

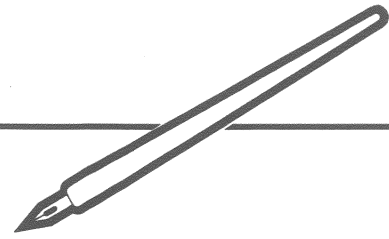


Clarion

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What is experienced when Christ is preached?

The answer to this question is not hard to give for Reformed people. We find this answer time and again in the Scriptures. It is therefore no wonder that we meet it as well time and again in our Creeds and in our Forms and Prayers in the *Book of Praise*.

Let me point at the Form for the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. We are taught there that the true self-examination consists of three elements; we must detest ourselves because of our sins; we must also believe that these sins are forgiven us on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ; and we must have the thankfulness for this redemption and in this thankfulness have the desire to live in love for the Lord and the neighbour.

We all know that our Heidelberg Catechism is divided into these same three parts; knowledge of misery (sin and God's wrath against our sin), knowledge of redemption in Christ, and knowledge of thankfulness for such a great redemption. It is to these three aspects of the Christian comfort, the Christian experience, that I ask attention in connection with the preaching of Christ.

Experience of sinfulness and preaching Christ

How do we know our misery, our sin, and our condemnation through the wrath of God against our sin? The answer is well-known: through the (strict preaching of the) law of God. However, we can also answer: through the preaching of Christ as Redeemer of sinners. These are not two different things, but one and the same. We can see that when we keep in mind that, according to the Scriptures and for the Christian believer, the law flows forth from Christ and is the law of Christ.

Christ points at sin with His, that is: with God's law. We see that so very clearly in the Sermon on the Mount, where our Lord places His true and so very strict interpretation and application of God's Ten Commandments over against the falsifying, externalizing, diluting interpretation of the Jews. "You shall not kill" means also that you shall not have anger and envy and feelings of revenge in your heart toward your neighbour. "You shall not commit adultery" means also that you shall not even look with sinful desire in your heart at a woman. "You shall not steal" means also that you must give to him who begs you and not refuse him who wants to borrow from you. "You shall not speak false witness against your neighbour" means also that, always, your "yes" simply must be yes, and your "no" no.

Believing in Christ with a true faith, that is, believing the gospel of Jesus Christ as the Saviour who died for your sins, who paid for you with the price of His blood, means that you go on your knees, because you accept that *you* are that sinner for whom He had to die.

Believing in Christ with the obedience of faith means, as our Heidelberg Catechism expresses so beautifully, "a *heartfelt* sorrow that we have offended our heavenly Father with our sins, and hate them and flee from them."

Christ must be preached as Saviour. We preach Christ to sinners. This means: we preach God's forgiving love to people who are lost in their sins. Such preaching is preaching to the hearts of those sinners, to the hearts of the children of God. Preaching Christ as Saviour, preaching God's grace, works a heartfelt sorrow in the hearts of those who are (being) regenerated.

It is important to take note of the word "heartfelt." This word points at feeling, emotion, experience. So do the words grieve, sorrow, and hate. When Christ is preached, the call to repentance is included. When, in obedience to the gospel, Christ is received and accepted through the preaching, the regenerating Holy Spirit works also the "feeling," the knowledge of sin and the awareness of sinfulness, and the grieve and sorrow because of it. Preaching Christ calls for repentance. Heartfelt sorrow because of sin is the fruit of preaching Christ.

It is remarkable that in much radio and T.V. messages this element of the awareness of sin and sinfulness is scarcely touched. It is "praise the Lord" and "Halleluja" in connection with being saved and receiving happiness. But there is very little of what Paul writes in Romans 7:24, "Wretched man that I am. Who will deliver me from this body of death?" However, in a life in fellowship with Christ the continuing awareness of sinfulness and sin cannot and will not be absent. There will be the continuing prayer for the forgiveness of sin. According to the teaching of Christ, the believer prays every day just as much for the forgiveness of his sins as for his bread. Therefore, much of this evangelical preaching and emotionalism has very little depth and remains superficial as the consequence of its man-centeredness.

Experience of redemption and preaching Christ

In the gospel God offers Christ as Saviour. Preaching, therefore, must bring Christ as Saviour to the listeners with the call for faith. It must be clear from the preaching that it is God's will that those who hear the gospel, especially His covenant people, obey this call and believe. When, in obedience to this calling God, listeners do believe, this faith will bring along joy in the Lord. Nobody who knows to be lost because of his sins and who believes that he is saved through Christ can remain untouched. Nobody, who is placed in the fellowship with Christ through faith by the power of the regenerating Holy Spirit, and who receives, in the fellowship with Christ, the remission of his sins, the righteousness of Christ, being a child of God, and an heir of eternal life with Christ, can remain indifferent. Thankful joy in the Lord will fill his heart. In the fellowship of faith with the Saviour there is experience of the joy of faith, the certainty of salvation.

And when this certainty and joy of faith is not so strong at a certain moment, the believer must repent and turn to Christ, return to the communion of faith with Christ. Christ is

the source of life. Therefore, Christ must be preached as the living Saviour and Lord. And people must be called to obey God by believing.

Certainty of faith does not come from turning into our own soul to find out what our spiritual standing is. Certainty of faith comes from turning to Christ in obedience to the call of God's Word.

Experience of thankfulness and preaching Christ

It is obvious that sinners who believe the gospel of Christ and who, in that faith, are convinced that they are lost because of their sin and sinfulness, but who also believe that they are saved by the sacrifice and death of Christ, will be thankful. Joy in the Saviour goes together with great gratitude. Heartfelt joy includes thankfulness. This thankfulness will express itself in a life through the Holy Spirit, a life in the obedience of faith in all good works. The believing child of God wants to please His God. He wants to observe God's commandments. The love that comes from God has come in his heart and life and therefore permeates his life. That love turns back to God but also reaches out to the neighbour.

Christ is a total Saviour. He saves from the guilt and the curse of sin through His blood. He saves also from the dominating power of sin through His sanctifying Holy Spirit. One who lives in fellowship with Christ through the Spirit, cannot but live in holiness before God. And when there is a falling in sin, there is great grief and sorrow because of it, and repentance and conversion. No one can truly live in fellowship with Christ through the Holy Spirit, and, at the same time, live and harden himself in sin.

In the fellowship with Christ the believers experience that it is their heartfelt joy to belong to God and Christ. They have "a heartfelt joy in God through Christ, and a love and delight to live according to the will of God in all good works," Heidelberg Catechism Q. and A. 90.

We can also point at Article 29 of the Belgic Confession, that not only speaks about the marks of the true church, but also confesses what the marks are of "those who are of the church." It says that "the marks of Christians" are the following: "They believe in Jesus Christ the only Saviour, flee from sin and pursue righteousness, love the true God and their neighbour without turning to the right or left, and crucify their flesh and its works. Although great weakness remains in them, they fight against it by the Spirit all the days of their life. They appeal constantly to the blood, suffering, death, and obedience of Jesus Christ, in whom they have forgiveness of their sins through faith in Him."

A third quotation I take from the Canons of Dort, Chapter V, Article 10. It speaks of the assurance and certainty of the preservation of the saints and says, "This assurance is not produced by a certain private revelation besides or outside the Word, but by faith in the promise of God, which He has most abundantly revealed in His Word for our comfort; by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, witnessing with our spirit that we are children and heirs of God; and, finally, by the serious and holy pursuit of a good conscience and of good works."

Article 11 continues, "Scripture meanwhile testifies that believers in this life have to struggle with various doubts of the flesh and, placed under severe temptation, do not always feel this full assurance of faith and certainty of persevering." And Article 14 adds, "As it has pleased God to begin this work of grace in us by the preaching of the gospel, so He maintains, continues, and perfects it by the hearing and reading of His Word, by meditation upon it, by its exhortations, threatenings, and promises, and by the use of the sacraments." Hereby we must remember that Christ is the contents of Word and sacraments.

Conclusion

God is real. So are Christ and the Holy Spirit. Also the fellowship with Christ through the Spirit is a living reality, given to those who, through faith, are implanted into Christ. Experience of this living reality is the work of Christ through His Spirit in the way of faith.

This experience of the work of the Holy Spirit appears in awareness of sinfulness and sins and in repentance from sin; further, it comes out into the open in the confidence of faith that these sins are forgiven in Christ's name. And in the third place, this experience will show in a godly life in accordance with the revealed will of God. It will show in the obedience of faith in which the believer surrenders himself to Christ and lives by what He as his Lord and Saviour says.

Do we seek to experience the fruits of the work of the Holy Spirit, let us not turn into our own soul to look for signs and marks.

Let us turn to Christ and to His work in prayerful, obedient faith.

Let us, through the Spirit, live in fellowship with Christ and for Him as He wants it.

Let us seek God's kingdom and its righteousness. We shall receive that kingdom and that righteousness. And, on top of it, we shall have the experience of the work of the Holy Spirit and its fruits in our life to His glory.

J. GEERTSEMA

Marriage and procreation₁

1. What is at stake?

This is the third time that we publish a series of articles on a marriage-related issue. The first time we dealt more specifically with the preparation for the married state. Young people try to get better acquainted with one another before they enter into the holy married state. In

the second series we paid attention to a completely different aspect. Not every married couple lives happily ever after, not even those who seriously try to maintain peace and harmony in the married state. Divorce and separation take place also among believers. In this third series we will deal with the relationship between marriage and having children. In the old

Form for the Solemnization of the Marriage it says "that by the marriage the human race is to be propagated." In Genesis 1:28 the Lord has given His divine promise and blessing unto Adam and Eve. This promise and blessing was at the same time an instruction. "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." This shows us clearly the relationship between marriage and having children.

There are a number of rather formal expressions which we will use quite fre-

quently in these articles, although they might not be very common to every reader. To assure that everyone understands the meaning of these expressions, we will first give a definition of some terms.

Intercourse in general means an exchange of feelings or actions which make people know each other more closely. In the context of these articles it refers to the act of sexual unity in which husband and wife become "one flesh." This word can be used also for a mere social contact.



by bringing up children. We first like to be married for a while, to get better acquainted with one another, to save some money and to finish a study, and then, probably, we will 'have' one or two children." There are even many who consider the married state not necessary for having children. Many have voluntarily and well-considered chosen for a life as a single parent. However, for us as Christians it should be perfectly clear that marriage and procreation are inseparably connected. Although single parents ex-

the maximum number of children? Some speak about the "optimum" and see that as the responsibility and ability, not only to bring forth, but also to raise, to instruct and bring to maturity the children which are entrusted to them. The maximum number may not always coincide with the ability to bring up these children in a responsible way. When we consider all these things, it is understandable that people came up with the question, to deal also with these aspects of married life. If certain restrictions are necessary, the question arises: how and in which way are we supposed to "regulate" the number of children and the interval between the birth of the children? Which criteria are we supposed to apply? Which measures are we supposed to take? What is legitimate and what is not? In response to some reactions and questions which we received after our previous articles, we will try to deal with the matters we have just mentioned. We consider it very important that these things are openly discussed. The most dangerous situation is always when an existing problem is denied or ignored, because then everyone tries to find his or her own answer, without help and support which we can give each other in an open and honest discussion. The chance that someone, with the best intentions of the world, goes a wrong way, is much greater if we leave the matters out of the discussion, than when we try to help each other in these, certainly very delicate, matters.

Therefore we refer to it as sexual intercourse, to be distinguished from social intercourse.

Procreation is the act of producing or bringing forth offspring. The word propagation, used in the old Form for the Marriage has a slightly different meaning. Propagation puts more emphasis on the increase of the number of descendants by bringing forth new life, while procreation refers to the bringing forth of offspring per se.

Conception is the beginning of new life by the union of a male and a female cell. From these definitions it is clear that we can only speak about procreation, if intercourse is followed by conception.

Abstinence in general means staying away from pleasant things, such as drinking alcohol. In the context of these articles it means to abstain from sexual intercourse.

After the publication of our previous articles we received requests to deal also with the relationship between marriage and procreation. That is a very current and controversial issue today. Even among believers there is no unanimity in this respect. In the world we can hear the statement: "We first like to enjoy life, we like to be free and not bothered right away

ist, it is and should be an exception. It can be caused by the death of one of the parents, it can be the consequence of a marriage breakup or of an out of wedlock pregnancy. In all these cases we are dealing with an existing reality but at the same time with a clear exception. We also realize that there are families without children. A marriage without children can still be a meaningful marriage and fruitful in the service of the Lord. Nonetheless it is an exception, no matter what the reason may be. We are not sure whether people always see it this way, or rather we are afraid that too often young couples consider it quite normal and legitimate to "wait" a number of years before they "have" a child. Some want to finish a study, others like to save money or buy a house or simply to enjoy life and freedom, before they take on the responsibility of raising children. Others consider themselves not "mature enough" and postpone for that reason the responsibility for a growing family. Couples who have already one or two children are questioning whether it is "time" to have another one. The main point is: when and to which extent there is an obligation, a "command" to procreate, to bring forth children. Are we supposed to bring forth

2. A changing attitude

We cannot deny that there is a changing attitude, also among Christians. Half a century ago the general point of view was that every limitation of the number of children in a Christian family was in conflict with the Word of God. The number of children was something we had to leave in the hands of the Lord. Only in cases of serious physical illness and a life-threatening situation of the mother, a couple was allowed to abstain from procreation, but in such a case the only acceptable method was total abstinence. Although the economical circumstances were much worse than today, most families were much larger than in our modern time. It is an undeniable fact that, if all Christian couples would live according to the old rules, there would still be families with twelve or even twenty children, as it sometimes happened in the past. We do not judge on any individual case. A marriage can remain without children for many reasons, and the number of children can be one or two, even when the parents would like to have, and do everything "they can" to receive more children. We do not judge any individual case, but it is a fact that the

average size of the family is much smaller than in the past, also among Christians.

The reason is that people deliberately take certain measures. If that would not be the case, the average size of the families would be even *larger* than in the past. Through better medical care the number of stillborn babies and miscarriages is less than in the past and the number of children, dying before they have reached the age of one year is much smaller than half a century ago. That means that the same number of conceptions produces at least twice the number of healthy children. Nonetheless the size of families is decreasing. We all agree, or at least are supposed to acknowledge that, according to the Word of God, sexual intercourse is only allowed within the marriage state. However, not everyone thinks the same way about the relationship between intercourse and having children. A minister, by virtue of his office, is sometimes confronted with marriage problems and supposed to "counsel" people in such a situation. Once a mother complained: "I do not understand why my husband wants to have intercourse while I am already pregnant? The only reason should be to procreate a child and that has taken place already!" This mother saw the sexual act only as a necessary way to receive a child and had no idea what a real sexual relation between husband and wife is all about. Although it might sound strange in the ears of some, such situations still do exist, more than we are aware of. However, today most Christians agree that, although the sexual relationship has to be restricted to the married state, not every sexual act has to be necessarily related with the bringing forth of a child. The very fact that conception is impossible in a certain situation, makes intercourse not meaningless. It is a gift of the Lord, given to mankind and a way in which a husband and wife can experience the most intimate relationship of love and unity. The Lord has connected this act with the bringing forth of children, but it has certainly its own value, also without the direct intention or result of bringing forth a child. If a couple knows that, because of physical aberrations, it is impossible to receive a child, that does not make their sexual life senseless. It is still a gift of the Lord, given to them in the married state. However, the question remains: in how far, when, how and for which reasons are parents allowed to take measures to avoid or postpone the conception of a next child.

We will try to answer this question in the next installment.

— *To be continued*
W. POUWELSE

PSALM 128

1543/Geneva, 1551

1. Blest is the man who al-ways
Re-veres and serves the LORD,
Who, walk-ing in His path-ways,
O-beys and keeps His Word.
The fruit of all your la-bour
As your re-ward you'll eat
And, blest by His great fa-vour,
You'll have what you may need.

2. Your wife a vine resembles,
Fruitful within your house.
Like olive shoots assemble
The children God allows.
Around your table sitting,
They are a rich reward,
A blessing great and fitting
For him who fears the LORD.

3. From Zion come your blessing;
May you see Salem's peace
And happiness progressing
Until your days will cease.
May you through life's duration
Know that your seed is well
And see their generations.
Peace be on Israel!



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EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editors: J. Geertsema and W. Pouwelse
Co-Editors: J. DeJong, Cl. Stam and
W.W.J. VanOene

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION
9210 - 132A Street
Surrey, BC, Canada V3V 7E1

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE

MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

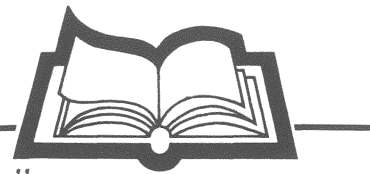
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“For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off”

Acts 2:39a

Grace Magnified

These well-known words of Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, heard every time a child is baptized in the church, might perhaps be losing some of their meaning for us, simply because we hear them so often, and because they are often used as one of the basic Scriptural proofs of infant baptism. We see the wide breadth of the text in the expression “all that are far off,” but its depth may be lost to us. This appears in the first words of the text, “For to you is the promise” Who are those referred to here?

The context gives the answer; in the climax of this sermon, Peter concludes that God has made both Lord and Christ this Jesus “whom you crucified,” verse 36. Peter addresses roughly the same crowd that had been gathered in Jerusalem fifty days before, and had participated in Christ’s condemnation and subsequent crucifixion. They had cried out, “His blood be on us and on our children.” (Matt. 27:25). To these same people who had thus called an enduring curse upon themselves, Peter proclaims God’s promise and His blessing — also enduring through the generations.

Here something of the depth of God’s unending grace opens up before us. For in the death of the well-Beloved, sin had reached its culmination point, its *climax*. No sin is greater than the wilful murder of God’s only Son, the special Messenger He sent into the world to proclaim His justice and truth. Man can do nothing worse than this. This sin — the crucifixion of the son of God — is tantamount to making a curse out of God’s blessing, and expressing the highest hatred and contempt for the LORD God. Many acted in ignorance, as Peter himself says, Chapter 3:17. Yet this does not affect their guilt! The proclamation of Pentecost does not ignore this guilt! Golgotha is the living proof, the verifiable evidence in the hands of the apostles and of God Himself which proves universal guilt, not only of the Jews but also the Gentiles. This is what we have done!

What a surge of life then comes forward on those words: “For to you is the promise” The greatest possible injury has been inflicted against the Holy One. But at the same time, He is prepared to overlook it, if only we repent and believe in Jesus. The culmination of sin also leads to the greatest offer of grace. The peak point of sin yields grace magnified, — indeed, grace *perfected* in the proclamation of the new covenant. And is that not what Pentecost is all about? With Pentecost, all comes to *fullness*. The full maturation of sin to such a vile deed opens the door to the fullness of grace proclaimed for Jew and Gentile alike. Along with the peak of guilt comes the proclamation of fullness of *amnesty*, release from guilt through the blood of the cross! And that promise comes to one and all, young and old, in

the same way God gave His covenant promises in the old covenant.

However, precisely because grace comes to its peak, and God’s love is poured out to its maximum, everything in the new covenant involves the highest *seriousness*, and the greatest *earnestness*. The fullness of giving, the fullness of divine speaking cannot but draw out the fullness of response — one way or the other. No doubt remains in the Pentecost age. From heaven’s end all registers have been opened. What ought then to come from earth to heaven?

Paul himself gives the answer when he outlines the aim of the Pentecost preaching. Just as sin has reached a climax in the death of the Son, and just as grace has come to its fullness in the forgiveness proclaimed in His death, so the thank offering must also come to its fullness in the obedient response of all who believe in Christ. Paul’s aim is to “present every man mature in Christ,” Colossians 1:28; and here the word “mature” includes the idea of completeness and perfection. God’s unexpected and astonishingly merciful proclamation of full amnesty must be met by a full and complete thank offering — a self-offering and self-dedication which leaves not one stone unturned in giving *all* to God. His “all” must be met with our “all” from below! So Paul adds that His gifts were many and varied, “until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,” Ephesians 4:13. We must strive for the fullness, but we are also brought to the fullness, so that, at God’s time, all we have done in the body may be placed in humble thanksgiving before His throne.

Here, too, the end can only be: *sola Deo gloria*. For the thank offering which God above may declare “perfect” and “complete” in Christ Jesus our Lord is all given by Him through the Spirit. For out of Him and from Him and to Him are all things! And He leads all things to the day when the fullness will be plain for all to see, and God shall be all and in all.

J. DEJONG

Note: Unfortunate errors crept into the “From the Scriptures” article of June 14, 1985, (Vol. 34, No. 12), entitled *Perfect Love*. The words of the first sentence, “. . . form an introduction to the passionate nature in John, . . .” should read, “. . . form an introduction to the passion narrative in John” The second sentence of the fifth paragraph should read, “Betrayal and denial — as actions they amount to much the same thing.” Sorry for these errors.

J. DeJong



Yes, this medley's preparations began long before its birth-date. Amidst all the hustle and bustle of packing and carrying tons of stuff from the one place to the other, there was a sheet of paper somewhere with notes taken from various bulletins. However, the mass of other material soon obliterated whatever goodies might have been gleaned from the products of bulletin editors, Consistory-reporters, and others. Thus we had to start all over again once the dust had settled and once the not-so-liquid sunshine of British Columbia had produced a reasonable tan. And so, here we are again. You did not forget me, witness the various expressions of concern that retirement from active service might also mean the end to our medleys, and I did not forget you, as can be seen from the present product.

However, let's come to brass tacks, as a favoured expression of my brother VanderBoom has it.

To start with, then, a letter has been received from a sister who looks with pity and compassion at the copies of the provisional *Book of Praise*. Apart from all the copies which showed their age and thorough exploitation, there may be also copies which are still in reasonably good health. She was wondering whether there is any organization which could use them or whether anyone knows how these remnants of a glorious past could still prove their usefulness, in whatever way. If anyone has any suggestion, I shall gladly receive it and pass it on, perhaps via this column. May I, for communications, refer to the little note which was inserted in *Clarion* with the address to which we respectfully request mail to be sent?

This time we start far away, at least far away from where we are at the moment.

We are referring to the Church at Grand Rapids. Rev. Kingma gives regularly a report on the contacts which have been made and are being maintained. In one of his latest reports he writes, "We also came into contact with a minister and an elder of an independent Church whose members for the greater part used to belong to the Roman Catholic Church. These men wanted to talk to us to get to know what our Churches stand for, because they were seeking affiliation with truly Reformed Churches . . . One thing is clear that these contacts made result in more contacts with other Churches and individuals."

We express the heartfelt wish that all those groups which are on their own, without any affiliation, may indeed find the way to contact and close ties with the Church federation, for history teaches that remaining on their own results in disappearance without leaving a trace. We do not seek our strength in a federation or in international organizations, but we are equally aware of the necessity to seek close contact and to maintain it for mutual support and "supervision" (in a non-technical, fraternal sense). We do not go for any distinction between "being" and "well-being" of the Church, but would almost dare to make the statement that contact and affiliation is an absolute necessity both for the "being" and for the "well-being" of the Church. There appear to be various groups of concerned Christians here and there who are seeking the way to preserve the old and proven doctrine of the Scriptures. Unless these groups find the way to a truly Reformed Church Federation, they will peter out and fade into oblivion. We do not hesitate to claim that we have remained truly Reformed and Catholic, and should therefore urge them to come and join us, on the condition that they fully agree with and promise to adhere to the summary of Scriptural doctrine as we have it in

our confessional forms, and are willing to abide by the Reformed Church polity as we have it.

However, let's continue.

From Grand Rapids we go to Burlington West. First we quote something with full agreement.

"Council also received three letters concerning the word 'Christian' which was inserted into the text of the Apostles' Creed by Synod 1983. Dr. Faber is requesting Synod 1986 to reverse that decision. After ample discussion we decided to express our agreement with this letter to Synod and to send a similar request on behalf of Burlington West. The grounds for this decision are too numerous to mention, but council was convinced by the evidence that Synod 1983 made an error in judgment."

This decision of the Burlington West Consistory differs from that of another Consistory. I shall not state which Consistory, for the point is not *who* said it but *what* was decided, and this is a matter of "principle," so to speak.

The other Consistory decided to declare the above mentioned letter plus another letter on the same material inadmissible. The brothers concerned were to be informed about the grounds on which their letters were declared inadmissible. The relevant bulletin did not give these grounds, and therefore I cannot form an opinion about them. I only go by the fact that these letters were declared inadmissible. And here I have my difficulties.

The agenda of the broader assemblies is composed by the Churches, *not* by Church members. Basically there is only one way in which an individual Church member can get a matter on the agenda of a broader assembly, and this is by way of an appeal when he complains that he has been wronged by a decision of a minor assembly. I repeat what I said before: the famous article does not say "when he thinks that a minor assembly has done something wrong," but "when he complains that *he* has been *wronged*." Which is a different story, I should say.

In the past our broader assemblies, including General Synods, did deal with "proposals" by individual Church members, and did make decisions on them. Gradually my objections to such course of action have increased. I have become more and more convinced that, if a member wishes to see something changed or something introduced, he has to approach his Consistory, with the request to take action to this end. If the Consistory agrees with him, they will initiate action. If the Consistory disagrees and does not see any merit in the suggestion, the member should abide by that, for it is quite something to engage a whole Church federation to achieve something! If a member sends a proposal or similar submission to a broader assembly, the broader assembly should inform him or her that he or she should approach his or her Consistory, but that broader assemblies are allowed to deal only with matters brought to the assembly by the Churches.

Now here is a brother who has serious objections to insertion of the word "Christian" in the Apostles' Creed. And I agree with him, as is obvious from what I wrote about the topic before. What is the course of action to be taken?

In the line of what I wrote above, I am convinced that the forthcoming Synod will have to send a reply stating that Synod is allowed to deal with submissions from Churches only. How, then, can a Church member achieve a change? Is it not by

approaching either his own Consistory — if it concerns a matter not of general concern — or all the Consistories when it concerns a matter that is a matter of the Church federation? Dr. Faber did the latter. Then, however, I think it is completely wrong to declare such a letter inadmissible, since, in my opinion, this is the proper way to follow. That a letter with arguments against those brought to the fore by Dr. Faber is declared inadmissible appears to be correct, for the place to come with arguments against arguments is not a Consistory table, but the docket of a General Synod. These matters are not decided at the Consistory level but at the General Synodical level. However, when a Church member considers it his duty to try having a General Synodical decision changed, his only way is: engage the Consistories. Then to declare such a letter inadmissible seems to amount to cutting off the way for concerned Church members, and this does not seem proper.

Not only, therefore, for the tenor of the decision by Burlington West, but also for the fact *that* they made a decision on this letter I am grateful.

Another decision by this same Consistory does not find favour in my eyes. "It was decided to request Synod 1986 to revise Article 13 so that Classis will always be involved in case a minister retires from active service."

For the first time in history, Article 13 of our Church Order gives a minister the right to retire once he has reached retirement age. On purpose no specific age was mentioned, for it may be 65 today, but 66 tomorrow, and 70 in ten years when it becomes apparent that an ever-shrinking number of citizens cannot bear the burdens caused by an ever-increasing number of retired people.

What change could an involvement of Classis bring here? Burlington West does not give any particulars as to how they wanted Classis to be involved. Is it their intention that Classis will have to *approve* the retirement? But then this would mean that what the Church Order gives as a *right* — retirement at retirement age — is made dependent upon the approval of a Classis, and thus a Classis would be able to overrule the generally adopted Church Order. Which is against the Church Order itself. Or is it the intention that the article shall be changed so that a minister will be allowed to retire *if Classis approves*? In this case mentioning a retirement age would not make any sense, and we could just as well have retained the old article.

Sorry, but I cannot see any advantage in changing the article which has been adopted with common consent after the Churches had ample time to study the proposed changes. Leave well enough alone.

Burlington East struggles with overcrowding. The Consistory received a "report from the committee 'to look into the overcrowding during our Church services' which report 'will be studied and the committee will be invited to the next meeting with the deacons.'"

One more thing should be quoted from the Burlington West bulletin. It is very old news indeed, but I still think that it should be passed on. "Speaking about our College, one of the governors was honoured by the Ontario government. Br. C.M. Loopstra, son of the Rev. W. Loopstra and member of the Toronto Church, is a barrister and solicitor. As such he has rendered many a valuable service to the Theological College and organizations among us. He received the special privilege of being appointed as Queen's Counsel. Our congratulations!"

As said above, it is old news, but we still pass it on, and add our congratulations to those expressed by the Rev. Mulder. I don't know what such being Q.C. entails, but that it is an honour is beyond doubt and congratulations — however belated — are well in place.

There was a curious sentence in the Toronto bulletin. From the Consistory report we learned that "special visits were reported on, as well as fifteen pastoral visits." When reading

these lines, we wondered whether those special visits were not pastoral. And if they were — and we have no doubts about that — why, then, the qualification "pastoral" with the other visits? Both ministers of the Word and elders are pastors of the flock, and their visits are pastoral. We should watch out for false distinctions.

From the Orangeville bulletin we can mention a few particulars of interest.

"The proposal regarding a sermon before the celebration of the Lord's Supper which was tabled some time ago was discussed . . . It is decided to maintain the original decision to leave it in the freedom of the minister." During the years of my active ministry I did both: have a brief sermon before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and confine myself to the reading of the Form for the Celebration. The latter course satisfied more. Not only does the service become unduly long when a brief sermon is given before the celebration — which especially for the children is not advantageous — but in such a brief sermon only brief remarks can be given and there is no time to go into a text more deeply or thoroughly. Besides, the Form, although somewhat lengthy, beautifully describes both the character and the purpose of the Holy Supper, and when it is read with the proper emphasis it is a sermon in its own right by which the Congregation is instructed and strengthened.

Another decision by Orangeville's Consistory meets with total agreement, something which will not be news to our readers. "Regarding collection at the Lord's Supper, it is decided to discontinue this practice. The Consistory and Deacons DECIDE: not to use the collection receptacles at the Holy Supper table any more from now on, but instead to ask the whole Congregation *after* the celebration of the Lord's Supper, to give their thankful offerings for the needy. *Grounds*: a) these offerings are now used for the work of the Church, for which we already give our voluntary contributions; b) only part of the Congregation can give their offerings this way; c) it may give the impression to others that we have to 'pay' before we may celebrate the Holy Supper."

Before we leave Ontario, there is one more item which should have our attention. Again we do not mention the name of the Church, for it is a general item more or less.

First a quote. "Due to the fact that the Lord's Supper will be celebrated this coming Sunday, *censura morum* was held. It was thankfully noted that none of the council members had any objection to the celebration of the Lord's Supper."

What we notice in this item are a few general misunderstandings in which this writer himself lived for a long time, until it was pointed out to him that things were different.

There is in the first place the term "*censura morum*." The proper term for what happens within the Consistory is "Christian Censure," or "Fraternal Censure."

The very use of the word "censure" may give the impression as if this is a matter of Christian discipline, dealing with doctrine or conduct; such an impression, however, is wrong. What is meant is that we "check up" on each other as office-bearers and help one another with the execution of our office.

Perhaps I mentioned it before in one of the medleys, but let me repeat it then for those who never heard it before.

On the Sunday of my ordination I asked the brother who ordained me, "We are going to have a Consistory meeting this week, and there is a 'Censura Morum' on the agenda in connection with the Lord's Supper two weeks from now, how are you doing this?" This shows that, upon becoming a minister of the Word, one certainly does not know everything and has to "feel" one's way around.

My cousin replied, "O well, you ask each of the brothers whether they have any objection to celebrating the Lord's

Supper with each other, and that's it." Yours truly did this faithfully for several years until . . . he came to the discovery that this was completely wrong. Certainly, in the old Church Orders it was provided that such a Christian Censure was to be held before the celebration of the Lord's Supper, but this was not to mean that the question should be asked whether the brethren could celebrate this Supper (together). Imagine! Would it ever be justified to ask such a question? Think about it. Could there ever be a reason why I cannot sit at table with the brothers and sisters? There is, of course, the possibility that there is something in my life why the Lord forbids me to partake, but can there ever be something in the lives of the others which gives me the right to say, "I cannot sit down with them at the table of the Lord?" Could I ever justly derive an argument from the doctrine or conduct of the other members — either office-bearers or non-office-bearers — to be disobedient to the Lord's command, "Do this in remembrance of Me?"

Article 73 of our Church Order does not speak about discipline in the technical sense of the word or of impediments to celebrating the Lord's Supper together. It speaks about kindly and humbly exhorting one another and admonishing one another with respect to the execution of our office. It is perfectly all right when the opportunity for such action is given expressly according to a set schedule, e.g. at the last meeting before the celebration of the Holy Supper; it may also be done every month or every second month. Besides, whenever someone wishes to do so, he can request the chairman to put the

Christian Censure on the agenda for the meeting. Participation in the Lord's Supper together should, however, remain out of the picture.

Possibly one of the elders is of the opinion that the minister should put some more time and study into the preparation of his sermons: the Christian Censure is for such exhortation and admonition. It could be that one of the brothers has noticed a lack of diligence in visiting their section-families with some of the fellow elders, or that he has learned that the deacons are neglecting a certain family, and so on. There are hundreds of possibilities regarding lack of zeal, failure to act, and so on, with ministers as well as with elders and deacons. The one may talk too much at family visits, the other may fall into the trap of being distracted too soon and not bringing the "train" back onto track soon enough when conducting family visits, and so on, and so on. Whenever we can help one another with the execution of our office, whenever we can exhort one another to remain faithful and whenever there is reason to "admonish" one another in case of neglect or failure or weakness, we are to do so. That's what the Christian Censure is for: the mutual supervision and taking heed of each other within the circle of the office-bearers. No question about being able to celebrate the Supper of the Lord together.

It is, therefore, also advisable to mention only that "Christian Censure was held," and not to make known whether use was made of it or not, whether it was necessary or not.

VO

Impressions of Bangladesh₂

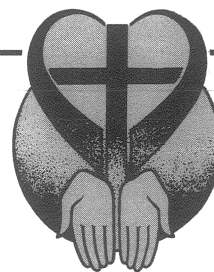
Editorial Note: What follows here is the second part of the report of Susan Van Tol about her trip to the far East.

Bangladesh has remained poor for a variety of reasons. It is a fertile land which has a year-round growing season, and is capable, of producing three crops annually with proper management, availability of seed, fertilizer, and irrigation. But it is so low-lying and has so many waterways that the annual monsoons and frequent typhoons, storm-waves, and tornadoes have disastrous results. The economy is underdeveloped, and depends mainly on agriculture. There are very few natural resources. Bengalis lack the knowledge, equipment, and skilled labour necessary to develop industry. They are not exposed to modern ideas and technology — therefore, they cling to old ways and simple tools. The civil war in 1971 disrupted the entire nation, and destroyed most of the existing industry, businesses, transportation and communication systems. This takes time and money to restore. Because of their religious beliefs ("If Allah wills it . . ."), these Muslim people tend to be fatalistic

and do not strive to fight the odds to improve their situation in life. The poor cannot afford to buy good seed and fertilizer to produce sufficient crops to get ahead. Many people are landless, having lost their property in the war of 1971, or being forced to sell acreage to feed themselves. Constant food shortage exists because they do not import or grow enough food to feed their steadily increasing population. The natives are content to eat a bowl of rice, being ignorant of proper nutrition and balanced diets. Ninety percent of the deaths in Third World countries are due to poor sanitation and contaminated water supplies. Basic health problems go uncared for — diarrhea, scabies, parasites, lice, ringworm, anemia, and malnutrition have become a way of life. Eighty percent of the population is illiterate. No law exists requiring children to attend school. Families have to pay for books, tutors and uniforms, so education is out of the question for the poor who need the few extra takas their children can earn to help feed the family. But without education, these people will never overcome their poverty, and will never break that vicious circle.

The education needs to cover all

aspects of community development. One part alone would be useless. You cannot give a health and nutrition class and expect the people from then on to eat well-balanced meals if they do not have the money to buy food, or a way of earning money to buy food, or seeds and fertilizer, or no land to grow food on, or if the women do not know how to prepare and cook the food once it is available to them. The whole community needs to learn cooperative skills (organization, leadership, banking, and technical skills), literacy, agricultural and gardening techniques, health and nutrition. They have to be shown what changes are necessary and be motivated to carry it through. This takes time, patience, and persistence because it is not easy to give up old habits and adopt a new life-style. So with common sense, imagination, concern and interest, Peter and Geraldine use their daily lives as an example for their Bengali neighbours. Peter invites his neighbours into his own gardens in Bogra to show them that a variety of vegetables can be grown together each season, and that raised vegetable beds increase production. He keeps chickens to show the



CRWRF

neighbours that penned-up chickens cannot destroy gardens, that the manure can be used as fertilizer, and that the eggs can easily be gathered for eating. Rather than buy expensive bamboo to build fences around his gardens, Peter raises epel-epel trees. These fast-growing shrubs can be trained to grow as a fence or hedge, and the branches and leaves can be trimmed regularly to provide high-protein fodder for livestock. He sells tilapia, a high-protein fish, from his own pond, to neighbours, who then in turn can supplement their own diet, and their income by selling fish to others.

Geraldine has put a great deal of time and energy into her Projaputi Women's Skills Program which offers new life to her poor neighbour women. The women learn skills in handicrafts, receive basic literacy, health, and nutrition training, so they can increase the well-being of their families (for more details please refer back to Geraldine's reports in *Clarion*, October, 1984 and January 25, 1985 issues). She also deals daily with women who come to her door begging for food, medication, advice, and work.

It is not easy for Peter and Geraldine, working in a harsh environment, isolated from church, family, and friends, in a country which does not allow direct mission work. But we "can do all things through Christ who strengthens" us (Philippians 4:13). Our daily life is a living testimony to our neighbours. Let our light shine, and pray that others will be drawn to Christ by our example. The work in Third World countries is slow, nonending, full of obstacles, frustrations and challenges, but if we trust and obey, He will show us the way and bless the work being done. Hope is being brought to these people. In the Khanjanpur area, Moslem and Hindu farmers who have heard about the work being done in the neighbouring Christian and Shantal villages, are approaching Christian Extension Services to ask if they too can join the program.

They see the benefits and want to improve their communities. So the needs of these villages are being assessed, and the work continues and expands.

There are not many well-educated Bengalis who can fill the staff positions for the community development projects. But in this again we see the Lord's hand — He sends Peter men like Habel, his



The little one doesn't share his brother's delight in having his picture taken

"counterpart." Habel is the Project Manager for the Khanjanpur Christian Extension Services. Not only is he well-educated, but he has extensive work experience, is of the Shantal tribe and thus can speak their language and understand their culture, *and* he is a Christian. The field-trainers also are educated Bengalis with work-related experience, and the necessary patience and skills to do a good job teaching their brothers.

I had the privilege of spending a morning with a Bengali Christian doctor who in his spare time had recently established a clinic for diabetics in Bogra. It was funded by donations he had obtained, and run by

hospital staff giving up their day off. Before this, diabetics received absolutely no medical care. He hoped that consistent donors and/or government funding would become available so that he could hire regular staff to run the clinic. Then he hoped to turn his attention to clinics for tuberculosis patients, and for lepers, and . . . the work is endless. How many of you readers have a friend or relative who is diabetic, or perhaps even yourself? Look at all the medical facilities, supplies, teaching, insurance, support groups, and health care available to you. What would it be like to live without it?

Yes, we often take things for granted. We have homes, schools, churches, jobs, healthcare, recreation — do you stop to think about the privileged lives we lead? It's so easy to sit back, enjoy life, and just take what we can get.

Young people tend to quit school early to find a job, rather than continuing their education. Older folks tend to become complacent in their daily routine, not reaching beyond their comfortable circles of family and friends to do volunteer work or get involved in community groups. Is that using the talents God gives each and everyone of us? We all have something special to give. Not all of us can become preachers, teachers, or mission workers, but we must meet the challenges and develop our full potential. There is a great deal of work to be done in our own congregation and communities too — with the sick, the elderly, the teens, the poor, the widows . . . We can do so much more for each other if only we try in His Name. "All things work together for good to them who love God" (Romans 8:28). How many of us use the opportunities we have to attend seminars, Bible Study, and other meetings to enrich our Christian knowledge?

In conclusion then — there was so much to see, so much to do, and so much to learn, that I left Bangladesh with regret that my visit was so short, having developed great respect for the work being done, and for our brothers and sisters serving there. I left with a strong desire to help promote their work by making you all more aware of it and asking for your continued support in prayers and donations.

In His service,
SUSAN VAN TOL

Gifts for the work of CRWRF may be directed to:

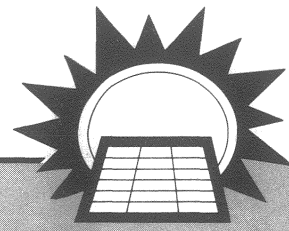
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All gifts are gladly received. Donations of \$10.00 or more will be issued a receipt for tax deduction.



Susan visits some area residents

RAY OF SUNSHINE



Hymn 48:1,3

(Musical notation for Hymn 48:1,3)

1. If you but let the Fa-ther guide you,
Re-ly-ing on His faith-ful-ness,
He will be ev-er-more be-side you
In all your sor-row and dis-tress.
He who on God Most High de-pends
Builds not his house on shift-ing sands.

Be still! What God in His good pleasure
To you in wisdom may impart
Is given you in perfect measure;
Thus be content within your heart.
To Him who chose us for His own
Our needs and wants are surely known.

We are happy to tell you that Mrs. Riemersma is doing very well after her operation. The LORD has heard our prayers and we thank Him for this blessing. As to the future, we commit Mrs. Riemersma and all those who go through times of illness or distress to the care of our heavenly Father. It is good to know that the Mighty God sincerely cares for us. We realize that this is not because of us, but because of the Lord Jesus Christ, who made up for all our sins. Let us again entrust ourselves to His loving care!

We received a "thank-you" note from Mrs. P. DeWit, the mother of Mary and Arlene. The girls were happy with all the cards they received. Mrs. DeWit included a picture of two beautiful carpets made by Mary and Arlene. They do a lot of rug hooking and knitting. I hereby pass on a request of Mrs. DeWit. She would love to have some unfinished rug hooking or canvass. If you have any and wish to part with it, please contact Mrs. P. DeWit, 20 Barnston Island, Surrey, BC V3T 5J4.

That is also the Lord's special care that those who are physically or mentally handicapped

sometimes receive a special gift to enrich their life and that of others.

Our calendar indicates that we have four birthdays in August.

PHILIP SCHUURMAN

Christian Horizon Home
371 Niagara Street
Welland, ON L3C 1L1

Phil is mentally handicapped. He keeps himself well occupied for during the winter he works in a "workshop" and in the summer he enjoys working on a farm. Philip hopes to celebrate his 26th birthday on August 5. Happy birthday Phil!

ROSE MALDA

Oakland Centre
53 Bond Street
Oakville, ON L6J 5B4

Rose had meningitis as a baby, which damaged her brains. She cannot walk or talk but when happy she smiles and claps her hands. She likes colourful cards. Maybe you will keep that in mind if you plan to send her one? She will be 28 on August 9.

FENNY KUIK

38 Rizzuto Bay
Winnipeg, MB R2C 3Y8

Fenny works in her dad's printing business at "Premier Printing." In spite of the fact that she cannot hear and speak, she is a happy lady and I am sure she will love to receive some cards on her 33rd birthday, August 18.

JACK DIELEMAN

307 Connaught Avenue
Willowdale, ON M2R 2M1

Jack is paralyzed from his chest down and he spends his days in a wheelchair. But he can do quite a bit. He is living at home with his parents and receives special tuition; he is doing very well in school, we hear. He has two sisters (one married) and 5 brothers. Jack hopes to be 13 years old on August 23.

Congratulations to you all! Have a "sunny" day!

Mrs. Riemersma is eager to take up her "sunshine" task again! So, send your letters and requests to:

MRS. J.K. RIEMERSMA

380 St. Andrew Street East
Fergus, ON N1M 1R1

Mrs. J. Mulder

ANCHOR

From the Question Column of *Dit Koningskind*

The following question was asked: "May we pray for the recovery of a retarded child?"

Several opinions were brought forward, by a group of parents, which I will use together with my own thoughts to come to an answer.

The parents of a sick child pray for healing. After recovery they give thanks for answered prayers. How does this relate to a handicapped child? May we also pray for its recovery? What is recovery? Does that mean becoming normal, just like everybody else? Is it being able to walk with paralyzed legs, or to hear when deaf and to see when blind?

Or can recovery also mean a slight improvement? A little more development than had been expected? Learning to talk when for years it seemed impossible?

Or is recovery the fact that our child becomes more conscious of his Lord and Saviour? That he learns to live to the glory of God, that he tries to conform to God's plan for his life, that he knows himself to be a child of God?

All these questions arise. At the

same time we believe and confess that we have a mighty God for whom nothing is too difficult or too wonderful, and who can do everything. He only needs to say, "I will," and it happens. When we consider all these things we realize that posing a question is certainly not providing an answer. However we must remain sober and realistic. We do not know why God causes this to happen to us, but we do know that He will work everything for our good.

On the other hand, we also know that the Lord uses all kinds of means to accomplish His work. He has given us doctors, and also medical science practised by Christians is a work of God by means of man. Realistically speaking however, He does not put on new legs. He can do miracles, we may never doubt whether God is able to or not. But just as the mountain will not be cast into the sea when I say so, so an amputated leg will not be put back on again. Can the Lord not do this? Indeed He *can*, but He *does* not do it. I think that this is faith: knowing that God can do a certain thing and know-

ing that He does not do it.

In this shattered world with all its sickness and pain we should not attempt to establish a heaven. That can happen only at the end of time. Nevertheless we have a tremendous perspective. For whether severely handicapped or less severely, living consciously or unconsciously we must all build the Church of Christ. When the number is full Christ will return and then there will be no more mourning and grief. Then we will all be full children of God.

It is to that goal that our prayer must be directed. We may have to make do here with broken bodies and mental shortcomings. But we may glorify and praise Him, even with those broken bodies. Then we may pray that our children will comply with God's purpose for them, but we may not pray against God. For "such knowledge is too wonderful for us."

Translated by
MRS. T. RAVENSBERGEN

Nieuwe Wet op het Nederlandschap

Op 1 januari 1985 is de nieuwe Rijkswet op het Nederlandschap in werking getreden.

De meest opvallende veranderingen ten opzichte van de oude wet zijn:

— man en vrouw krijgen — wat de nationaliteit betreft — een gelijke rechtspositie. Voortaan zullen niet alleen de kinderen van een Neder-

landse man, maar ook de kinderen van een Nederlandse vrouw bij geboorte Nederlander zijn.

De niet-Nederlandse man van een Nederlandse vrouw wordt op dezelfde wijze en onder dezelfde voorwaarden

Nederlander als de niet-Nederlandse vrouw van een Nederlandse man. De mogelijkheid dat een met een Nederlandse man getrouwde buitenlandse vrouw door het afleggen van een verklaring (optie) de Nederlandse nation-

aliteit verkrijgt, komt te vervallen.

— De leeftijd waarop men meerderjarig wordt, is — voor wat deze wet betreft — gebracht op 18 jaar; bij huwelijk op een jongere leeftijd wordt men ook meerderjarig.

— Verlies van het Nederlandschap door langdurige afwezigheid.

Een meerderjarige Nederlander, die woont in het land waarin hij is geboren en die ook onderdaan is van dat land, verliest het Nederlandschap door — na zijn meerderjarigheid (18 jaar) — 10 jaar onafgebroken in zijn geboorteland te wonen.

Voor de overige buiten het Koninkrijk geboren Nederlanders leidt een 10-jarig verblijf in het buitenland niet meer tot het verlies van hun nationaliteit. Zij behoeven de zogenaamde 10-jaarlijkse verklaring tot behoud van het Nederlandschap niet meer af te leggen.

Andere gronden voor verlies.

Een meerderjarige (18 jaar) verliest het Nederlandschap onder andere ook, als

— hij vrijwillig een andere nationaliteit aanneemt (door optie of naturalisatie);
— hij afstand doet van het Nederlanderschap.

Een minderjarige verliest het Nederlandschap, als

— hij door erkenning, wettiging of adoptie het kind wordt van een vreemdeling;
— de vader of de moeder vrijwillig een andere nationaliteit verkrijgt en de minderjarige in die verkrijging deelt of deze nationaliteit reeds bezit (door geboorte)
— de vader of de moeder het Nederlanderschap verliest;
— hij zelfstandig (los van de ouders) dezelfde nationaliteit als de vader of de moeder verkrijgt.

N.B. Het Nederlandschap gaat in geen van deze gevallen verloren als daarvan staatloosheid het gevolg zou zijn.

Een minderjarige verliest het Nederlanderschap niet zolang één van de ouders nog Nederlander is.

Nederlander worden

Het Nederlandschap kan op verschillende manieren worden verkregen:

— van rechtswege.
— door optie, of
— door naturalisatie;
van rechtswege (onder andere):
— kinderen van een Nederlandse vader of moeder zijn bij geboorte Nederlander. Voortaan zullen dus ook kinderen van een Nederlandse moeder Nederlander zijn ongeacht de nationaliteit van de vader.
Gevolg hiervan is dat kinderen van

een Nederlandse moeder en een niet-Nederlandse vader bij geboorte een dubbele nationaliteit zullen hebben, tenzij zij geen nationaliteit aan de vader ontlenen.

N.B. voor kinderen geboren vóór 1 januari 1985 zie echter onder "Overgangsbepaling"

— een kind, geboren uit een in Nederland wonende vader of moeder die zelf ook geboren is uit een in Nederland wonende moeder, is Nederlander. Bepalend is hier de woonplaats van de ouders.

Hier kan uiteraard voor Nederland ook Nederlandse Antillen worden gelezen. Dit kind behoort tot de zgn. derde in ons land wonende generatie.

door optie (dat is een eenzijdige verklaring, afgelegd door een niet-Nederlander, die leidt tot verkrijging van het Nederlandschap, onafhankelijk van een beslissing van de overheid.)

Twee groepen van personen kunnen via een optie het Nederlandschap verkrijgen:

— meerderjarige vreemdelingen — niet ouder dan 25 jaar — die in Nederland zijn geboren en aldaar sedert hun geboorte — zonder onderbreking — woonplaats of werkelijk verblijf hebben gehad;

— vreemdelingen — niet ouder dan 25 jaar — die in Nederland zijn geboren, daar tenminste drie jaar woonplaats of werkelijk verblijf hebben en sedert hun geboorte staatloos zijn.
door naturalisatie.

Om voor naturalisatie in aanmerking te kunnen komen moet men aan vier voorwaarden voldoen:

— men moet meerderjarig (18 jaar of gehuwd) zijn;
— tegen het verblijf van de verzoeker voor onbepaalde tijd in Nederland mag geen bezwaar bestaan;

— de verzoeker moet in de Nederlandse samenleving zijn ingeburgerd.

Dit moet blijken uit een redelijke kennis van de Nederlandse taal en uit het feit dat de verzoeker zich heeft doen opnemen in de Nederlandse samenleving;

— de verzoeker moet minstens vijf jaar, onmiddellijk voorafgaand aan het verzoek, in Nederland woonplaats of werkelijk verblijf hebben gehad.

Geen verblijfstermijn geldt voor een vreemdeling die:

— voorheen Nederlander is geweest;
— tijdens zijn meerderjarigheid door erkenning, wettiging of adoptie het kind is geworden van een Nederlander;

— drie jaar of meer gehuwd is met een Nederlander.

Een termijn van twee jaar geldt voor een vreemdeling die in het verleden tenminste 10 jaar in Nederland of de Nederlandse Antillen heeft gewoond. Een termijn van drie jaar geldt voor een ongehuwde vreemdeling, die tenminste drie jaar met een ongehuwde Nederlander in een duurzame relatie samenleeft.

Afwijzing naturalisatie.

Ook al voldoet iemand aan alle voorwaarden dan kan het verzoek toch worden afgewezen onder andere als de verzoeker woont in het land waarvan hij onderdaan is.

Overgangsbepalingen

Nederlander volgens de nieuwe wet is uiteraard ook iedereen die dit op 31 december 1984 was.

Drie overgangsbepalingen zijn van groot belang:

— niet Nederlandse kinderen van een Nederlandse vrouw die geboren zijn voor 1 januari 1985 kunnen door middel van een optieverklaring Nederlander worden, mits zij op 1 januari 1985 nog geen 21 jaar oud zijn en niet gehuwd zijn (geweest)

Zijn zij jonger dan 18 jaar dan kan de Nederlandse moeder ten behoeve van hen zo'n verklaring afleggen. Ouder dan 18 jaar kunnen zij het zelf doen. Voorwaarde is wel dat de moeder op 1 januari 1985 de Nederlandse nationaliteit bezit.

Deze overgangsbepaling geldt gedurende drie jaar; de optieverklaringen moeten dus voor 1 januari 1988 worden afgelegd.

— vrouwen die het Nederlandschap hebben verloren in verband met hun voor 1 januari 1985 gesloten huwelijk en wier huwelijk door echtscheiding of door de dood van de man is ontbonden kunnen via een optieverklaring het Nederlandschap terugkrijgen.

Zij moeten die verklaring dan wel afleggen binnen een jaar na de ontbinding van het huwelijk. Het herkrijgen van de Nederlandse nationaliteit werkt dan terug tot de datum van de ontbinding.

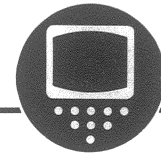
— het verlies door 10-jarig verblijf in het buitenland, d.w.z. in het land waar men geboren is en waarvan men de nationaliteit bezit, treedt voor hen die op 1 januari 1985 reeds meerderjarig waren niet eerder in dan 10 jaar na genoemde datum.

Voor nadere informatie gelieve U zich te wenden tot het

Consulaat-Generaal der Nederlanden
1 Dundas Street West, Suite 2106

Toronto, ON M5G 1Z3

Telephone: (416) 598-2520



Executive committee of the Canadian Reformed Teachers College Association held June 7, 1985.

After opening in prayer and Scripture reading the meeting deals with the treasurers report. The financial situation has become more precarious with each passing month and although enough funds were received during May to pay the bills for that month, we are still in a deficit situation. For the remainder of this fiscal year (i.e. to the end of August) an amount of \$29, 000.00 is yet needed in order to end the year without a negative balance.

The principal reports on various items including planning for the next year; e.g. staffing for part-time lecturing is nearly complete and part-time (evening) courses are planned in Music, New Testament, Introductory Computing and Old Testament.

The Graduation was held May 31 and again the Cornerstone Church was filled. With gratitude to the Lord we may look back on a beautiful evening where seven graduates were presented to the meeting.

We hope to meet again on July 5, 1985 D.V. The meeting was adjourned after prayer.

for the executive,
C.J. NOBELS

Classis Ontario South, June 12, 1985

1. *Opening.* Rev. M.H. VanLuik, on behalf of the convening Church at Watford, opens classis. He requests that Psalm 62, stanzas 1,3 be sung. He reads Ephesians 2:1-10 and leads in opening prayer. A hearty welcome is extended to all the brothers, the visitors, to student G. Wieske and a special welcome is also given to the brothers from the Church at Ancaster which is represented for the first time. It is mentioned that the Church at Smithville extended a call to the Rev. A. DeJager of the Church at Neerlandia, and it is also remembered that this will be the last time Rev. Cl. Stam attends classis as minister of Smithville, since he will be dismissed to the Church at Fergus.

2. *Credentials.* The brothers from Ancaster check the credentials. All the churches are duly represented. Revs. D.G.J. Agema and C. Stam are present in an advisory capacity. Four churches have instructions.

3. *Constitution of Classis.* Classis is constituted as follows: Chairman: Rev.

M.H. VanLuik; Clerk: Rev. J. Moesker; Assessor: Rev. W. Huizinga.

4. *Adoption of Agenda.* After a number of additions to the provisional agenda, the agenda is adopted.

5. *Preparatory Examination of Student Garrelt Wieske.* All the required documents are presented.

He delivers a sermon proposal on Micah 3:5-8. A discussion follows in closed session. Classis decides to continue the examination.

Rev. Cl. Stam will pass on remarks about the sermon proposal to br. Wieske.

Rev. J. VanRietschoten examines him in O.T. Exegesis on Exodus 17:1-7 and Numbers 20:1-13.

Rev. W. Huizinga examines him in N.T. Exegesis on Mark 13.

Rev. P. Kingma examines him in church doctrine from the Belgic Confession.

After each of these exams the other delegates receive the opportunity to ask questions.

In closed session classis discusses the examination. With joy classis announces to br. Wieske that it is satisfied with the exam. Classis declares him eligible for call within the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches. He receives permission to speak an edifying word in the midst of the churches for one year. Candidate G. Wieske declares verbally that he will bring only the Word of God as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity when he speaks an edifying word. Classis delivers a Declaration of Eligibility to him. Psalm 111, stanzas 1 and 5 are sung and the brothers receive the opportunity to congratulate br. and sr. G. Wieske.

6. *Question Period ad Article 44, Church Order.* The Churches at Chatham and Hamilton in closed session request and receive advice in disciplinary cases.

Hamilton asks advice about contact with the Covenant Orthodox Reformed Church of Canada in Sackville, Nova Scotia. They ask whether they should deliver all documents and information to Classis Ontario North or whether they

themselves should continue the contact. Classis decides to ask Hamilton to continue the contact and to report to the next classis about this contact, and to advise classis how to deal further with this contact.

7. Reports

A. Church Visits are reported for the Churches at Chatham, Hamilton, London, Smithville and Watford. These reports are gratefully accepted.

B. Classical Archives were checked by Watford. All the documents are present and well kept.

C. The Fund For Needy Students was audited. The funds were found to be in good order. The Church at Chatham which administers the fund reports that there are no requests for financial aid at this time. Chatham submits a financial report. As per June 1, 1985 there is \$3914.18 in the fund.

8. Instructions

A. Ancaster asks that Rev. W. Huizinga be appointed as counselor for this church. This is approved.

B. Grand Rapids has four instructions. Firstly, they ask whether a minister for the special task described at a previous classis should be classified as "Minister" or "Missionary" at Large in the USA. Classis recommends that he be called "Minister at Large" per Article 6, Church Order.

Secondly, they ask whether they can delegate a deacon to classis, seeing that their deacons belong to the consistory. The delegates are satisfied with the discussion on this matter.

Thirdly, Grand Rapids, as well as Smithville, proposes that the Guidelines for Church Visitation and the Classical Regulations be altered to conform to the revised Church Order. This is adopted. The Revs. J. Moesker, J. VanRietschoten, and M.H. VanLuik are appointed to fulfill this mandate for next classis.

Fourthly, they submit a communication from the Reformation Church in Blue Bell, PA in the USA and they propose that a committee be appointed for the purposes requested by this church. Classis gratefully receives the information and requests of the Church in Blue Bell concerning possible affiliation with the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches. Classis decides to appoint a committee which has the following mandate:

a. to investigate this request and the procedure of admission, taking up the necessary contact with the Church at Blue Bell,

OUR COVER

Banff-Jasper Highway
Lake Louise Junction, AB
Photo courtesy of
Tourism British Columbia

b. to make recommendations on this matter to the September Classis and to inform the churches three weeks ahead of time concerning this matter.

This is adopted. A committee of the Revs. C. Bosch, J. VanRietschoten, W. Huizinga and elder T.M.P. VanderVen is appointed.

C. Lincoln requests that Rev. W. Huizinga be appointed as their counselor. This is accepted.

D. Smithville announces the forthcoming separation of the congregation into two churches. The second church (of Attercliffe) will be constituted as per July 1, 1985. The address of the Canadian Reformed Church at Attercliffe will be, P.O. Box 30, Wellandport, ON L0R 2J0.

9. *Incoming Mail.* The Church at Smithville requests the release of Rev. Cl. Stam from his duties in Classis Ontario South. After reading the letter of Smithville in which it releases him of his ministry and call in Smithville as per July 8, 1985 at 12:01 a.m., the classis decides honourably to release Rev. Cl. Stam from Classis Ontario South. A certificate to this effect is approved.

10. *Appointments.* Rev. C. Bosch, on request, is appointed as counselor of the

Church at Attercliffe.

New examiners to replace Rev. C. Stam are appointed as follows: Sermon proposals: Rev. C. Bosch; Knowledge of Scriptures: Rev. M.H. VanLuik; Ethics: Rev. J. Moesker.

The Church at Ancaster is appointed to convene the next classis on Sept. 11, 1985 in London at 10 a.m. Proposed moderamen are: Chairman: Rev. C. Bosch; Clerk: Rev. M.H. VanLuik; Assessor: Rev. J. Moesker.

11. *Personal Questions Period* is offered and used. Rev. Cl. Stam speaks fond words of appreciation and of farewell. Rev. P. Kingma replies in kind to him on behalf of Classis.

12. *Acts* are read and adopted.

13. *Press Release* is read and approved.

14. *Censure* is not necessary.

15. *Closing.* The chairman asks that Psalm 121:2,4 be sung. The ladies are thanked for their excellent service. Rev. W. Huizinga closes the meeting with thanks and supplication.

For the classis,
REV. W. HUIZINGA,
assessor, h.t.

“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, June 14, 1985

The vice-chairman opens the meeting with the reading of Psalm 57 and prayer.

It appears “Anchor” will be able to rent the house on Mount Nemo Nursing Home property. The Canadian Reformed Society for a Home for the Aged Incorporated is to come back to us with a proposal regarding this.

A letter from a member about the Summer Camp fees is read. This member feels that the fees are too low for participants over 18 years old.

A discussion follows. The consensus is that the fees have been set for this year but with the start of a home for our handicapped we may have to look at the rate next year.

A note to be put in all the bulletins is drawn up and approved.

The press release is read and after some amendment accepted.

After a question period the meeting is closed in prayer.

E.J. DE JONG

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



Hello Busy Beavers,

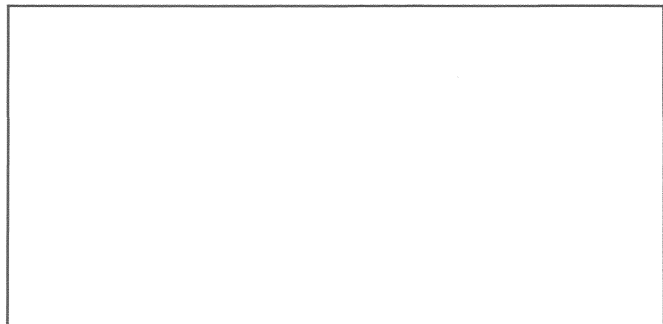
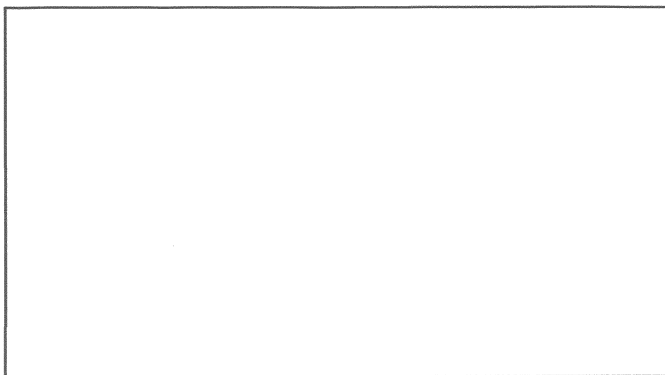
Here are two poems for you from Busy Beaver *Jennifer Stam*. I think you will like them!

SING A SONG OF PRAISE

O Lord, You have a way to care
for things both big and small.
Hear my song of praise, O Lord,
I clap my hands and sing!

SPLASHING IN THE WATER

Splashing in the water,
fun, fun, fun.
Why don't you come and join me?
sun, sun, sun
Put on your bathing suit
and come join the fun!



Get out your markers! Let's make our own pictures to go with the poems.
Use up all the space, all right? And don't forget . . . have fun!

Now it's time for birthday wishes.

All the Busy Beavers join in wishing a very happy birthday and many happy returns to all the Busy Beavers celebrating an August birthday. Here's hoping you have a really good time celebrating with your family and friends. And may our heavenly Father bless and keep you in the coming year.

August

Joanne Visscher	1	Kathryn Smid	17
Wayne Penninga	2	Tim Hofsink	21
Heidi Siebenga	5	Shane Pieterman	22
Janina Barendregt	6	Caroline Wubs	23
Christine Lodder	6	Lois Lof	26
Linda Nap	9	Karin VanHof	26
Kristi Van Popta	11	Wendy Vandergaag	28
Edward Stam	12	Audrey Vandersluis	30
Alice Van Woudenberg	13	Theo Wierenga	31



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Emily Vegter*. We are very happy indeed to have you join us from so far away! You'll enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities, I know. I see you like using markers, too, Emily. Will you make us a picture sometime? Bye for now. Write again soon.

And a big welcome to you, too, *Lucy 't Hart*. We are proud to gain not just one, but TWO new members from so far away! Sounds to me as if you had a good holiday, Lucy. And now you're happy to be in school again, while most Busy Beavers are having their holidays! Please write and tell me your birthday, Lucy.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Karin VanHof*. We hope you'll enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Will you write and tell us about your very favourite Ramona book, Karin? And are you going away this summer?

Welcome to the Club, *Jodi Brouwer*. We are happy to have you join us. What are you planning to do this summer, Jodi? Will you write and tell us? Bye for now.

How did you do on the walkathon *Stuart Schenkel*? Did your sister make it, too? I'll bet your Dad was happy for your help with that deck railing! I like your truck picture, Stuart, but next time watch all that exhaust polluting the air, all right? He could get a ticket for that!

Hello, *Heidi Siebenga*. I love your picture of your garden. It was really nice! Do you help to look after it, Heidi? And did you have to pull a lot of weeds? What will you do with the wheat, Heidi?

You've been very busy *Jennifer Siebenga*! Keep up the good work! And I see you mean to keep the other Busy Beavers busy, too! Are you enjoying your holidays, Jennifer?

I think your Dad must have been very happy with his surprises on Father's Day, *Teena Buzeman*. And congratulations to you and your brother on winning third place. Was it a field day, Teena? I see you're enjoying your holidays! Bye for now. Write again soon.

Thanks for your two poems, *Jennifer Stam*. The Busy Beavers will like them just as I did, I'm sure. What are your plans for the summer, Jennifer?

Quiz Time!

Can you unscramble the names of these Bible books?
by Busy Beaver *Teena Buzeman*

- | | |
|------------|--------------|
| 1. eloj | 6. ahmci |
| 2. hojn | 7. smao |
| 3. etmhtaw | 8. aghagi |
| 4. klue | 9. adbohαι |
| 5. aoshe | 10. kbhakauk |

DO YOU RECOGNIZE ME?

Can you match the person to the way he/she looked?

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. Elisha | ... a. lame on both feet |
| 2. Leah | ... b. a smooth man |
| 3. Zacchaeus | ... c. fair and beautiful |
| 4. Sarah | ... d. hairy man |
| 5. Absalom | ... e. ruddy and beautiful countenance |
| 6. Esther | ... f. tender eyed |
| 7. Saul | ... g. taller than any of the people |
| 8. Mephibosheth | ... h. bald head and carried walking stick |
| 9. Jacob | ... i. little of stature |
| 10. David | ... j. hair heavy on his head |
| 11. Rachel | ... k. beautiful and well favored |
| 12. Esau | ... l. fair woman to look upon |

NUMBER PUZZLE

1 0 9 8 1 5 6 1 7	You must find and circle:	
0 1 3 5 2 5 5 5 6	0401	1579
9 5 6 2 1 5 1 4 5	0918	1980
6 9 9 4 5 5 2 2 4	1096	1984
3 1 1 2 3 8 4 1 5	1098	2113
9 3 6 8 1 1 2 4 5	1111	2654
5 6 8 9 8 1 6 9 9	1188	3187
1 6 3 1 7 8 8 0 1	1215	3666
2 6 5 4 0 4 0 1 9	1314	3691
1 1 1 1 7 9 1 7 8	1407	3951
1 9 8 4 6 9 6 0 0	1490	4268
3 9 7 0 8 3 6 8 9	1542	4651
1 0 6 7 9 4 4 0 1	1561	5242
4 0 4 6 5 1 1 8 8	664	8118
	6835	6512
	7080	8764
	7654	7917
	5555	5591
	5689	5689
	8914	9900
	9934	

Answers: 10.-e 11.-k 12.-d
Do you recognize me? 1.-h 2.-f 3.-i 4.-l 5.-j 6.-c 7.-g 8.-a 9.-b
Books of the Bible: 1. Joel 2. John 3. Matthew 4. Luke 5. Hosea 6. Micah 7. Amos 8. Haggai 9. Obadiah 10. Habakkuk.

Bye for now, Busy Beavers.
I hope you're enjoying a safe and happy holiday.
Be sure to write and tell us about your vacation!

Love,
Aunt Betty

You know my address!
Aunt Betty, Box 54
Fergus, ON N1M 2W7

Food Facts

Gg - grape

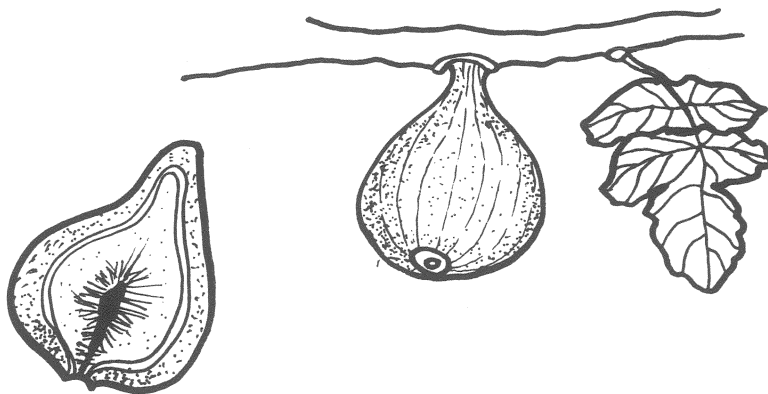
(Genesis 40:10)



Special interest: Grape growing is the largest fruit industry in the world.
Food produced: jams and jellies. Drinks produced: wines and juices.

Ff - fig

(Genesis 3:6, 7)



Special interest: The fruit is hollow, and the flower grows inside it.
Figs can be eaten dried, some can be canned, while some are eaten fresh.