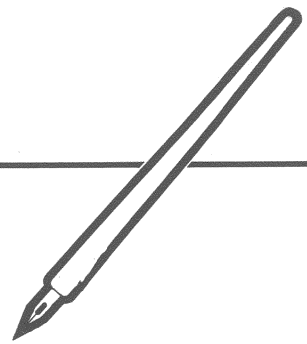




Clarion
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The pope

In this issue we will be paying attention to the visit of the pope to Canada. Prof. J. Faber has written an article on this topic for which we thank him. Also, in Press Review, you can read parts of an address given by a Free Presbyterian Church minister.

Issue 1163 of *Canadian Scene* (Aug. 17, 1984) tells us that, "During his Canadian tour in September, Pope John Paul II will visit three famous Quebec shrines which for years have attracted pilgrims from many parts of the world." These shrines were set up because it was claimed that miraculous things took place here. In one, "the eyes of the statue of the Madonna in the chapel are said to have opened miraculously." The Madonna is of course "Notre Dame," our Lady Mary.

The pope's visit has become an ecumenical event as well. In Toronto representatives of thirty-seven "denominations" will meet with the head of the Roman Catholic Church.

What is wrong with all of this? Many will say that if the belief that the bread and wine changes into the real body and blood of Christ makes the Roman Catholics happy; and, if the belief in the help of an exalted Mary gives them so much comfort, why not let them have it? Does it really make that much difference? Are we not all Christians, serving the same God, believing in the same Lord Jesus Christ? Of course there are certain things that we do not agree with but, do we not live in a free world? Is it not everyone's right to serve God in the way he is brought up or chooses to serve? As long as a person is happy and feels that he is right in doing what he does, should he not have that freedom? Besides, isn't the pope a well-meaning, sincere Christian man who is in a position to do much good?

But we may not speak that way. Such speaking is purely humanistic reasoning. This type of religion is entirely man-made and man-centred, a consumer item. You go to the "religion store" and buy the kind of religion that you like because it suits your taste.

That is precisely what is wrong with so much "religion" in our days. Man serves God in the "religion" that suits him. However, that is the old sin against the second Word of the Covenant. True religion is not that which suits our taste, but that which is in obedience to the written Word of God. True religion is keeping God's commandments; serving God according to His will as revealed in the Scriptures. True religion is: "Speak, LORD; Thy servant hears," even though it does not "suit" us and goes against our sinful flesh.

It is necessary also for us to apply this truth in our own lives. It is easy to point out the errors and idolatry of the pope and of the Roman Catholic Church. We can shake our heads at those thirty-seven denominations that are playing their ecumenical game with the pope while not welcoming any true

prophecy from the Word of the Lord. But how is it with ourselves? After having accused the Gentiles of terrible sins in Romans 1, the apostle directs his attention to the people of God, the Jews in Romans 2, and says: "Therefore you have no excuse, O man, whoever you are, when you judge another; for in passing judgment upon him you condemn yourself, because you, the judge, are doing the very same things. While you preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the law, do you dishonour God by breaking the law? (vs. 1, 21ff.)

Is it not so that often we can be very strict, when it suits us? If it does not cost us (too much) money? Or is not too inconvenient? If it does not interfere too much with our fun and pleasure? How is it? Do we shelve our principles for a moment, when we can keep or get a certain amount of dollars? Do we maintain a strained relationship with a brother in the church because of some money or just because we do not like him, instead of living in obedience to God's commandments and out of the self-sacrificing love of Christ? Take the commandments of the LORD, and you can easily add your own examples.

I am aware that I am now speaking about the personal weaknesses, and refusals to obey God's will in our daily life. There is quite a difference between the personal sins and the officially adopted and maintained un-Scriptural doctrine and practice of a whole church. Nevertheless, there is also similarity, and it is that similarity which is stressed by the apostle Paul.

For someone who has the Scriptures as the only norm for his life, it is not difficult to point out the grave deviations from God's Word and the disobedience against God's revealed will in the Roman Catholic Church and so strongly adhered to by the present pope. The truth must be maintained: what is wrong, is wrong. The Word of the LORD also tells us not to have part in the sins of others. That is why we want no part in the meeting of representatives of the thirty-seven churches with the pope and why we can call it an ecumenical *game*.

At the same time, there is a strong warning in all this: it is so easy to be religious in your own, man-made way. It is so easy to be religious when it does not hurt and is convenient. Christ warned: "Enter the narrow gate" of true faith that obeys God's Word. "For the gate is wide and the way is easy, that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (Mt. 7:13ff.). "Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall" (1Cor.10:12).

J. GEERTSEMA

Marriage and divorce₁

1. An old phenomenon

Last year we published a series of articles about "Marriage and Family life." In those articles we dealt with and discussed the way young people meet each other, have their first contacts and prepare for a more lasting relation. We wrote about the preparation for marriage: about the way our young people are supposed to behave and act, how parents must guide and support them on that route. We saw how important it is that open communication exists between parents and children. The whole setup of those articles was to elaborate on and to give some guidelines for the preparation for a happy and lasting married life.

Considering the response we received upon those articles, there appeared to be place for such considerations. However, there were also questions and requests to deal with the other side of the story. That shows that not every couple which gets married lives "long and happily ever after" even when both are confessing members of the church, entering holy wedlock with good intentions and proper preparations. Unfortunately, also among our people marriage problems occur and even separation and divorce is not unheard of.

What is our attitude in this respect? How do we have to deal with such cases? Which stand do the office-bearers have to take? Are disciplinary measures required, and, if so, which ones and for what period of time? How far do we go? Can someone who has been divorced remarry or is reconciliation the only option? Does someone, who has been divorced, have to remain single for the rest of his/her life, even if he/she is not to blame for the failure of the marriage?

No one should be surprised that also among our people separation and divorce are current issues. We are not immune to what is going on in the world. Denying this reality is a matter of burying one's head in the sand. According to statistics one out of every three or four marriages ends in separation or a divorce, within five years. That seems to be the average in the world and, in some areas, it is even worse. Let us not fool ourselves thinking



that this development will leave our community untouched.

Moreover, marriage-breakups, marriage-failure, separation and divorce are not brand-new issues. They have been a reality throughout the ages. In the Old Testament we can read already about it. In Deuteronomy 24 we find regulations, given to the people of Israel and written down by Moses, the servant of the LORD. Jesus Himself said in Matthew 19 that "for the hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." A man should not put away his wife, there should be no divorce or separation. But still it exists.

We, as Christians, should not ignore or deny this reality but rather face it and try to find the proper way to deal with it.

We should not approve or play down sin, but we should not close our eyes to its consequences either. Although a girl should not become pregnant before she

is married, there are "forced marriages" and there are "single mothers," also among us. We have to deal with them in a Christian way according to Galatians 6:1 "if a man (or a woman) is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him (or her) in a spirit of gentleness. Look to yourself, lest you too be tempted."

It is the same with separation and divorce. It should not occur. It is against the will of God. What God has joined together, let not man put asunder. But as long as we are living in a sinful world, waiting for the renewal of all things when our Lord Jesus Christ comes back upon the clouds of heaven, we will have to face the consequences of a broken human society, even a broken Christian society within the communion of saints. The destructive power of sin is evident and we have to cope with it.

In this article we will try to consider

our attitude in this respect. First we have to search the Scriptures, to see and hear what the Bible says about it. Then we have to face the reality of everyday life and apply the norm of the Word of God to our way of life and our approach to these kind of problems. Christian ethics means to apply the revelation of God's Word to everyday life in all its different and changing circumstances. Changing circumstances may ask for different measures, but the norm, the standard, the Law of the Lord our God remains unchanged and unchangeable. In Deuteronomy 24 we read about "hardness of hearts." Moses had to deal with it. Our Lord Jesus Christ spoke about it in Matthew 19 and we have to deal with it as well.

2. Some definitions

Dealing with an issue like this we should try as much as possible to avoid confusion by using expressions which are not clearly defined. Different people can use the same words, and still talk about completely different things. That causes misunderstanding, confusion and sometimes conflicts. Therefore it might be worthwhile to make some introductory remarks about certain expressions which we are going to use quite frequently.

When we speak about a *separation* we are referring to a situation in which a husband and wife, being legally married, do not actually live together as husband and wife. We can distinguish three different "types" of separation, depending on the reason why people do not live together.



tions, it can also be the result of the fact that the other party has created an unbearable situation, and everything in between.

In the third place a separation can be the result of a judicial verdict. A judge can grant a request of one of the parties and deny the other the right to enter the home where they used to live together.

When we speak about *divorce* we refer to a legal and judicial verdict by which a marriage has been definitively dissolved. It might be necessary in cer-

authority given by the Lord, but at the same time we have to be obedient to God rather than to man. Moreover, the government *allows* people to dissolve their marriage by a divorce, but the government does not *force* us to use this option. In other words: the government can relieve us of the obligations and duties of marriage according to the civil law, but the government can never relieve us of the obligations which we have according to the Law of the Lord.

The terms *adultery* and *fornication* also need some special attention. In the seventh commandment we read in our translation: "you shall not commit adultery." It is clear to everyone that this commandment forbids all sexual impure relations and does not just speak about the breakup of a marriage. Therefore it might be worthwhile to notice that our translation does not use the word *fornication* but the word *adultery*.

The word *fornication* comes from a word that originally referred to the underground vaults and arches in the old city of Rome, in which perverse actions took place. (Fornix means: vault or arch.) In our contemporary English *fornication* means a sexual act between two persons not married to each other, as when both of them are unmarried. It is clear that such an act is strictly forbidden by the seventh commandment. However, our Bible-translation does not use the word *fornication* but *adultery*.

With the word *adultery* we have to distinguish between its original meaning, its meaning in our contemporary English, and its Biblical or confessional meaning.

The original meaning of the word *adulter* or *adulterate* is to mix together or, more specifically, to debase or deteriorate by a mixture of foreign or baser material. In our contemporary English we still use the word *adulterate* in this sense e.g.: when a farmer adds water to the milk we say that the milk has been adulterated with water. In the same way wine can be adulterated with some other inferior additions. However, the word *adultery* is used in our contemporary English almost exclusively for sexual relations between a married person and someone who is not his or her spouse. Therefore in our everyday language the difference between *fornication* and *adultery* is that with the former both parties are unmarried and with the latter at least one of them is married.

The Biblical or confessional meaning of the word *adultery* is much broader and more comprehensive. The seventh commandment is certainly not given for married people only. It has a meaning for each and everyone. It rather refers back to the original meaning of the word *adulterate*. We should not mix the pure and

"Jesus Himself said in Matthew 19 that 'for the hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.' A man should not put away his wife, there should be no divorce or separation. But still it exists. We, as Christians, should not ignore or deny this reality but rather face it and try to find the proper way to deal with it."

First there is the situation that both parties agree to stay away from each other, for whatever reason it might be. Such a separation can be a temporary measure to prevent things from getting worse and to work towards restoration of peace and unity in the family.

In the second place separation can be the result of the fact that one party, for whatever reason it might be, has left the other. That can be done with bad inten-

tain situations to make a distinction between a legal divorce and the still existing Biblical obligation to stay together and to reconcile or to remain single without the possibility of a remarriage. A judicial statement of a worldly judge does not automatically dissolve a marriage before the Lord. The civil law cannot change the Biblical rule. What the Lord has joined together man should not put asunder. We have to obey the civil government as the

beautiful relationship, instituted by the Lord and inherent to the married state, with any impure, foreign or base relation. We should not debase or deteriorate the wonderful gift of the Lord in the sexual relation between husband and wife with any strange or impure element.

This Biblical meaning is clearly explained in Lord's Day 41 where we read: "What does the seventh commandment teach us?" "That all unchastity is accursed of God; and that we must, therefore, detest it from the heart, and live a chaste and continent life both within and outside of holy wedlock." We further read: "Does God in this commandment forbid nothing more than adultery and suchlike gross sins?" and the answer is: "Since our body and soul are both temples of the Holy Spirit, it is His will that we keep both pure and holy; wherefore He forbids all unchaste actions, gestures, words, thoughts, desires, and whatever may entice one thereto."

It is perfectly clear that the seventh commandment is not given for married people only but that it applies to each and everyone and has an impact on our whole life. Jesus Christ put it this way in Matthew 5:28 "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."

After this excursion about linguistic implications we will first turn our attention to what the Bible teaches us about divorce.

3. Biblical starting point

When we discuss our attitude and our response to separation and divorce, we take as our starting point what we read in Matthew 19:3-9. There we read: "And the Pharisees came up to Him and tested Him by asking, 'Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?' He answered, 'Have you not read that He who made them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder.'" They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and to put her away?" He said to them, "For the hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for unchastity, and marries another, commits adultery."

The most striking part in this Scripture passage is Jesus' assurance that it is God who has joined together husband and wife in the holy married state. Accord-

ing to the ordinance of God they are no longer two but one flesh and therefore man should not put asunder what God has joined together.

There should be no such thing as separation or divorce. That is our starting-point. It should not be there, it should not happen. It is sin. From the beginning it was not so. Only after we have stated and accepted the right norm and standard, can we talk about these matters in

and writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, or if the latter husband dies, who took her to be his wife, then her former husband, who sent her away, may not take her again as his wife, after she has been defiled; for that is an abomination to the LORD, and you shall not bring guilt upon the land which the LORD your God gives you for an inheritance" (R.S.V. translation).

"In Deut. 24:1-4 Moses does not 'give permission' to write a certificate of divorce. He rather puts restrictions on an existing practice. He does not say: 'let a man do so' but rather: 'if he has done so, he cannot take her back, if it pleases him.'"

the proper way. We also learn from these words of our supreme Master and Teacher that sin exists and that we have to deal with it. We are confronted every day with the "hardness of heart" of sinful man, and its consequences.

In Matthew 19 reference is made to Deuteronomy 24. There Moses gave regulations for divorce and separation. We read in Deuteronomy 24:1-5 "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if then she find no favour in his eyes because he has found some indecency in her, and he writes her a bill of divorce and puts it in her hand and sends her out of his house, and she departs out of his house, and if she goes and becomes another man's wife, and the latter husband dislikes her

We find a remarkable difference between the R.S.V. and the K.J.V. translation. The King James Version has: "When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. And if the latter husband hates her, and writes her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband dies, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his



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IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial — The pope	
— J. Geertsema.....	370
Marriage and divorce	
— W. Pouwelse.....	371
Press Review — Papa's visit	
— J. Geertsema.....	375
An ecumenical pope?	
— J. Faber.....	376
Martin Niemöller	
1892 - 1984.....	379
Our little Magazine	
— Aunt Betty.....	380

OUR COVER

Luzern — Switzerland.
Photo courtesy John F. Vanveen.

wife, after she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

It is important to notice the difference, because the explanation of this Scripture portion depends on the translation. According to the K.J.V. Moses says: "When a man hath . . . found some uncleanness in her: *let him write* a bill of divorcement . . . and send her out of his house." In the R.S.V. we do not find a period at the end of verse one, but a comma. This seemingly minor thing is very important for the meaning of the text. We have to make a few linguistic remarks to get to the point. In the R.S.V. verse one is a so-called "if-clause" (or a subordinate adverbial clause). The main clause of the verses 1-4 is "When a man takes a wife and marries her, if . . . (verse 1) and

if . . . (verse 2, 3) or if . . . (verse 3) then *her former husband . . . may not take her again to be his wife.*"

What is the practical consequence of these rather linguistic technical remarks? According to the K.J.V. verse one gives a *rule* for a man to send away his wife with a certificate of divorce. According to the R.S.V. Moses says only that, *if* a man has sent away his wife, he cannot take her again as his wife after she has been married to another man.

Personally I consider (as many theologians do) the R.S.V. translation better in this respect. In Deut. 24:1-4 Moses does not "give permission" to write a certificate of divorce. He rather puts restrictions on an existing practice. He does not say: "let a man do so" but rather: "if he has done so, he cannot take her back, if it pleases him."

We should also carefully notice what Jesus says in Matthew 19:8. The Pharisees asked Him: "Why then did Moses command one to give a certificate of divorce, and put her away?" Jesus did not take over the suggestion of a *command* but answered: "For the hardness of heart Moses *allowed* you to divorce your wives . . ."

Apparently Moses was speaking about the existing situation and custom in Israel and the surrounding nations to write a certificate of divorce. Moses did not abruptly put an end to this custom, in the same way as the custom of having more than one wife still could continue. But restrictions were made to avoid abuse of this custom and to put certain limitations on it.

—To be continued
W. POUWELSE

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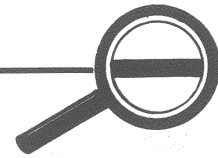
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The Consul-Generaal
voor deze:-
Mevr. G. SCHNITZLER
Fgd. KANSELIER



Papa's visit

Papa is visiting us. The word pope means "papa" or "dad." He is also called "the Holy Father." This latter name is one of the reasons the minister of the Calgary Free Presbyterian Church opposes the pope's visit to Canada. I thought it would be appropriate to use a part of his address in our Press Review in this issue.

We read in the introduction that what follows is "a statement reflecting accurately the position of the Free Presbyterian Church of Canada." Most of the Free Presbyterian Churches are found in Northern Ireland. That explains the so strongly Irish-political character of this address.

The minister quotes some Roman Catholic dignitaries who said "Roman Catholics and non-Roman Catholics will be delighted by the pontiff's visit and the papal visit will be a time of pastoral renewal for all faiths." His reaction is:

We are entirely unhappy that the pope should come to Canada. We don't want a "pastoral renewal" with the pope because he is not our pastor. Why are we unhappy? Our reasons for opposing the papal visit fall into three general categories. We oppose the papal visit on religious grounds. We oppose the papal visit on moral grounds. And we oppose the papal visit on political grounds. Let us take these in turn and examine them logically and Scripturally.

First let me state, our religious reasons for opposing the papal visit. We oppose the intended visit of the Pope of Rome on religious grounds because of the extravagant claims which Romanism makes for the papacy.

Pope John II by virtue of his accepting the tiara of the papacy makes these claims for himself. The formal declaration which the officiating cardinal makes when crowning the new pope states, "Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns, and know that thou art the Father of Princes and Kings, Ruler of the world, the Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ." We object to the pope's claim to be the Vicar of Christ. The word "Vicar" comes from the latin word "vicarious" which means, "one acting in the place of another." That means then that Pope John Paul II is claiming to take the place of Jesus Christ on earth. That claim is in direct opposition to John 14:16, 17 and 26. "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever. Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth Him

not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." The Scripture shows that there is only one person who can justly claim the title "the Vicar of Christ" and that is the Holy Spirit of God. For Pope John Paul to claim to be the Vicar of Christ is total blasphemy.

You will find in the January/February issue of the *Canadian Revivalist* this quotation from the *New York Catechism*. It says, "The pope takes the place of Jesus Christ on earth . . . By divine right the pope has supreme and full power in faith and morals over each and every pastor, and his flock. He is the true Vicar of Christ, the head of the entire Church, the father and teacher of all Christians. He is the infallible ruler, the founder of dogmas, the author of and judge of councils; the universal ruler of truth, the ARBITER OF THE WORLD, THE SUPREME JUDGE OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE JUDGE OF ALL, BEING JUDGED BY NO ONE, GOD HIMSELF ON EARTH.

Now that is pure blasphemy of the most flagrant variety, because it places the Roman pontiff as the substitute for the Holy Spirit whom Christ said that God would send in His name.

In Luke 22 we have a most interesting occurrence. There we find the disciples arguing over which one of them should be accounted to be the greatest. Now if there had ever been a time when Christ could have settled, once and for all, the supremacy of Peter as the first pope then this would have been the place, because Peter was present. But you find in verse 25 and 26 that Christ says, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so . . ."

The Lord is saying that although earthly kingdoms have their kings, and princes, and visible rulers, the church of Jesus Christ has but one Head, that is Jesus Christ Himself alone!

To have two heads on any living thing is unnatural. If you have a calf with two heads, it is a monstrosity fit only for the sideshow of a carnival. If you have a church with two heads it is likewise a monstrosity. Ephesians 4:15 identifies Christ as the Head of the Church, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him all things, which is the Head, even Christ."

Now then, there is another religious

reason why we object to the papal visit. That reason lies in the great devotion which Pope John Paul II has expressed to the Virgin Mary.

Now Rome's position regarding the Virgin Mary has never been more clearly stated than it was by St. Alphonsus Ligouri in his book called *The Glories of Mary*. In that book you will find these words, "At the command of Mary, all obey, even God. Yes, Mary is omnipotent."

The attribute of omnipotence is an attribute of deity. Only God is omniscient, omnipresent, and omnipotent. If anyone besides God Himself is omnipotent, that is, all powerful, then God is not really God at all. It is not true to say that any person upon earth is omnipotent.

Also, in that same book, in the index there is a chapter which begins by speaking of the great necessity of the intercession of Mary for our salvation. So the Roman position is that Mary is a mediatrix who can get favours for us from Christ which we cannot get ourselves, and we need to have her intercession in order for us to be saved.

If you check the document of the Vatican II council, you will find that Rome has not changed her position regarding Mary.

John Paul II has a coat of arms. That coat of arms has a dove, a shield, and a cross upon it. In one corner of the shield there is the letter "M." That "M" stands for "Mary."

The motto of Pope John Paul II is "Totus Tuus" which means "completely yours" in Latin. If John Paul II were making this great confession concerning Christ it would be fine, but he is not confessing Christ. "Totus Tuus" refers to Mary.

When the pontiff first visited his native Poland, he went to the shrine of the Black Madonna. Here is the prayer that he made at that time, "Our Lady of the bright mountain, Mother of the Church, once more I consecrate myself to you in your maternal slavery of love, 'totus tuus,' I am all yours. I consecrate to you the whole church, everywhere and to the ends of the earth. I consecrate to you humanity. I consecrate to you all men and women, my brothers and sisters, all the peoples and the nations. I consecrate to you Europe and all the continents. I consecrate to you Rome and Poland united through your servant by a fresh bond of love. Mother accept us. Mother be our guide."

In Southern Ireland the pope prayed to Mary. In Guadalupe he prayed to Mary. But when he went to the USA the prayer to Mary was omitted; the US is a largely Protestant

— Continued on page 378

An ecumenical pope?

At the moment when our readers receive this issue, the long-awaited and much publicized event will have taken place: the pope came to Canada. It is amazing and amusing to see the fever that affects our Roman Catholic compatriots slowly but surely. The Toronto cardinal received a new Cadillac and Quebecers even built a whole rail car to transport the pope in luxury and safety. A Hamilton conductor who hopes to show his musical skills in front of the bishop of Rome declared in ecstasy that he will be closer to the Almighty than ever or anywhere on earth. More importantly, one of the last actions of Mr. Trudeau as prime minister was the decision to confer automatic seniority, forever, on the papal representative in Ottawa, as is the custom in Roman Catholic countries. Although during the election campaign none of the leaders of the three main parties mentioned this fact — all three leaders are Roman Catholic — *The Globe and Mail* columnist, George Bain, called this action rightly “as imperious and contemptuous of public opinion as the wholesale distribution of patronage, and of more fundamental importance for the definition of Canada that it makes to the world.” For let us not forget: although Roman Catholics constitute the largest religious community in the country (11.2 million to 9.9 million Protestants), and although there are more Roman Catholics in Metropolitan Toronto than there are members of the United Church in all of Canada, our nation has never been and still is not (yet) a Roman Catholic nation. Our civil authorities would do well not to forget the pluralism of the Canadian society that they always laud in other political contexts.

The coming of the pope to Canada must evoke a reaction in a Reformed heart. We cannot but remember the manner in which our forefathers in the sixteenth century spoke of the pope as the Antichrist. Did Scripture not speak of him as the one who takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God (II Thess. 2:4)? Modern man may smile about the zeal and language of the Reformers in the sixteenth century and even we ourselves may not simply identify the pope with the Antichrist, nevertheless, it is clear that our forefathers had tested the spirits and that they justly recognized in the claim of the papacy an anti-Christian tendency.

In the meantime, history went on. In July 1870, the strong and self-conscious Pius IX led the First Vatican Council into accepting the new dogmas of the primacy and the infallibility of the pope. The first dogmatic constitution on the church of Christ describes in its four chapters the institution of the apostolic primacy in the blessed Peter, the perpetuity or continuance of St. Peter’s primacy in the Roman pontiff, the power and the nature of the Roman pontiff, and, last but not least, the infallible teaching authority of the Roman pontiff. The last two chapters were the most important. The pope has the full and supreme power of jurisdiction over the whole church. This jurisdiction is valid also in matters that pertain to the discipline and government of the church throughout the whole world. This power is ordinary and immediate over each and every shepherd and faithful member. And when the Roman pontiff speaks *ex cathedra* (from his chair, that is, in his official capacity as shepherd and teacher of all Christians), he possesses through divine assistance the infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed in defining doctrine concerning faith and morals. Such definitions of the Roman pontiff are therefore irreformable because of their nature, but not because of the agreement of the church.

The famous church historian Philip Schaff describes the days of the two most important sessions of the Vatican Council as the darkest and stormiest which Rome saw from December 8, 1869 to July 18, 1870. “The Episcopal votes and the papal proclamation of the new dogma were accompanied by flashes of lightning and claps of thunder from the skies, and so great was the darkness which spread over the Church of St. Peter, that the pope could not read the decree of his own infallibility without the artificial light of a candle” (*Creeeds of Christendom*, I, 159).

What did the Second Vatican Council in our twentieth century do? Did it soften or diminish the doctrinal statements of its predecessor? Was it not convoked in order to define the office of the bishops and did it not stress the collegiality of the bishops? Sure, but in the meantime it underlined the primacy and infallibility of the pope. In section 25 of the dogmatic constitution on the church the Second Vatican Council declared in 1964

that the pope’s definitions, “of themselves, and not from the consent of the church, are justly styled irreformable, for they are pronounced with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, an assistance promised to him in blessed Peter. Therefore they need no approval of others, nor do they allow an appeal to any other judgment.” This last sentence not only repeats but even corroborates the infallibility statement of 1870.

Rome remained the same; the claims of the pope were unabated. While a Reformed believer would imagine that Protestant confessors also maintained their confessional “no” against the papacy, we see, nevertheless, a remarkable and threatening development in the ecumenical movement. Roman Catholic and Protestants are now “in dialogue” and together they begin to speak about the “Petrine office” or “Petrine ministry.”

In the past I wrote in this magazine something about a Canadian agreement on infallibility, the so-called Toronto Statement on Infallibility issued by the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue of Canada (*Clarion*, August 27, 1982). I concluded that the agreed statement is ambiguous, while it uses the term “infallible” and fills it with the contents of another term, namely “indefectible.” Also Reformed believers confess that the Catholic Church will be there to the end of the world (Art. 27). This promise of God requires faith and does not mean that each and every local congregation — not even of the city of Rome — will always remain. Because of the ambiguity in terminology and the clouding of the real issues between Rome and Reformation with respect to the relation of Word and Church, I labeled the agreed Canadian Statement on infallibility a dangerous declaration.

On the American continent there is not only the dialogue between Anglicans and Roman Catholics, but also the encounter of Rome and Lutheranism. In 1974 *Papal Primacy and the Universal Church* was published under the sponsorship of the USA National Committee of the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Bishops’ Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs. As the title indicates, Lutherans and Roman Catholics in dialogue discussed the papacy as a form of ministry within the universal church. Right from the beginning the papacy is already accepted as

an expression of the unity of the church. This is what in modern ecumenical jargon is called "the Petrine office," that is, the office of Peter. We read: "Lutherans increasingly recognize the need for a ministry serving the unity of the church universal . . . Lutherans can also grant the beneficial role of the papacy in various periods of history. Believing in God's sovereign freedom, they cannot deny that God may show again in the future that the papacy is His gracious gift to His people" (21). Mind you, this Lutheran acceptance of the papacy is surrounded by cautions. The pope's service to unity should, in relation to the Lutheran churches, probably be more pastoral than juridical. Papal primacy should clearly serve the gospel and the unity of the church of Christ, and its exercise of power should not subvert Christian freedom. When I read such statements, I sigh: Wishful thinking. Do the Lutherans think that the pope will ever give up the clearly juridical power over all Christians that Vatican I allotted to him? Does the whole development, even after Vatican II, not show that autonomous ecclesiastical power corrupts the one who wields it?

The reasoning of this common statement seems to be innocuous: Christ wills for His church a unity which is manifest in the world. A special responsibility for this may be entrusted to one individual minister under the gospel. The bishop of Rome can function in ways which are better adapted to meet both the universal and regional needs of the church in the complex environment of modern times. The Lutheran churches then should acknowledge "not only the legitimacy of the papal ministry in the service of the Roman Catholic communion, but even the possibility and the desirability of the papal ministry, renewed under the gospel and committed to Christian freedom, in a

larger communion which would include the Lutheran churches" (22-3).

Our readers will notice that step by step the Lutherans bring themselves to an acceptance in principle of the papacy. But where in Holy Scripture is it even slightly indicated that a special responsibility for the unity of the church may be entrusted to *one* minister of the gospel? Not even Peter himself had received such a special charge. And Peter, in his significant function, in the early days of the church after Pentecost, is unique and his apostolic function is, as that of the Twelve in general, unrepeatable. Foundations are laid only once. Peter himself exhorts the elders "as a fellow elder" to tend the flock of God "not as domineering over those in your charge" (1 Peter 5:1-3). The unity of the church is guaranteed by the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ Himself. We read in Ephesians 4 of one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. We do not read of "one Peter" and certainly not of "one pope." It is deadly for the church if her ministry is built up according to human reasoning, instead of obedience to the Scriptures. In our Reformed Confession we speak in this manner: As for the ministers of God's Word, they have equally the same power and authority wheresoever they are, as they are all ministers of *Christ, the only universal Bishop* and the only Head of the Church (Art. 31, B.C.).

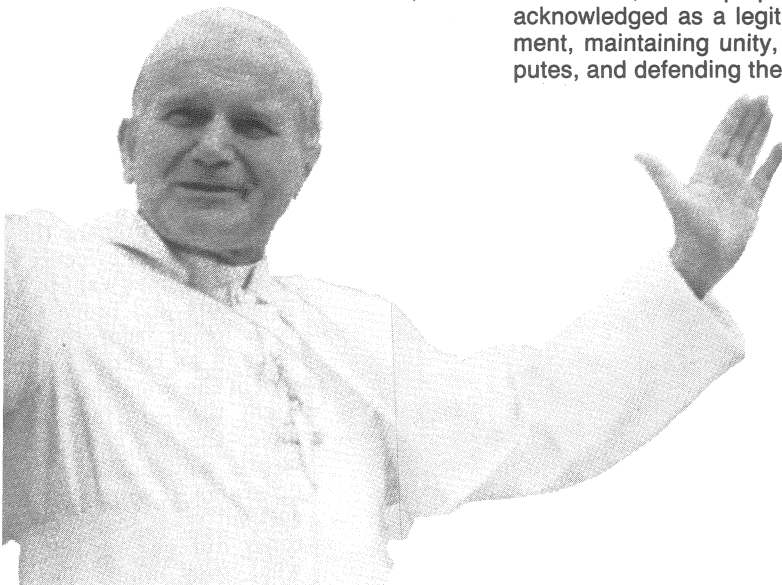
The following statement, produced by Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue, was published in 1980 in a book entitled *Teaching Authority and Infallibility In the Church*. As the title indicates, the discussion now proceeded from the issue of the papal primacy to that of the infallibility of the pope. As far as the papal primacy is concerned, this statement again stresses that it could, "under proper conditions, be acknowledged as a legitimate development, maintaining unity, mediating disputes, and defending the church's spiri-

tual freedom." With respect to the infallibility of the pope, it states that "Lutherans may well ask themselves whether the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal infallibility, even if not something which they would be able to affirm for themselves, need continue to be regarded by them as anti-Christian and therefore as a barrier to the unity of the churches" (14).

Again, it is remarkable that, although Roman Catholic *theologians* speak of the possibilities of reinterpretation or reformulation of previous dogmas, the *officials* of the Roman curia remain silent and in their silence adamant. The formulation of the irreformability of the papal dogmas was even corroborated by Vatican II. Do Protestant ecumenists really think that Rome will exempt them from the demands of submission to papal dogmas, proclaimed by him who claims to be the supreme shepherd on earth for *all* Christians? The doctrine of papal infallibility diminishes God's own glory: the glory of the infallible God, and the glory of God's Word, the infallible Scriptures. How could a real spiritual son of Luther — think of his debate with Eck in Leipzig — ever regard the doctrine of the infallibility of the pope as a minor issue and as no barrier for the unity of the church of Christ?

The pope comes to Canada and among the pieces of information that I picked up was also an announcement about an ecumenical gathering in Toronto, where Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, etc., etc., and even the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada, are officially invited to meet with the pope. I do not know what our Christian Reformed brothers will do. They were observers in Vancouver at the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches last year. Will they now, with all those modern ecumenists, be attracted by the steady glowing lure of *Roma aeterna* because of what is called the unity of the universal church? The papacy seems to be like a radiant beacon in dark times and it seems to guide to a haven of rest. Let us even acknowledge that the pope — as any Christian — may speak words of Biblical wisdom, even in matters of life and death, e.g. against abortion upon demand. What is according to the Word of God is true and remains true by whomever it is spoken, and it should be acknowledged also by us, sons of Calvin. But the papacy as such is an abomination; the claim of primacy and infallibility of the pope is false and remains false, by whomever it may be defended. We reject it wholeheartedly, for the sake of the glory of God and of His Christ. Here we stand; we do not move one step to the pope; we cannot and may not, and God will judge.

J. FABER



Papa's visit, continued

nation. In predominantly Romanist nations the emphasis was all upon Mary.

So Pope John Paul II makes an idol of Mary. That is against Scripture. I Corinthians 1:31 states, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

So you can see that our opposition to the papal visit rests upon these objections at the very least.

Also there is the fact that the pope allows himself to be called by the title "Holy Father."

The title "Holy Father" occurs only one time in Scripture, and that is in John 17, during the High Priestly prayer of Christ. There God the Son calls His own Father, "Holy Father." For a mere man such as Pope John Paul II to usurp that title is not only the height of arrogance, it is absolute blasphemy.

These are not all of our religious reasons for opposing the visit of John Paul II but they are some of the more easily explained ones.

Summing up a number of his "moral reasons" for opposing the visit of the pope, the minister mentions the fact that the pope is called "Your Holiness" while there were many unholy, immoral popes. He mentions the pope's "cover-up" of a financial scandal in the order of the Pauline Fathers, an order of monks based in Pennsylvania, as well as the fraud at the Vatican Bank, and then points out the following:

If you want to hear other moral reasons why we do not support the papal visit then let me turn you to view Northern Ireland, where the vast majority of our churches are located, and there you will find a little province destroyed by the terrorist campaign of the I.R.A. which is strongly Roman Catholic. Over 2000 people have been killed as the result of that campaign.

The pope came to Ireland, and in Dundalk someone asked him if he would consider excommunicating those who murdered, he said, "Oh no, let these people be."

Also when I.R.A. convicted murderers were on the hunger strike in the Maze prison several years ago, just before they died, the personal secretary of John Paul II came to the Maze prison to bring golden crucifixes to the hunger strikers which had been specially blessed by the pope. Those hunger strikers held these crucifixes while they voluntarily committed suicide by starvation. The second hunger striker to die was a man convicted of 26 murders. Pope John Paul II condoned the murderous actions of the Roman Catholic I.R.A. by the action.

With respect to the political reasons, we read, among other things:

After World War II, Pope Pius XII turned his attention toward the Western world

following the traditional Roman practice of allying with the predominant political power. Inside the Vatican there were certain advisors who felt that he was doing wrong. They felt he should be turning his attention toward Communist block nations. Two of those advisors were promoted sideways so that they would not embarrass Pius XII. One man's name was Roncali, the other was called Montini, Roncali became Pope John XXIII who followed Pius XII. Pope John XXIII was the one who gave a gift to Luigi Longo who is the head of the Italian communist party in Italy. Under pressure from the German press the Vatican denied that such a gift had been given, but Longo affirmed that he had received it, and the Vatican had to retract.

After John XXIII died, Montini became Pope John Paul I; he was the other advisor who was in favour of supporting Eastern block nations. One of John Paul's first interviews was with Archbishop Nicodem, who according to our documentation was thought to be a KGB man. Nicodem took a heart attack and died during that interview, and two weeks later John Paul I died.

John Paul I was a socialist, but the reports which I have, point to the fact that the Kremlin was agitating for a more left-wing pope than even John Paul I.

So you can appreciate the pattern which is developing from John XXIII to John Paul I to John Paul II when you realize that John Paul II is from a communist block nation.

The last paragraph suggests that Pope John Paul II must be even more communist minded than his predecessors because he comes from a communist block nation. This is, in my opinion, not only a suggestive speculation, but in light of the facts even appears to be in conflict with the facts. Do we not read that in some ways this pope is opposing the Polish communist regime? Was the Russian

KGB not behind the plot to murder this pope? I cannot agree with this reasoning for saying "no" to the pope's visit.

The author continues with the following lines:

Revelation 17 shows a powerful religious entity riding to power on the back of a scarlet coloured beast which is generally understood to be a political system. What I believe we are seeing now is the alignment of Rome with the communist political system by virtue of the relationship of the present pope to a communist satellite country.

Rome is aligning herself with the political left. Watch in South America for the involvement of Romanist priests in the Marxist causes. Watch the statements of the bishops concerning the nuclear freeze in the U.S. We are witnessing the establishment of Catholic Communism.

I can agree with the writer's view on Revelation 17, that the harlot is the false church riding on an anti-Christian political power. But I do ask: does the pope agree with all those Roman priests promoting the cause of communism? Besides, there are many, many Protestant church leaders and organizations (e.g. the World Council of Churches) doing the same.

We must be careful in our argumentation.

Further, I agree that Canada as a nation should not have a visit by the pope. If he wants to visit his Roman Catholic subjects, so be it, but the nation? No, even though he is the head of Vatican State. Modern governments are so strongly in favour of a separation of church and state. In this case I would like to see consistency. Now with this visit, the Canadian government is promoting Roman Catholic errors and a false man-made religion.

J. GEERTSEMA

HYMN 1B

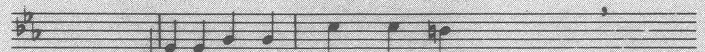
'k Geloof in God



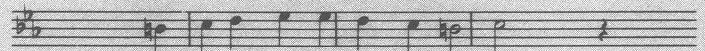
I. In God, our heaven-ly Fa-ther, I be-lieve -



Al-might-y Rul-er, all-vic-to-ri-ous,



Cre-a-tor of both heaven and earth,



Whose ho-ly Name is great and glo-ri-ous.



And I be-lieve in Christ our Lord -

Martin Niemöller — 1892-1984

Since his death in Wiesbaden, a few months ago, much tribute has poured in for Martin Niemöller, pastor in the German Evangelical Church for many years. The name is perhaps unfamiliar to our younger members, but older members who lived through the first years of the last great war will recall Pastor Niemöller as a noted figure in the German Confessing Church who openly spoke out against the National Socialist movement, and openly defied Hitler. Because of his continued criticism of the National Socialist leadership, he was arrested and imprisoned, and later ended up in the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau. Particularly his last year of preaching before his imprisonment in the congregation at Berlin-Dahlem contained a strong appeal to resist the rising power of socialism. For example, in one sermon on II Tim. 2:11, 12, (“... if we endure we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him He will also deny us . . .”) he said:

“I believe, dear friends, that we are set before the choice today, and it means for us, in our everyday life, in the midst of this world, it means for us, the *one* choice, it means *this* Either-Or: “Do we endure?” or “Do we deny?”, and every brother or stranger, who for the sake of the gospel will suffer and endure like an evildoer at the same time proclaims with his suffering that the Word of God is not bound, that it progresses free and unbound, that God’s Word seals in stronger than a prison door and a concentration camp, binds stronger than any earthly power can bind — and because

it still opens so many church doors and concentration camps — also this Word of God gives a freedom which no power on earth can give us

We know that also for the sake of this Word suffering comes over the congregation of Jesus Christ . . . we shall and must go through it, we shall and must learn again, that God’s Word will remain unfettered, so that it can free us; that the Word of God will remain unyoked, so that it can deliver us.” (*Dennoch Getrost*, p. 131.)

It was this message that brought him to camps — first to Sachsenhausen, and then to Dachau a few years later. He had begun with a courageous stand. And the “pray for Niemöller” banners were flashed all around the free world.

But the end was different than the beginning. He was later released from Dachau, and after the war became a strong critic of the free world and US foreign policy. Rev. Herman Knoop, who was also in Dachau at the time, said that the view the Dutch clergy had of the German resistance clergy was radically transformed when the Dutch ministers came into the camp. He says:

“We in Holland had read much of the brave struggle of the German evangelical ministers against the Nazi’s. And we were impressed by this struggle, and were also thankful for it. However, my contact with these clergymen forced me to radically alter my judgment about the brave struggle of the German clergy. The image we had of them was very flattered. They were *Germans*, just like all the other Germans in the camp. I had

thought there would be some principled men among them. There weren’t. Except for a few they were all weaklings, who at the same time were puffed up with their German pride. They looked down on anyone who was not German, not least of all us Dutchmen . . .,” (*Een Theater in Dachau*, p. 127)..

So, too, Overduin writes that Niemöller did not suffer. “Rev. Niemöller and Shuschnigg were both honorary prisoners. They got food from the S.S. kitchen, didn’t have to work, sat apart from the rest of the prisoners and had no contact with them.” *Faith and Victory in Dachau*, p. 127. No wonder his tone changed after he was released. Deeds are more than words!

Niemöller’s death only serves to remind us of those who went in but did not come out, Dutch clergymen who, despised by the German clergy, suffered in a different way. There was *Rev. J. Kapteyn* who knew he would not ever get out, and knowing this, kept giving his bread to Rev. Knoop, (who, health-wise, was a much stronger man), *insisting* that he take it. “I refused, but he insisted, and so he forced me to take the bread from him, who was so hungry himself. He kept insisting and I took. That was Jo Kapteyn. That is the way he was in all things,” p. 119. And then there was *Rev. J. Tunderman*, also a man not physically strong, a prisoner sent to the infirmary early on, so that his body could be used for all kinds of Nazi experimentation. He died the day after Christmas (!) in Dachau.

And there were many more clergymen and other prisoners, whose names are now either forgotten, or have never been noted and recorded. The contemporary press hails Niemöller as a great Protestant leader, one who stood in the shoes of Martin Luther. We will leave the judgment to the LORD. But we already know that when the books are opened and the names of those who suffered for the cause of the gospel are placed before the world, the list will not be drawn up as the world itself has drawn it up.

God grant that today, too, we may be ready and willing to suffer, as previous generations have done, not simply with our words, but also with deeds; not simply for a while, but to the *end*, so that we may obtain the *unfading crown of glory*. Then we will meet them all, also the brothers of Dachau, in the eternal joy of the Lord.

The Apostles’ Creed

Eenige Gezangen, 1933

Christ Je - sus, the in - car-nate Word,
 God’s on - ly Son, our faith-ful Sav - iour,
 Sent to re-deem a world for-lorn;
 Who was con-ceived by God the Spir-it
 And of the vir-gin Mar-y born.



Hello Busy Beavers,

How was your summer?
 Did you swim lots?
 Did you go visiting or camping?
 Maybe you had fun reading a lot or riding your bike?
 Many Busy Beavers, I know, helped at home.
 Anyway, I hope you all enjoyed a good time this summer!
 And now we're ready for something different, right?
 First summer work and fun, and now
 Now it's back to _____.
 Yes, back to school!
 Back to our friends!
 Back to learning new things.
 Busy Beavers, there are so many wonderful things to learn
 about God's creation!
 God's ways with His people are wonderful, too!
 Here's a wish for you all, Busy Beavers.
 I'll put it in a box because it's my very special wish for
 you all!

Guess what?
 It's also time for . . . BIRTHDAY WISHES!
 Here's hoping all the Busy Beavers celebrating a
 September birthday have a very happy day with their family
 and friends.
 May the Lord bless and keep you all in the year ahead.

September

Helena Hopman	6
Angela Brouwer	8
Keith Lubbers	9
Emily Barendregt	10
Tammy Linde	11
Mary Vande Burgt	11
Cindy Huttema	13
Angela Mans	13
Teresa Oosterhoff	18
Walter Bartels	19
Margo Hofsink	20
Joyce Broersma	21
Rose Peters	21
Jennifer Dykstra	26
Anthony Vis	26

May going to school
 help open your eyes
 to the work of our
 wonderful God and Saviour
 and how we may serve Him.



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Alex Meerstra*.
 We are happy to have you join us. Be sure to join in
 all our Busy Beaver activities, Alex. Will you write and
 tell us about your holidays and your hobbies sometime?
 And a big welcome to you, too, *Henry Moesker*. I see you
 are a real Busy Beaver already sending us a puzzle and riddles!
 Thank you, and keep up the good work, Henry!
 Hello, *Jennifer Siebenga*. It's nice hearing from you, and I
 really like the games you sent in. But because everybody's go-
 ing back to school, we'll save them for next summer. Is that all
 right with you?
 Did you enjoy camping *Peter John Sikkema*? Where did you
 go? And did you sell lots of vegetables this summer? How do
 you feel about going back to school, Peter John?
 I see you mean to keep the Busy Beavers very busy, *Henry
 Sikkema*. Good idea. Keep it up! Did you have a good summer,
 Henry?

How did your swimming lessons go, *Caroline Wubs*? Sounds
 to me as if you had a good time at home this summer. Thanks
 for the puzzle and the games, Caroline. Keep up the good work!
 Hello *Rita Wubs*. Thanks for all the riddles. I'm sure the Busy
 Beavers will enjoy them, and the games, too! How do you feel
 about going back to school, Rita?
 Thanks for your pretty letter and the games, *Erica Moesker*.
 Too bad it rained while you were camping. I sure hope you had
 some good days, too!
 Hello, *Miriam Vanderwerf*. I'm happy to hear you passed.
 Do you know who your new teacher(s) will be? Thanks for the
 puzzles, Miriam. Bye.
 I see you're playing your recorder this summer, *Sylvia Van
 Bodegom*. That's great! Keep it up. Thanks for the puzzle, Sylvia.
 Bye for now.
 Hello, *Donald Woltjer*. It was nice to hear from you again
 Did you yourself type out the poem for us? Thank you, and keep
 up the good work!
Mark A. from Surrey, please write and tell me your address
 and birthday, all right?

JOKES



RIDDLES FOR YOU

from Busy Beaver *Matthew Onderwater*

1. What are the most dishonest shoes?
2. What is bent, salty, and sings rock songs?
3. What kind of bird stands in front of your door and goes buzz?
4. When do eggs sleep?
5. What kind of bag is always sleeping?
6. What does a house wear?
7. How big is a football field?
8. Why are kings like books?
9. What vegetables will make a duck rotate?
10. What does a frog do at a baseball game?
11. What group of desert people never get angry?

Answers: 1. sneakers 2. Elvis Presley 3. a door buzzard
4. when they're adozen 5. a nap sack 6. a dress 7. a foot
8. They have lots of pages 9. spin-ach and turn-
ips 10. He catches all the flies 11. nomads

Quiz Time!

Busy Beavers *Michelle* and *Kerry Roodzant* have a **PRETTY HARD** puzzle for you today!

It's a well-known Bible text. But you must break the code yourself!

W M X Q Q X H A Y X
 O Z X Y B T Z O X F I Q
 N F Y O Z X C
 Q Z A M M W X
 Q A O B Q N B X H.

I will give you some clues to help you!

X=E B=I I=U A=A F=O

Answer next time!

Busy Beaver *Henry Sikkema* has this puzzle for you to do.

Esther

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

Abate	Fast	Marble	Stud
Adar		Mordecai	Sum
Ahasuerus	Gallows		Susa
Ashes		Nisan	
	Haman		Vashti
Banquet	Harem	Oil	
Courier	Hate		
Decree		Peace	
	Jew	Plot	
Edict	Joy	Province	
Esther		Pur	
Eunuch	Law	Purim	

Every letter is used except for 13. They spell a name:

Have you sent in your answers to our **BIG SUMMER CONTEST** yet?

Please do it very, very soon!

With love from your
Aunt Betty

Address your letters to:
Aunt Betty
Box 54
Fergus, ON

CHURCH NEWS



CALLED and ACCEPTED to London, ON

CANDIDATE J. MOESKER

of Hamilton, ON

He DECLINED to Lincoln, ON