized in The Netherlands. During this congress the following statement was made: "The purpose of the Labour Organization is to help the workers in their aim for a better legal position in their branch of industry and to provide such labour regulations that they will be able to fulfil their God-given calling, for the development of their own strength

and gifts as well as for their families, their branch of industry, the country and the church." This is a rather lengthy sentence, as was the custom at that time. However, the meaning can be clear. A Christian Labour Organization had to be established. Their aim was to get a better legal position and to provide fair labour regulations. The ultimate purpose was: to be better equipped to fulfil their God-given mandate, for the benefit of their families, the country, and the church.

Over against a socialistic labour movement, based on the principle of the revolution and the "class-war," a Christian organization was established. The socialists had taken over the "class-war" idea from Karl Marx. His Marxist theory propagated the ongoing struggle between capital and labour, between the capitalists and the labourers, between the rich and the poor, between the oppressors and the oppressed. The Christian labour movement, however, tried to reach their goal through reasonable and peaceful negotiations. It was the "harmony model" over against the "conflict model."

This development shows us that there is basically nothing against having a labour organization, or against working together as labourers in a certain trade to get better legal protection or to reach a better contract in collective negotiations. The question is only, in which way this aim is reached and which means are used.

— To be continued.

W. POWELSE

CHURCH NEWS

Classis Ontario South of June 20 & 21, 1984 has declared that

Douwe Agema of Hamilton
Willem den Hollander of Hamilton
Jacob Moesker of Hamilton
Matthew VanLuik of Lincoln

are eligible for call within the American/Canadian Reformed Churches and that they have permission to speak an edifying word in the churches for a period no longer than one year.

W. Huizinga, Assessor

CALLED to Winnipeg, MB

CANDIDATE W. DEN HOLLANDER
of Hamilton, ON

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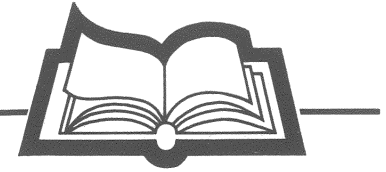
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“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.”

John 14:12

Greater Works

The disciples of the Lord surely must have been puzzled at the words of the Lord Jesus when He told them that they would not only do the same works He did, but also *greater* works. The term signifies works of a higher order; the disciples would not simply enlarge the number of works, but would be doing a different kind of works — better, more glorious and majestic works than Christ did. This only made them wonder. Their own works had always been secondary to Christ's, and they could not fathom doing greater things than He did. More than that, they could not see how they would be doing them in Christ's absence. He was going away. And they would do greater works?

The same perplexity is at times still with us today, because we suffer from the same shortsightedness shared by the disciples. They certainly did not expect the Lord Jesus to leave. They expected an earthly kingdom, a kingdom in which they would sit next to the newly proclaimed messianic King, and share the wonders of His reign. But Christ announces His departure from the disciples — through the avenue of death, v. 4. And we too, still think that Christ's absence is more of a hindrance to faith than a help. Wouldn't it be so much easier if He were still on earth? How can we do anything like He did, let alone greater works?

Now there is no denying the greatness of the miracles of the Lord Jesus. He did many signs and wonders, and seven of them are recorded in the book of John as a kind of summary of them all. The evangelist is also clear on why they were both done and written down: “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name,” John 20:30, 31. All the signs and miracles had one aim: to show how the Lord Jesus was more than an ordinary prophet or teacher; indeed, He was the Son of God, the Saviour. He was the fulfillment of the prophecies.

Yet here we encounter the limitation surrounding the works of the Lord Jesus, a limitation which He Himself implicitly acknowledges in this passage. With all the signs He did, many still did not believe. In fact, after the culminating sign, the raising of Lazarus, the Jews immediately took steps to have both Lazarus and the Lord Jesus put to death, John 11:53; 12:10, 11. The signs had tremendous power, and came with the force of conviction and clarity. The Lord Jesus even appealed to both His enemies and disciples to believe on account of them, John 10:38; 14:11. Yet, for the most part, people did not believe in Him. At the end, even His disciples were scattered, and abandoned Him. The signs brought little faith;

and where they quickened and strengthened faith, it did not last. It was all so fleeting, so momentary. At the point of trial, all was lost.

Now, however, the Lord Jesus hails the birth of a new time, inaugurated by His ascent to His Father. Having gathered them together, He commissions them to do greater works. And they do them! Not only do greater powers appear in their wonders and miracles in Jesus' name, Acts 5:15; 19:11, 12; more importantly, we see the signs together with the proclaimed Word bearing fruit. The church grew in numbers day by day, and also grew in wisdom and knowledge, Acts 12:24; 19:20. And faith was no longer that fleeting acceptance of the moment; now it rested firmly in the promises of God, and grew to be able to withstand trial and temptation, Acts 14:22. So the apostles could see and do greater works in Christ's name — works greater than any He had done on earth. For Christ's works from heaven surpass all His works on earth. Now they may see and participate in the working of faith, hope and love; in the working of greater endurance, patience, meekness, kindness and longsuffering. They may share and communicate the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22, 23.

For this is the miracle that all other miracles point to, the goal to which all signs and wonders are subject: *true* and *lasting* faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. This was the faith that the Lord Jesus never saw on earth — abiding faith in Him, faith that stood the test, and endured trial and temptation. But now He can and does give it, through His apostles. For now He has ascended, having completed His Father's will on the cross, and so defeating the powers of sin and death. Now He brings *heavenly* powers to bear on the spiritual battles of His children. And with those heavenly powers, greater works are visible everywhere.

And they should still be visible in the church today: deeds of love, faithfulness, kindness, goodness, joy and peace. With all our sins, these works should stand out in the flock, and we ought to grow in them more and more, overcoming the old nature through Christ, and putting on His new nature, cleansed through His Spirit. For He has ascended and given us the Comforter, His Spirit, to help and guide us. So we may be witnesses of ever greater works of the Lord amidst His flock: for He returns to us ever anew, granting victory in trial, support in struggle, revival in decline, a resurgence of love and hope, when all expectations are lost. Greater works are still here — but not because of us. They are here because His Spirit still remains with us and freely works among us.

J. DEJONG

Installation of Dr. K. Deddens

For the third time in her history the Church of Hamilton was privileged to witness the installation in her midst and hear the inaugural sermon of a minister of the Word set apart for the Training to the Ministry at the churches' Theological College. First came Dr. J. Faber, who was installed on September 9, 1969, and was soon followed by Drs. H.M. Ohmann, whose installation took place on October 17, 1971.

On Sunday, May 6, 1984, Dr. K. Deddens joined this procession of professors as he was installed as Hamilton's minister in a service led by Prof. Dr. J. Faber.

That morning's sermon dealt with Paul's appeal to Timothy not to be ashamed and timid in his office as preacher, but to keep in mind Christ Jesus the Victor and thus show strength and endurance as a faithful servant (II Tim. 1:8-2:7). The words of the text were II Tim. 2:8, "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descended from David as preached in my gospel."

Dr. Faber explored three aspects of "father" Paul's words of encouragement to this "son" Timothy, whose responsibilities included training others to the ministry:

1. The contents of this appeal, for Christ is the Prince of Easter;
2. The validity of this appeal, for Christ is the King of Ascension;
3. The power of this appeal, for Christ is the Author of Pentecost.

Timothy appears to have been a first of many "teachers of preachers," whose chains of office are linked to the present and the incumbents at our Theological College. Paul was nearing the end of his term in office and being deserted by many. His concern therefore is that the chain of transmission remains intact. Timothy must equip others to carry on the task of preaching the gospel. He urges Timothy to adopt a soldier's singleness of mind, the self-discipline of an athlete and a farmer's labour intensive lifestyle. But it is still more important that Timothy, and all others whose task it is to teach the preachers, keep firmly in mind that Jesus Christ is the Man on God the Father's and their side; the living Prince of Easter who abolished death.

This Jesus Christ is also the living

King, whose ascension placed Him on a throne far greater than His forefather David's. This Ruler of kings on earth invests Timothy and his successors with an assurance, boldness and authority that exceeds that of the powers of this world.

Paul then points at his gospel preaching as being the source and force for Timothy's calling to participate in the relay race wherein one generation of faithful men entrusts to another the teaching and preaching of the pure gospel.

Following this sermon a "Form for the installation of Ministers of the Word, set apart for the Training to the Ministry" was read. This rather unique form is largely similar to the form found on page 35 of the (1981) Liturgical Forms Section of the *Book of Praise*. However, certain paragraphs which refer to the minister's supervision of the congregation were removed and more applicable references to the special calling, duties and obligations of a professor substituted. The courts of Cornerstone Church resounded with praise (Psalm 135:1) after Dr. Deddens had spoken his very first words in a worship service there, when he said in response to the questions: I do with all my heart.

After the service the congregation heard two congratulatory letters from neighbouring congregations. There followed yet a social hour during which many met and spoke with br. and sr. Deddens and, that part of their family able to come from Canadalaan in Groningen to the real thing.

That afternoon, before delivering his inaugural sermon, the newly installed minister met another, but much younger newcomer to the church when he administered the sacrament of baptism to a child of the congregation.

He then preached on II Cor. 2:14-17 where Paul speaks in glowing terms of the preaching of the gospel and compares its progress to one of those impressive victory parades put on by a conquering Roman commander. These verses represent Paul's apostolic song of praise on the preaching of the gospel in the world. This preaching has:

1. A unique nature;
2. A double effect and

3. A fourfold mark.

Paul is grateful for the turnaround in the Church of Corinth. There is a willingness to turn away from earlier sins and abuses and to give Paul the respect and recognition that his office deserves. Paul's preaching has wrought a miracle. The power of the Word has brought this about. Paul the preacher follows the triumphant Christ on his irresistible victory parade through the streets of the world. The uniqueness of the gospel preaching lies in its proclamation of a final and conclusive victory even where it appears that the church is losing the battle. For in spite of every opposition the preaching of the Word continues to spread the knowledge of God as an aroma that pervades the world.

This fragrance clings to the preachers of the gospel and works either death or life among their audience. This single fragrance has two perceptions; it is an aroma of life to those who believe and a stench of death to those who reject the preaching.

The realization that his preaching has these two opposing effects puts a great burden of responsibility on a preacher's shoulders. How can anyone ever accomplish such a great calling? The God who calls men to that ministry will equip them to their heavy task, for He is faithful.

This preaching has to meet certain marks, certain standards. These standards are absent in the words and work of many whose interests are profit, position or prestige. The sound preaching of the Word is able to meet four important tests: it must be brought sincerely and from pure motives; it must be brought with Divine Authority, not as the word of men; it must be brought in the full realization that each word is subject to God's close scrutiny; and it must be brought in total surrender and obedience to Christ, the Chief Office Bearer.

Dr. Deddens concluded his sermon by stressing how necessary it is that all who engage in preaching, or in the preparation to that office, place themselves with their work in the hands of God who shall complete their work. For God gives this promise to all His ministers: My grace is sufficient to you.

Address to the General Synod of Heemse 1984 of the Gereformeerde Kerken in The Netherlands

The Committee for Correspondence with Churches Abroad decided in its meeting of December 7, 1983 to send the Rev. J. Visscher (convener of the Committee) to represent the Canadian Reformed Churches at General Synod Heemse 1984 of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. The Rev. J. Visscher will be in The Netherlands from June 5-18. Following is his opening address which has been translated into the English language.

Mr. Chairman, Members of Synod and Honoured Guests:

It is with great pleasure that I may bring to you the greetings and best wishes of the Canadian Reformed Churches. At your last Synod, the Synod of Arnhem 1981, a telegram was used to convey our greetings; however, Synod Cloverdale 1983 expressed the desire to have a more personal form of representation at Synod Heemse. As a result, the Committee for Correspondence has delegated me to represent your sister churches in Canada.

Needless to say, this constitutes a rare honour. Of all the ecclesiastical relationships that our churches maintain none is so dear to us as the one that we have with you. Although the Canadianization of our churches is proceeding at a fast pace; nevertheless, we continue to recognize that our roots and our heritage are here. Many of our older members are avid readers of *Nederlands Dagblad* and *De Reformatie*. There is a keen interest in the events and developments that take place in the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland. There is also a lot of travel between our respective countries which continues to strengthen the ties.

With respect to that matter of travel, I may express to you our appreciation for the fact that it was possible to have two representatives of your churches present at Synod Cloverdale 1983, namely the Rev. Dr. K. Deddens and the Rev. J. de Gelder. The fact that the former is now in Canada as professor of diaconology at our Theological College should not be misinterpreted. We have no policy in place to entice away 50% of your delegation every time you decide to send one. More than anything else, it was a happy coincidence that the man whom you decided to send was also the man who had been tentatively approached to fill this vacancy.

Truly, we are thankful that Dr. K. Deddens was led to accept his appointment, just as we are thankful for all of those servants of the Lord who have come to Canada over the years. Whether this trend will continue for much longer however appears doubtful. The busiest years of immigration were in the early 1950's, with the result that a new generation is arising which is not so familiar with the Dutch language. The appreciation of our Dutch heritage is still there, but it is more an appreciation at a distance. Needless to say, this is having repercussions. Calling ministers from Holland becomes more difficult. Hiring teachers from abroad will also taper off, especially due to the fact that this year the Teachers' College in Hamilton will graduate its first class. Also, at the Theological College we hope to have five graduates this year, which will go quite a ways in filling existing vacancies. As a matter of fact, if our enrollment continues to grow it may even be so that we shall see immigration in reverse.

What all of this indicates is that the Canadian Reformed Churches, while continuing to prize very highly the ties that exist between our respective churches, are more and more taking on an independent existence. There was a time when we were Dutchmen in a foreign land, later we were half-Dutch and half-Canadian, soon we shall be fully Canadian. But does this mean that we shall begin to diverge from the Confessions and the Church Order which are of European origin? By the grace of God, we hope not. We recognize the fact that the Church of Jesus Christ is catholic and international, that she crosses boundaries and ethnic distinctions, that we are part of that Church being gathered from every tribe and nation.

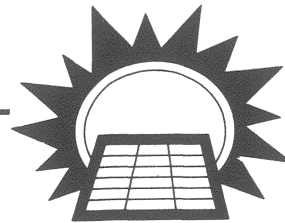
Nevertheless, it is so that in the midst of unity there may also be diversity. In this regard when you read our Acts 1983 you will notice that there is much that speaks of unity: confessional revisions and retranslation, revised Psalms and Hymns, an updated Church Order, joining the ICRC, etc. Yet there are also some things that lean towards diversity, or a slightly independent course if you will. Synod Cloverdale 1983 decided to charge its Committee for Correspondence to do still more work on the matter of a relationship with the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Koryu-

pah). It also decided to request the Korean churches to give their reactions to certain difficulties that we see with respect to the Westminster Standards and church polity of Westminster. As a result of these difficulties, we have also asked that this matter be placed on the agenda of the ICRC meeting at Edinburgh and have asked Dr. J. Faber and the Rev. J.N. Macleod to address some of these difficulties.

Related to this, is the fact that Synod Cloverdale 1983 also went on record as being opposed to any fundamental change to the rules of correspondence and expressed its reservations about the formalizing of ecclesiastical contacts with churches with which correspondence cannot as yet be established. It is true that the Canadian Reformed Churches have formalized contact with the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in the USA but Synod did not want this to be perceived as a common practice. In short, Synod Cloverdale 1983 was of the opinion that correspondence and correspondence only should be the established relationship for inter-church relations. Should this position meet with disagreement on your part, as it no doubt will seeing your past decisions, I would counsel you to address Synod Burlington 1986 on this matter.

Should you ask, "what gives rise to these differences?" One may point to two basic factors. One is the impression among many in Canada that the number of your ecclesiastical contacts have expanded too fast and not always with the fullest consultation between sister churches. There is also the view that some of these relationships have been established without sufficient attention being paid to historical examination, confessional integrity, and relations with other churches and organizations. Another factor that accounts for our different way of looking at other church federations has to do with geographic proximity. If you should decide to recognize churches of Presbyterian persuasion that has very little in the way of repercussions for you at the local level. You are not living on a continent that has many Presbyterian churches, but we are. Because of this the need is felt to proceed very cautiously. The Canadian Reformed Churches wish to build bridges to the Presbyterian world, but we wish to do this in such a way that it will not compromise our confessional in-

RAY OF SUNSHINE



"And this is eternal life, that they know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent." John 17:3

Everlasting life as expressed in the Scriptures is that life, which alone is worthy to be called life. It is not a life which continues endlessly only because one simply does not die, but because death shall be no more. It is not a life that triumphs over its adversary, death, but a life wherein no more death, or anything such as, sickness and trouble, disaster and calamity, sorrow and crying, that reminds us of death, will be, or ever shall be there (Rev. 21:4).

We ought not to express it negatively. Everlasting life is a positive idea (conception) which is free from all negativism and contradiction. It is LIFE.

The beauty of it is to add nothing to it, but to express everything with that one word. "This is eternal life, that they know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent" (John 17:3). Now I know in part; then I shall understand fully, even as I have been fully understood (I Cor. 13:12b). Through the history of the centuries Christ has brought life to His people — He gave them everlasting life. And that LIFE, which is on this earth experienced by all believers as a beginning of the eternal joy shall be enjoyed fully on the Day of the Lord, and ever after. This is the ending whereof is no end.

Translated from: *Het Koningschap van Christus*,
by Ds. A. Ringnalda

"Eternal life does not begin with death; it begins with faith."
Samuel Shoemaker

We have received a request to remember Jim for his 23rd birthday on July 4. He is the oldest of seven children and is mentally handicapped. Jim works for a company in Burlington and is quite happy to be there. Jim is looking forward to going to "Camp Boo" again this year. His address is as follows:

JIM BUIKEMA
549 Enfield Road
Burlington, ON L7T 2X5

Jenny Hansman hopes to celebrate her 37th birthday on July 7. She suffers from encephalitis (a form of sleeping sickness) and is confined to her home most of the time.

JENNY HANSMAN
19890 - 55A Avenue
Langley, BC V3A 3X5

Charlie will be celebrating his 9th birthday on July 20. He keeps a scrapbook and is looking forward to putting some new cards in it. He also enjoys going to "Camp Boo" during the holidays.

CHARLIE BEINTEMA
401 Park Street
Chatham, ON N7M 3S7

Jim hopes to celebrate his 23rd birthday on July 28. He cannot speak or write, but is trying very hard — he understands everything. His hobbies are swimming and bike riding. He likes sports very much, water sports especially.

JIM WANDERS
Huron Regional Centre
PO Box 1000
Orillia, ON L3V 6L2

A thought for today — Try it! It works!

Stop wishing for things
You complain you have not
And start making the BEST
Of all that you've got.

By Helen Steiner Rice
from *Somebody Loves You*

Send your requests (with permission of the person involved); and please send me updated information, brothers and sisters. It will be very much appreciated.

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

tegrity and will meet with the support and understanding of our members.

It is to this end that the Canadian Reformed Churches also hope that the forum of the ICRC will prove to be of benefit. There are some members who doubt its value, but the Synod of Cloverdale was convinced that the Conference should have our support and participation. It is our hope that it will provide yet

another avenue to bind our churches together, to increase our understanding of each other, to give mutual assistance wherever that is needed, and to testify to the truth of God in a world infested with liberalism, revolutionary theology and false ecumenism.

For the rest, brethren, it is our wish as churches that the ties between us may strengthen. We pray that the Lord will

grant you much wisdom as you deal with the matters on your agenda. May you be found obedient in all things, and may you not depart from the faith once delivered to the saints. May you continue valiant in the truth, just as our forefathers of the Secession who 150 years ago considered the truth of God more valuable than the praise of men and the approval of kings.



On June 22nd, brother and sister G. Hutten of Watford Church celebrated their fortieth wedding anniversary. A few years ago brother Hutten had a serious accident from which, initially, he did not expect to recover, but the Lord made everything well and he is again "as good as ever" as far as this goes. The preserving hand of our Father increases the thankfulness for the gracious gift they may joyfully recall and we offer our congratulations to them as well as to their children and grandchildren. I know that they proceed in faith and gratitude, and this is the condition for looking forward to more blessings and, ultimately, the greatest blessing of all: with children, grandchildren and all posterity to live on the new earth.

There are more reasons for special gratitude in these days.

Practically every bulletin mentions the fact that brothers and sisters make profession of their faith, and therein the faithfulness of our God is seen in either preserving His children in the line of the generations, or bringing them in, sometimes along miraculous ways and paths. These are happy days for the ones who do make public profession of faith as well as for the parents, grandparents or — in some instances — great-grandparents. Here we see how the Lord our God blesses the upbringing, the teaching of His Word in the home, at school, as also in the church. Parents may, then, oftentimes be surprised at it that the Lord uses their defective and imperfect upbringing and blesses it with such a gracious result, let us not forget the ministers who also are aware of their shortcomings and faults, and also are surprised at the grace of our God who is willing to use them to guide and preserve His children.

In by far the most instances we take it for granted that children of the covenant continue in the path of the covenant, and in most instances this is a fact indeed; it is only when there is one who does not continue in this path that we are reminded of it that it is all of grace and that it is without any merit of ours. Thus we give thanks to our God.

One of the things that we experience on this occasion is that it is difficult to find a suitable book to present to those who made this profession. We would have loved to have some more copies of *Before Many Witnesses*, but it appears to be sold out. Could it be considered to reprint it? If each church promises to purchase 25 copies, it would be feasible, I think, although this is something for Premier Printing. But why should I not give them a hint via our medley once in a while?

And now first a word from our sponsor.

We know that you have the money; we have materials you may wish to have.

Our schools here need money, and we have several volumes of *Clarion*, hardcover, in fact, we have several complete sets from 1973 on. We have been binding volumes with the proceeds going to our schools in one form or another. Who would like to have a set? We are offering them for \$10.00 per volume, shipping included. Purchase of the complete set — insofar as we have them complete — will yield you a 10% discount. First come first served.

Now the rest of the news.

Let us start at home.

A classis was scheduled for the end of June, but, as the convening church, we did not receive any item from any of the churches; for this reason we decided to postpone classis till

September, and informed the churches accordingly. We postponed *classis* and not — as one consistory recorded it — "A letter from the Church of Fergus regarding the postponement of the meeting of classis North to September 13, 1984." I am quite certain that we did not speak at all of "meeting of classis." Please

Previously I mentioned the matter of "school catechism" in Burlington. The consistory of Burlington South "decided to inform the school board etc., for practical and financial reasons to leave catechism instruction as it is, except that each minister will teach the students of his own congregation."

This news item in addition to what I quoted the other time.

The Brampton bulletin contained a request to save all envelopes so that the stamps can be cut off by the handicapped, with the proceeds of this going to the Association for the Handicapped. Apparently the stamps are sold by weight, and when we all help, some extra income may be provided for this association.

Personally I have been saving the stamps for many years, because I hate seeing anything going to waste. Until now they went to the Bible Society; but from now on I will save them for the Association mentioned above.

I would also urge all our members to do the same. Some members do not receive all that much mail, but there are also brothers who have a business, there are members who work at an office and have plenty of opportunity to save the stamps attached to the mail they receive. It costs little time and little trouble to make it a habit to save them: all you need is a little corner in a drawer of your desk or a big yellow envelope to put the stamps in. I readily and cheerfully pass this information on.

As I mislaid the bulletins from Ottawa, I only now inform you of it that "As of April 1, the afternoon services will begin at 2:30 p.m." Let the visitors to the Ottawa area bear this in mind, or rather, make a note of it in the Yearbook which they — of course — always take along!

In case you also have a travel attestation and visit Ottawa on a weekend when they are celebrating the Lord's Supper, "With respect to the collections, it is decided to delete the collections at the Lord's Supper table." Those who are aware of my convictions regarding this kind of collections will know that I am very happy about it.

Yes, and this is the last about Ontario.

Almost everywhere growth is reported. Nurseries become overcrowded, church buildings have to be enlarged, churches have to be split. No, there is no miraculous growth, no considerable influx of people who have become attracted to the true service of the LORD; there is only the steady growth from within, with now and then someone coming in from without.

This steady growth, however, necessitates measures and the making of plans. One such a plan for future "expansion of the church building will be filed until we grow out of the present building." This is what Winnipeg reported. Personally I would not wait till we grew out of the building, for then it will be too late; but I presume that the mothballed plan will be recalled to active service before it is that far.

Carman's decision regarding solemnization of marriages evoked some reaction, as is understandable. When something has been regular practice for many years there are bound to

come some reactions if a change is made. Carman's consistory did receive some letters and appeals.

The consistory decided on a careful, cautious course.

"After a lengthy discussion consistory decides:

"To postpone implementation of the decision re: marriage services, because consistory is unable to agree on how to answer the letters received regarding this matter and therefore consistory will ask advice from the next classis."

This is a cautious approach.

I don't know what the contents of these letters were. Perhaps they were correct and dealt with the question correctly. My experience, however, is that oftentimes, when a consistory has made a decision and given reasons for it, brothers and sisters who write about it do not come with arguments to prove that the consistory's decision is wrong or that the reasons given are not applicable, but that they ask or demand of the consistory that the consistory shall prove that its decision was justified and that its reasons are valid.

This is turning things upside down. One who objects to a decision has to prove that the decision is wrong or that the reasons are untenable. Then a consistory can be convinced by such proof offered or not. In the first instance the consistory will rescind a decision; in the second case it simply can say, "Sorry, brother, your arguments are not convincing, and the consistory abides by its decision."

We'll see what the next classis advises the Carman consistory to do.

As for the Fraser Valley, the Resthome is off the ground, figuratively speaking. The first steps have been completed, and the work should be well in progress at the moment.

What also went well is the seminar or course which Dr. Faber gave for some 140 interested members during a brief stay in the lower Fraser Valley. This encouraging beginning must have been a joy for the organizers and for the participants alike, not to mention the speaker. Well, at the ministers' workshops we have listened to partially the same material and I can honestly say that we all enjoy it every time anew.

Prof. C. Graham of the Free Church of Scotland's presence in the Valley prompted the board of the Study Center to utilize it and to ask him to speak for all who would be willing to come and listen. I have not yet read about the results, but we may be informed about that later on.

Abbotsford "discussed the feasibility of instituting or having church services in the State of Washington." "After a lengthy discussion the consistory decides to begin worship services in the USA on September 2, 1984. Preparations will begin."

Separate services are usually the first step towards institution. It may take a year or more, but that will be the result. The overcrowding of Abbotsford's auditorium will also be cured by these separate services.

As for the Okanagan Valley, the brothers and sisters there purchased the "organ" which they had been using thus far. A "Collection Box" marked "Building Fund" will invite members and guests to contribute towards the cost of the organ and of a future meeting place.

The Chilliwack consistory decided, in connection with the Okanagan Valley, that "the delegates will ask whether classis considers that calling a minister for the Okanagan is the right goal to work towards." "Not surprisingly, classis encouraged the consistory to look in this direction."

And, as if this is not yet enough, the Langley consistory report tells us of a meeting of the Broadcasting Committee in a broad form that "this meeting passed a proposal to continue with the existing broadcast policy and to encourage Abbotsford to call a minister for the radio ministry."

The Surrey consistory published the following note.

"Rev. Boersema has felt that he needs time to follow an

academic study in mission and mission methodology to become better prepared for his work as a missionary. Being convinced that this would take too much time from the actual work in São José and would be detrimental to it, and being not convinced of the benefit of such an academic study, council decided that it could not grant to Rev. Boersema such time as requested. Rev. Boersema, then, decided, not to continue his agreement with the Maranatha Church beyond April 1986."

I still wonder how the missionaries in former days, with a very scant preparation for their task, saw so much fruit upon their work and how it was possible that so many people from the heathen nations learned to know the Lord, to love Him, and to live as God's children without the benefit of an extensive advanced academic special training.

And I have wondered for a long time whether the whole figure of a missionary going into the mission field for so many years is indeed a Reformed phenomenon.

When I was called to Fergus, I did not inform the Fergus consistory that I was coming for a three-or five-year period, which could be extended. No, I was called, accepted, and expected to stay here the rest of my active ministry. This has become a fact as well. Is it not the same when one is called to be a missionary? And is not the only way in which one can be released from this work when one receives a call, and accepts it?

It is logical that someone, going into the mission field, and seeing the quite lengthy preparation necessary, such as language study, promises that he will not accept a call within five or six years; but this is basically different from saying, "My 'contract' runs out then and then; don't count on it that I will renew it." More and more I become convinced that this is contrary to the Reformed concept of a call and the position of a minister, whether he is serving here or in the mission field.

More than once I have stated that I have great admiration for the brothers (and sisters) who give themselves to this work. This is not the point. The point is whether the seriousness of the calling and of the position allows the practice of "terminating" an agreement by a certain date. More and more I become convinced that it does not.

There are a few things in another field, too, about which I have my grave doubts or, rather, of which I say that they are wrong.

In one bulletin I read, "The brothers appointed to the office of elder have accepted their appointment."

The reason why I write about this is not that such a gross mistake is made here. The reason is that I think we should look at it from another angle. When the Lord has appointed through His church, I think there is no such thing as "accepting the appointment." There can be reasons why someone must request to be relieved of the appointment and to be released from the obligation to serve as an office-bearer, but this is different. To me it is a foregone conclusion that one who has been appointed will serve as an office-bearer.

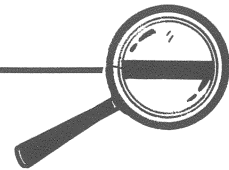
What disturbed me more is the following announcement.

"The consistory has the sad duty of informing the congregation that brother and sister A. have withdrawn themselves with three baptized children from the church and placed themselves outside the kingdom of God."

Certainly, we should not have lame expressions when announcing to the congregation that someone has broken with the church. We believe that we are the church of the Lord and that one who breaks with the church, breaks with the church of the Lord. This — and I say this in order to prevent misunderstanding — is a judgment about *ourselves*, not about others. Let every one please take note of this.

Once when, in a sister church, I had to announce such a breaking with the church, I said that brother A. had broken

— Continued on page 301



An urgent letter to those who plan to marry outside the church from one who did

A brother gave me a copy of a "Youth Article" that appeared in the May 1984 issue of *The Reformed View*, the official organ of the Reformed Fellowship of Canada. He suggested that I use this for *Clarion* which I gladly do. The letter speaks for itself. It was placed in *The Reformed View* by Rev. C. Pronk, who informs us that this (shortened) letter "was written by a young woman in response to a sermon preached on Judges 3, where the children of Israel are warned not to marry partners from heathen nations." I will quote it completely hoping that it may serve to open the eyes of someone who is on the way to sinning here against God's will, and helping to prevent such sin and a world of misery, possibly even eternal perdition. Here it is:

Dear Unmarried, seeking a partner outside the Faith:

If you will not heed the commands of God in II Cor. 6: 14-18, nor the warnings given by faithful ministers and parents, take a few minutes to read what I live by bitter experience. The same may easily happen to you, even though at the outset you may believe as I did, "I know we can work it out," or "We're mature enough to handle whatever problems arise."

Religious differences permeate every conceivable aspect of married life. They show in family gatherings, recreational preferences, educational understanding, friends you choose and keep, materials and literature you buy, the way you look at or handle job responsibility, conduct towards strangers, neighbours, your spouse, and most important, your attitude towards God.

We have a lovely home with a beautiful lawn, flowers and a vegetable garden. Inside the house the rooms are furnished handsomely and I have every convenience to make life easy and happy. So what more could my heart desire? Simply, the presence of the Lord. "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world and lose his soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. 16:26). I have a handsome and well-educated husband and a healthy and happy son, a bit demanding, but the joy of my life.

What more could natural man wish for? But God has come to me in baptism and separated me outwardly to Himself. Why did Seth's seed prosper until the sons of God married the daughters of men? Why did Abraham send his servant to choose a wife

for Isaac from Abraham's own relatives?

Consider the loneliness and painfulness when you give an answer to the following questions:

1. Can you go to one or both church services, or do you go alone, sing the songs of Zion alone, hear God's commands to joy in the Lord, see husbands and wives worship together with envy welling up in yourself?

2. Can you belong to the choir, attend Bible studies and other church-related functions without being questioned, "Why do you want to go there? Your place is at home."?

3. Are you able to pray freely and aloud at mealtime, read the Bible without your spouse disagreeing with this?

4. Can you face the fact that your mate does not believe God created heaven and earth, as Genesis teaches? He believes in the evolutionary process.

5. When your first child is born, can you bear to have your spouse say, "He's not going to be baptized in your church if it means he's going to be brought up strict like your family."?

6. When you want to take your child to church, can you bear to have your spouse say, "Why do you want to go there? You're not taking my son to that church."?

You promised to love, honour, and obey; to be submissive and obedient; to do your duty in sickness and health, for richer and poorer — with love in your heart toward your spouse. Where is that love now? Memories of how things used to be cut you to the heart. What will you do? Leave for a separation? You vowed not to do that, but to love, honour and obey till death parts the two of you. But you also know God commands: "Do not forsake the assembling of yourselves together . . ." And you do not want to do that either. You are caught in a net. What will you do?

If, by grace, the Lord convinces you of your sin, and if, by His goodness, He sends tokens of His favour through your Bible reading, outpouring in prayer, and sermon-hearing by tapes, perhaps you will be constrained to plead: "Please let me go to church on Sunday morning." Then the going doesn't become any easier.

How do you answer your mother-in-law's queries about why you don't go along with the family's Sunday parties? "Families should be together. Why, so-and-so would do anything for her husband; why not you? We gave you more than we gave to anybody

else. Where's your gratitude? Now I know why my son is so nervous, you made him that way." "No, if you're a good person, you'll go to heaven." "A new car? O, a new heart! What's that?" And so it goes.

When you take a stand to attend both church services on a Sunday, can you listen without pain when your mate tells you: "You're crazy, selfish . . . You're just like the rest of the hypocrites in your church?"

Your only hope then is that God, Who made Saul into Paul will still save to the utmost — your spouse. You become increasingly aware of how you caused the Lord's Holy Name to be blasphemed, instead of being honoured.

Dear reader, don't tempt God. If there is the least hesitation whether it's right, don't marry! Speak to your minister.

Choosing to defy God's command regarding marriage, you will one day look at your partner and ask: "Who is the stranger?" You will no longer speak the same language, for he will have nothing to do with God's dealings; he sees no beauty in the Lord; He finds no awe in the word "Grace," no humbling desire in the words, "Come unto Me . . ."

You look around your home and ask, "What is there in it that encourages the fear of the Lord?" Your answer will have to be "Nothing." Yes, you do have a Bible and some devotional books, but there is no family altar at which you all meet at night for a Bible story or a lesson from Scripture, no place where your husband leads in prayer and speaks about the things of the Lord. There is no continuity of lifestyle of parents for the child to follow. Mommy goes to church, prays, reads the Bible, tells Bible stories, speaks of the Lord, but Daddy doesn't go to church. He doesn't pray or read the Bible; rather he watches TV and falls asleep, speaks of the unfairness of his boss, and certainly won't give any money for Christian schools or for the support of the church.

As you look at your little child, you say, "I'd give my life if you could be brought up in the truth." You remember how you used to spend Sundays going to church twice, and having like-minded people over for coffee and dinner. You rested, read good books, played the organ or piano, sang psalters and hymns and sometimes you visited with others of the church.

But now you come home from the service and find grease on your child's clothes, toys strewn around the yard, the lawn freshly mowed. In the afternoon you find your

NEWS MEDLEY — Continued

with the church of the Lord. You can be sure that I got quite some flak about that, mostly from members who later on did the same thing. How did I dare say that? The man became only . . . Christian Reformed.

Apart from the fact that it was completely unknown to me what the man had done after breaking with the church in that place, there was this element, that I did not pass any judgment on either the man or the community which he joined later on.

If we are not convinced of it that we belong to the church of the Lord in the place where we live, we are to repent as soon as possible and to go and join this church wherever it may be. Everyone has the God-given duty to belong to Christ's Church, we confess in our Belgic Confession, and no one has the right to withdraw from it. If someone withdraws from it, we are to make clear that this is a sinful act.

Here our responsibility and our authority stops.

It is not only uncalled for, it is completely wrong to say that thereby this person has "placed himself outside the kingdom of God." We have nothing to do with that.

Excommunication is completely different. When someone hardens himself in sin and has to be excluded from the Church of Christ, then, indeed, we declare, with the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, that this person "is now excluded from the fellowship of Christ and from His kingdom," and confess in Lord's Day 31 that he is excluded "by God Himself from the kingdom of Christ."

However, I cannot understand how a consistory dares to declare that someone who has broken with the church of the Lord has thereby placed himself outside the kingdom of God.

Here a consistory assumes an authority which it does not have.

It is also by such things that food is given to the slander that we claim that no one who is not a member of a Canadian Reformed Church or foreign sister church will go to hell. Strictly speaking, this is implied in the statement which I quoted.

I am convinced that further pondering and study of the matter will result in the acknowledgement that, indeed, this statement was wrong and ought to be withdrawn.

Let me conclude with the cheery news that the Acts of Synod have arrived, all 413 pages of it, and with the — perhaps even cheerier — news that the *Book of Praise* will be available towards the end of the summer. Now we can begin studying and singing. Especially the *Book of Praise's* appearing is a reason for great joy, since now I feel free to let the congregation sing Psalms which, in the old rhyming, were oftentimes less than satisfactory.

I do not wish to claim that the new rhyming is perfect, but everyone will see the vast improvement and join with me in the gratitude for the fact that the Lord has enabled us all together to bring this work to a conclusion. May generations be served by it.

Nothing can be said about the time when the next medley will appear. These months of the year do not show much activity anyway as far as societies, consistory meetings, etc., are concerned.

Besides, should you not have some respite and not be compelled to read a news medley for a few issues to come? Happy holidays, folks.

VO

PRESS REVIEW — Continued

reading interrupted by the Sunday baseball game. When you call that supper is ready, your spouse is in the middle of changing the oil of the car, or finding a squeaky sound under the hood. Can you attend the evening worship service? Will his Daddy care for your child, or will he turn on the TV to keep him quiet? This Sunday, the Lord's Day.

It all seemed so easy before you were married. Your hopes were high. You were going to bring your spouse to know the Truth. But what has happened? All your good intentions have resulted in hardening your husband, instead of causing him to see the God of the Bible.

In every aspect of life you are living with your faces pointed in a different direction. Where does this leave your little ones? You shudder to think of the future.

Are you still not convinced to reconsider and end your plans to marry into the world? Are you still desirous of tempting the Lord? Do not think there are guarantees of success for your marriage if one of you attends church or reads the Bible and prays. You are tempting God Who came to you in infancy and placed a seal on your forehead, drawing you into His covenant. And will you now discard that as if it were worthless?

When the day comes that you cannot but serve the Lord, it may mean that anger comes into your home and marriage relationship. Your spouse says, "You've changed; I haven't," as he puts the blame

for your marital problems squarely on your shoulders. And you know you have been changed. Amazing grace! As much as you look for words to explain what has gone on in your heart, you cannot find the words that he can understand. Your only interpreter is the Holy Spirit who changed Saul, who opened Lydia's heart, and who speedily answered the jailer's cry.

I could write much more. Let me close by urging you to seek wisdom from the Lord. May you have no rest until you are pleading at the foot of the cross for your own salvation and the glory of the Lord displayed in your life. Then you will ask for a marriage partner with whom you can live to the honour and glory of your Maker and your Lord.

With warmest regards from,
Someone who learned from bitter experience.

J. GEERTSEMA

CORRECTION

How does the revision of our Church Order affect us today?

On page 255, third column, last sentence of second-last paragraph should read:

We can and should not try to lay down in our Church Order how long this reasonable period is to be.

VO



**Do not be mismated with unbelievers
II Cor. 6:14-18**

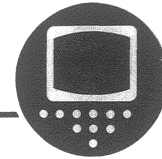
Do not be mismated with unbelievers. For what partnership have righteousness and iniquity? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said,

"I will live in them and move among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."



OUR COVER

Polson Park, Vernon, BC.
Photo courtesy of D.K. Deters,
Vernon, BC.



Annual Membership Meeting, Canadian Reformed Society for a Home for the Aged Inc., Friday, April 27, 1984, Ebenezer Villa, Hamilton.

The meeting is opened by the chairman, br. M. VandenBos who invites us to sing Psalm 89:1, 3. Scripture reading is Matthew 10:26-33, after which the chairman leads in prayer. All are welcomed. Special mention is made of the fine work of our Care Committee and our administrator. It is reported, thankfully, that our home will soon be filled.

The minutes of the Annual Membership Meeting held October 7, 1983 are read and adopted.

The treasurer's report is read by br. H. Bartels. It is reported that both membership and income are down from the previous year.

Br. Hart in his financial report explains the monetary situation in the actual operation of Ebenezer Villa.

The auditors, brs. T. Zietsma and J. Ruggi, report the books to be in good order. Auditors appointed for 1984-1985 are brs. J. Ruggi and A. de Jong.

An election of new board members is necessary because of the retirement of the brs. M. VandenBos, H. van Luik, G. van Woudenberg, and J. Schulenberg. Elected are brs. T. VanderHout, H. Breukelman, A. Scholtens, and R.J. Oosterhoff.

The customary resolution confirming the action of the board till this time is passed.

The chairman invites us to sing Psalm 98:4 after which Dr. J. Faber closed the meeting in prayer.

For the Society,
A. SCHOLTENS, Secretary

For more information about Ebenezer Villa, please contact:

Mr. Henry Bartels RR 2 Ancaster, ON L9G 3L1 (416) 765-4965	Anko Scholtens RR 1 Vinemount, ON L0R 2G0 (416) 643-2617
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Meeting of the board, ANCHOR "CRAFTH," March 30, 1984, Hamilton Church.

The chairman, br. G. Witten,

opened the meeting and welcomes all the board members present.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and, after some discussion, approved.

We then dealt with mail which included a letter from our new representative from the Church at Ottawa.

There was a letter from br. W. Zomer concerning his findings on his recent visit to Canada and his meeting with the board. Also a notification that he and his wife want to reconsider their decision to become foster parents for our handicapped.

We received a letter from the Human Rights Commission granting us an exemption from the discrimination code in hiring house parents who must be members of a Canadian Reformed Church.

There was a report by br. A. Bouwman on behalf of the Summer Camp Committee and there was some discussion concerning the things needed for the Summer Camp.

The treasurer, br. W. Siphema, gave us a financial report for the year 1983. The board instructed the treasurer to approach auditors to check the books.

We then enjoyed an intermission after which the chairman reopened the meeting. There was a request from the Building Committee concerning the specific requirements for a home.

The board considered meeting in the Church in Burlington East pending arrangements.

There was some discussion concerning the formation of an executive committee. An extensive discussion followed concerning the specific needs for our handicapped and the method of care.

A committee of three people will be set up to look into the specific needs of all the handicapped brothers and sisters in our midst.

Br. Witten volunteers to be on this committee as board member and will ask two qualified brethren to serve the board in this matter.

Next meeting will be, D.V., April 16, 1984 in Burlington East.

KEES BROUWER

Meeting at Burlington, April 16, 1984.

The chairman, J. Witten, opens the meeting and extends a welcome to all present.

Minutes of the previous meeting are adopted after some changes are made.

Letter is received from the Summer Camp Committee regarding the purchase of two tents. Permission is granted to them to purchase these items.

Draft letter to Br. Zomer is read and approved.

A lengthy discussion follows in regards to the proposed by-laws. A final draft will be presented at the next board meeting including some suggested changes.

The Assessment Committee comes with recommendations as to what direction the board should take.

The next meeting is set for April 27.

H. Bouwman leads the meeting in closing prayer and the chairman adjourns the meeting.

P. FEENSTRA

Meeting at Burlington, April 27, 1984.

1. The meeting was opened with prayer, reading and singing.

2. The minutes were approved after a minor change.

3. The treasurer reports on the money received and spent; the representatives are encouraged to collect the membership dues to keep the cash flow going.

4. The Assessment Committee reports on visiting some families. The local chapters will give parent relief.

5. It is decided that some letterheads will be printed. The P.R. Committee is asked to give wider knowledge to the Logo.

6. *By-law Proposals.* The by-law proposals have been checked by our lawyer and after one more change they will be presented to the membership.

7. *Membership Meeting* to be held on May 25, 1984, D.V., in the Hamilton Church; there will be a vote to accept the resolution of the Board to adopt the name, the letters patent and the proposed by-laws officially.

8. Question period is held.

9. After singing and prayer the meeting is closed.

For the board,
W.J. GODSCHALK

Meeting at Burlington, May 18, 1984.

The chairman, J. Witten, opens the meeting and welcomes all present.

Minutes from the previous meeting were adopted as presented. The location of our meetings will remain in Burlington East.

The Assessment Committee reports on their progress to date.

The Building Committee receives requested information from the board and will work with this.

The Summer Camp Committee reports that things are now being finalized for the camp. Everything seems to be moving smoothly and we all look forward to another successful camp.

The treasurer reports that the books

will be audited soon.

The general membership meeting has been rescheduled for June 1 in Hamilton.

Some discussion ensues in regards to the by-laws.

A point is brought up that perhaps some of our handicapped could be involved in cutting our current stamps from envelopes in order to raise money.

"Foster-parents" is the next point on

the agenda and it is noted that we are still waiting for some information and a reply from Br. Zomer.

The next board meeting is scheduled for June 14.

Press release is read and adopted. Psalm 68:8 is then sung and W. Sipkema leads in closing prayer.

The chairman adjourns the meeting.

P. FEENSTRA

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



Hello Busy Beavers,

Summer holidays are here!

Another school year is finished.

Now it's time for holidays!

So what are you going to do?

Are you going to swim?

Will you help with the work?

Is your family going camping, and will you help plan the camping trip?

I hope all you Busy Beavers have a great summer — helping others, having fun, learning something new.

I hope, too, you will all have a SAFE holiday!

To help you here are some

WATER SAFETY RULES

- Always swim at supervised areas.
- Be sure to swim with at least two other people.
- Swim in daylight when you can see and be seen.
- When boating, always wear a government approved life jacket.
- React quickly if someone stops breathing; learn and practise rescue breathing.
- Be informed! If you can enrol in a safety training class.

* * *

RIDDLES FOR YOU

Have fun trying them on your family and friends!

Thanks go to Busy Beavers *Cornelius Leffers* and *Rita Wubs*.

1. Why didn't the little girl go straight home?
2. Why did Hannibal cross the Alps?
3. Why did the stork stand on one leg?
4. Why did the General wear red, white and green suspenders to the Second World War?
5. Why did the little girl think the cook was mean?
6. Why did the little boy take a ruler to bed?
7. What room can't you sleep in?
8. What did the horse say when he cleared his throat?
9. Which driver doesn't get a ticket?

Answers: 1. Because the road was crooked. 2. He wanted to see the other side. 3. If he stood on one he would fall over. 4. To hold up his pants. 5. Because he was beating eggs and whipping cream. 6. So he could measure how long he slept. 7. a mushroom. 8. I'm a little hoarse. 9. a screwdriver.

CONTEST NEWS!!

First let me say "THANK YOU" to all the Busy Beavers who entered our Spring Contest.

You sure gave each other lots of competition!

And you worked hard! Good for you!

Not everyone can win, though. But keep trying!

And now I will tell you who our winners are: Busy Beaver *Margo Hofsink* and Busy Beaver *Sylvia Van Bodegom*.

Congratulations to you both.

Keep up the good work!

FOR YOU TO DO

Long drive?

Getting bored?

You need a game!

Who can help us out?

Please send us directions how to play your traveling game.

This is very important.

So I will send a little reward to all the Busy Beavers who help!

Send to:

Aunt Betty

Box 54

Fergus, ON N1M 2W7

Quiz Time!

Busy Beaver *Debbie Jagt* has this quiz for you.

BIBLE NAMES

- A _ _ _ _ a very cruel king
- B _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ Solomon's mother
- C _ _ _ _ the first murderer
- D _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ a judge of Israel
- E _ _ _ _ _ _ a very nice queen
- F _ _ _ _ You should have _ _ _ _ _ in Jesus.
- G _ _ _ the mighty ruler
- H _ _ _ _ _ king in Jesus' time