

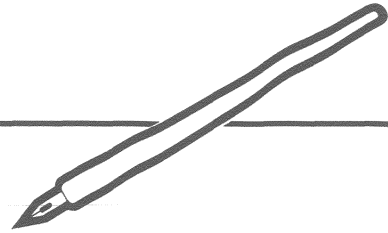
A black and white photograph of a mountain valley. In the foreground, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees. A river flows through the middle ground, curving around a small town or village. The town has several buildings, including what appears to be a church with a steeple. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains with some snow or light-colored rock patches. The sky is bright with a few wispy clouds.

Clarion

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What is going on today?

The past

At the time that the great Reformation took place, there was also a cultural movement going on which is called humanism. This humanism was built, basically, on the foundation of the classical period in which Greek and Roman culture flourished. Paintings and sculpture of the late Middle Ages show a close relationship to the Greek and Roman fine arts. There is another field in which this relationship reveals itself. It is that of philosophy. Both in the Greek-Roman culture and in humanism man is glorified with his physical qualities and his mental abilities, his ability to think, to reason. With his reason man is able to discover truth.

This humanism helped to pave the way for the great Reformation. At the same time, this humanism also greatly damaged the Reformation. The Arminian attack on the Scriptural, Reformed faith had its root in humanism, in the goodness of man and the capabilities of his reason.

Humanism led to the philosophical and cultural movement of the Enlightenment. While humanism maintained faith in God and still regarded the Scriptures as God's Word to man, the Enlightenment went a step further, becoming much more critical with respect to God's Word, assuming that only those things can be true which human reason can agree with. What human reason cannot explain was declared to be myth. Belief in God was reduced to a kind of deism, which sees God as a watchmaker. In the beginning God made heaven and earth; after that God let them go on their own.

The philosophy of the Enlightenment (a most misleading word, in the light of the Scriptures) pushed God to the background. The next phase in the philosophical development in our Western world built its thinking on the assumption that there is no God. Via Darwin (evolution), Karl Marx (socialism), Sigmund Freud (psychiatry), and many others, our Western world sank more and more into the quicksand of that secularism which has done away with God completely. Everything is explained from an evolutionistic, and therefore also materialistic, point of view. There is only matter. Whatever exists is the result of so many billion years of evolution; and the mind, the soul, is nothing but the electrical activity of brain cells.

For someone who knows and believes what the Word of God says, also in the first chapters of Genesis, this philosophical development is not a strange one. It is the consequence of man's fall in sin. Time and again mankind refused to honour God, his Maker, and did not want to acknowledge and serve Him. Always when man sets his first steps on the road of proud refusal to submit with humble obedience to God's revelation, and when he then goes on along that road in a hardening of his heart, he ends in a total rejection of God. Any refusal of humble submission shows the sin of paradise: man wants to

be his own god. He wants to do his own thing and go his own way. In such a situation man has no place for God. For the true God, that is.

The consequences in the present

Let us first for a moment focus our attention on the consequences of throwing God out of his life (as if he really could) for man himself. What does man without God do? He becomes uncertain. He does not know where he comes from, and he does not know where he is going. His life has no deeper, true meaning anymore. Money, possessions, pleasure and fun, materialism — it does not satisfy in the end, neither does it give true certainty. So, man becomes superstitious and seeks his certainty in astrology, in the stars, for instance. Man becomes an idol worshipper. He fabricates his own gods. And in the end it all comes down to that great idol, man himself. He lives for himself. However, man without God is and remains a lost creature, wandering about in his search for certainty, for meaning and purpose in his life.

There is in our modern world the realization that, in the end, a materialistic outlook on life, thus a life without a god, without spirituality or spiritual experience, is a life in a void, in emptiness. That emptiness must be filled. Our modern Western world, having first created its own spiritual void, is now increasingly throwing itself in a searching for spiritual fulfilment.

However, it does not seek the spiritual fulfilment in and through Jesus Christ. No, it finds the new spirituality more and more in eastern religiosity. This eastern religiosity is pantheistic. Everything (*pan*) is god (*theos*). Perhaps it is better to say: everything is divine (*theios*). Some time ago I wrote in an editorial about a Grade one teacher in California who taught her students in school that they are perfect, because they are god; they have god in themselves; they are part of god. As far as man is god, he is immortal, we hear. Dying is not dying anymore. Dying means reincarnation. You will come back on earth in a newly born body of someone else. The one day you can die as an old man or as a young girl, the next day already you can reappear on earth again as a new-born baby. There are many people who claim that they remember things from a previous life.

This for most of us is quite new, but in fact very old, false religiosity is part of the so-called New Age movement. It has been said that this new religion, in one way or another, is present in more than 10,000 organizations in North America. We find it in a new optimism; in books about a glorious future, among other things through advanced technology, through the computer. It comes to us in the promotion of (transcendental) meditation, of yoga, of weekend retreats for people who have

a hard time coping with the tensions of modern life, the tensions of a high position in either business or government. We are invited to take part in weekend retreats in which we are taught to relax through meditation and other mental and spiritual exercises. We find it in occultism and satanism. It is brought into cars and homes, in the city and at the beach, through hard rock and other forms of modern music. It works within organizations that promote health food in connection with yoga. It is at work in so-called humane organizations that oppose cruelty to animals; and in societies for the preservation of the environment. People want to protect life in plants and animals, because all is god and god is in all. There is health in herbs and plants, in a well-balanced diet, not so much because the Creator gave good gifts to man, but because everything is god, is part of god; because the whole cosmos is one, is a unity.

There are also the many eastern and western gurus who promise to lead you to oneness with god through meditation and other exercises. They promise that when you follow their instructions and teachings you will have spiritual experience. This is cosmic experience; it is the experience of your oneness with god, with the All, with the One. The use of drugs can bring the same spiritual or religious experience. And those who have had it, will tell you all about the greatness of their spiritual experience of oneness with the cosmos, with the universe, with god. They will tell you that it makes you feel that you belong to someone, to the One; that you are not alone; that it gives meaning to your life; it fills your life with a new spirituality, with god. It provides you with joy and happiness.

The message is that this being part of the One, of the cosmic reality, of god, is true for every one. The only thing necessary is, that we must become conscious of this great reality. This consciousness can become ours through being taught and through experiencing it. And in article and book many people of the New Age, some of whom were involved in revolutionary, anarchistic youth movements in the sixties, claim that they have had those wonderful spiritual experiences of belonging to the One. They tell that they have felt it. Their own experience tells them that it is real and true. They tell that it has changed their life; that it brought a total conversion; and that the experience of the cosmic spirituality fills them with a new life.

No change in evil principle

We saw that the development of humanism came to a philosophy in which man has no place anymore for God, because he wants to be his own god. He wants to be "free." (He does not realize that this "freedom" is nothing but slavery of unbelief and sin, and of the devil.) But we can ask: What has changed now? What is the difference between the philosophy of the old humanistic materialism and this New Age spiritual movement?

In principle there is no difference. Certainly, these New Age believers are convinced that they have found new spirituality. They have spiritual experiences. They feel, they experience their "god," the One, the great cosmic spiritual reality. They feel, they experience, that they are part of this all. However, all these people who claim that they have finally found "it," are still in the same boat of being their own gods. They say that the new cosmic consciousness makes them aware that they are god, and that, as god, they can create their own reality, that means, their own life. They, as god, determine their own life. Do you, who read these lines, see that this means that these people still can do their own thing? Do you see that here no confession of sin is necessary; and that there is no call to repentance?

Philosophic materialism said: there is no god. This new eastern, pantheistic spiritualism proclaims man to be part

of god; that is: he is god. In materialism man is declared autonomous and free, his own boss, so that he has the right to determine himself what is right for him and what is wrong. This new spiritualism that declares man one with the cosmic all, hardens him even more in his rebellion against the true living God. He is even more autonomous. The ethics of Hinduism, and we find it back in this New Age thinking, is that there are no absolutes. There is no absolute, personal God, the Maker of heaven and earth, no absolute Giver of a truth and of laws that are absolutely true for all. No, this movement says: as gods you can and should create your own realities; you can and should make your own life. Since that is the right of every one; there cannot be an absolute truth or an absolute

"Do we, as churches, and as church members function in such a way that in our life, in our words and actions, the surrounding world is confronted with the living God and with His Christ?"

law that is the same for everyone. What is true for you, does not have to be true for me. And what is true for me today is not necessarily still true tomorrow. Without absolute truth there is no absolute right and wrong. You determine yourself what is right for you and what is wrong for you.

So, our conclusion is that those who follow this New Age thinking have filled the modern spiritual void of materialism with a new spiritual experience in which man can remain his own god; yes, in which he is said to be made conscious of his own "divine" being. Man does not sin. He cannot, because he is his own god. As mentioned above, this false philosophy is conquering our Western world. It is a hardening in unbelief. It is a hardening in the rebellion against the only true God and Jesus Christ, whom He has set as the only legal King. Christ is the only Saviour.

We can say that through this added spiritual dimension the satanical character and strength of this new humanism has drastically increased. This New Age movement is more fiercely opposed to the Christian faith than the old materialism, which already so strongly opposed everything that has to do with God and Christ. That is evident, e.g., from the psychology of Freud, the socialism and communism of Marx, and the evolutionism of Darwin. But this New Age movement is very much behind the fierce opposition against the Christian faith in our days. Why is a Christian prayer and the reading of the Bible so strongly opposed in many a public school, while all kinds of new ideas in which this new consciousness is promoted are freely brought into the classroom of any institution of public education, from elementary school to university?

Does God give the church a place and task in this world?

We focussed our attention on man's own reaction to the spiritual void which he created by rejecting the true God and His Word. Let us also pay attention to God's reaction. The Apostle Paul, for instance, gives us insight on this point in Romans 1:18-32. There is first of all God's anger. In His anger He surrenders man to his own rebellious philosophies. What the result is, we can read in the passage referred to. Paul says that people in his days "were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to their parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless." Paul has also said that the result was that those despisers of God "exchanged natural relations for unnatural."

But there was not only God's wrath in Paul's world. There was also God's love in Jesus Christ. It was in that very world that God sent the preaching of the gospel through the apostles, through Paul, through the church. Believers witnessed. They confessed their faith in Christ Jesus as the only true Redeemer. They confessed that there is only one true God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who are One. They confessed that this true, very personal God is the Maker of heaven and earth. He is not part of it. He stands above it. Man is not part of God. He is made to believe, to obey and to serve this God as His child through grace.

In the midst of the wicked first world before the flood, God placed Enoch and Noah. Through their faith, their confession, their speaking, they confronted their world with the true God and called the people to conversion, even when announcing judgment.

When Abraham freed Lot, and met the king of Sodom and his people, Abraham's giving of tithes to Melchizedek, his being blessed by this priest-king of the Most High God, his refusal to receive anything of the spoil of Sodom, although it had all become his own through his victory, according to common war rights in those days, that was all a testimony of the living God to the king of Sodom. Before God was going to destroy Sodom because of its evil, God placed Abraham and his words and actions on Sodom's way. In that way God confronted Sodom with Himself; He pointed at its sin, calling it to repentance. Repentance did not come. But that is immaterial. There was a last warning, a last call before judgment that came to Sodom through Abraham. That is the significant point.

Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years. That was because of its sin of unbelief. At the same time, the Canaanites received those forty years as a last call unto repentance. Judgment was decided upon already. They had made the measure of their sins full. Israel would be instrument in the hand of the LORD to execute that judgment. Would there still be people who would repent and turn to the living God? Rehab did. And so did the people of Gibeon. But that was all. The rest did not repent. Nevertheless, through Israel, or rather, through the mighty deeds of the LORD for Israel, the Canaanites were confronted with Him, the true, living God, before their judgment.

Christ died at the cross, crucified by an unbelieving covenant people. Before He died, He spoke of God's judgment that would come upon Jerusalem. Yet, God gave Jerusalem another forty years during which "the temple" was confronted with "the church." And in the church the temple was confronted with the Head of the church, with Christ Jesus and with His Father. Through the church they heard the call to faith and repentance.

We see from all these periods in the history of salvation and judgment, that God uses the church to confront the world with Himself, with His grace for those who believe and in faith

repent and turn from their sins, but also with His wrath and judgment upon those who harden in unbelief. We can continue that same line through the letters of Paul, and see it again in Revelation. Chapter 11 speaks of the two witnesses, announcing God's plagues. Those witnesses are killed in the end. Repentance does not come. But that is not the point. The point is that witness is given. In these witnesses, of the true and faithful servants of God and in their testimony, the world is confronted with the living God.

Do we fulfil our task?

Revelation is prophecy. So we see here also our task in the world in which we live today. That world can still be materialistic and god-less, living in a spiritual void and craving for a new spiritual fulfilment. That world can be looking at the wrong address and in the wrong place for that spiritual fulfilment because of its maintained refusal to bow the neck under the saving yoke of Christ. Whatever the case, the task of the church has remained the same. It is our task, yours and mine, to stand in this world of ours with the testimony of Christ Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

In the church, through the faithful fulfilment of the office of believers, our triune God wants to confront our materialistic and false-spiritualistic world with Himself. Are we faithful in the fulfilment of this calling? Are we faithful servants of God and of His Christ in our modern, rebellious and lost North-American world? Do we, as churches, and as church members function in such a way that in our life, in our words and actions, the surrounding world is confronted with the living God and with His Christ?

I have written in a rather critical way about the new Christian Heritage Party. I thought, and still think, that a critical eye is needed because of the broad, and thus automatically vague, basis. Does this critical approach now mean, that I am not sympathetic towards it? Does it mean that I have shoved the whole endeavor aside as worthless? No, dear reader. For I see in this party, in those who work so hard for it, a strong effort to be faithful servants of Christ Jesus in our modern materialistic and false-spiritualistic Canadian world. And that has my support.

Brother VanWoudenberg does give his Christian testimony on radio and television. In this testimony he does confront our Canadian society with the living God and His Christ. The new Christian Heritage Party is an effort to come to a constant or permanent (as long as possible) Christian testimony at the heart of our Canadian life, in our parliament. And it could be (but now I am speculating) that the remarks of Mr. Mulroney about the drug problem, pornography, and the break-down of the family in our modern society, are, at least partly, a reaction to the establishment of this new Christian party, since most of the votes for this new party (mine anyway) will come from the conservative Canadians.

Yes, I want to see the positive side as well. I want to see what is behind it. This Christian party therefore has my sympathy. But, just because the trumpet, when it blows, must give a pure sound, coming from, and being in accordance with, the Word of the living Christ, therefore I wrote my sympathetic-critical remarks, including the present ones. And I conclude with the prayer that our triune God may make faithful us, Reformed Canadian citizens, and all those who sincerely love Him and seek to live by His Word in a truly loyal Christian service, not only in our political and societal callings, but also, and certainly not less urgently, with respect to our being church and our church membership. May He make us useful for the coming of His kingdom and actively faithful in the fulfilment of our calling in that kingdom. This includes the Christian Heritage Party.

J. GEERTSEMA

A farewell and a welcome

The farewell

Our Co-editor, the Rev. W. Pouwelse, has left us. He has gone back to the Netherlands to take up his new task in "De Wijngaard," giving pastoral care to both patients and workers. "De Wijngaard" is an institution where physically and mentally handicapped brothers and sisters, of whom the majority is of an older age, receive nursing support. For our churches, and especially for our magazine, we find this move not so nice. This, I think, is understandable.

The Rev. Pouwelse has served our churches well, especially the congregations at Burlington-West and Langley. He did this for six and a half years. During those years he and his wife have given themselves to our churches, even though their personal circumstances were not always easy. Particularly the time in Langley was difficult through constant physical troubles, suffering, and the death of sr. Pouwelse.

In spite of all these hardships the pastoral work continued, not only in the congregation, but also in *Clarion*. Every issue again had an article from the hand, or must I say, from the computer, of our brother. There was even a series about the computer. However, most of the articles dealt with pastoral matters. Part of these articles were revised and published as a booklet. Two more volumes are to follow. It shows that br. Pouwelse has worked hard in our midst with the talents which he received from his Maker and Redeemer.

For all this work I like to express our appreciation and gratitude. Rev. Pouwelse, you have been a helper and leader for many of us. We thank you for your cooperation, your hard work, your guidance and support. It was good to have you in our midst. We shall miss you. And we wish you God's blessing in your new task in the old country. May He continue to make you a blessing for others. May He also continue to give you strength as your Father in heaven who is always beside you.

Although Rev. Pouwelse leaves the editorial staff of *Clarion*, he has promised that he will continue to write for us, anyway for the time being, on an irregular basis. We persuaded him to give us this




Rev. W. Pouwelse

promise, using the argument that his articles are so very much appreciated. We also realize that we cannot ask for more. Once again: thank you br. Pouwelse, and may our God be with you.

The welcome

Since your other editor has his hands full with his new task, and even though there are the faithful contributions of the other members of the editorial staff, others were approached to join and they expressed their willingness. These others are Dr. K. Deddens and Dr. C. Van Dam, both professor at our Theological College. We are sure that our magazine will benefit from this addition, and, with thankfulness and appreciation, we welcome these brothers.

J. GEERTSEMA



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May children partake of the Lord's Supper?⁴

History

In the previous articles we saw the connection but also the distinction between the sacraments of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper, also the connection (and distinction) between the sacraments in the Old and the New Dispensations, and after that we paid attention to I Cor. 11:26-29 in this respect.

In this final article I would like to show something from history, especially from Calvin and I will end with some conclusions. Defending the admittance of children, one often reasons: during many ages children were allowed to partake of the Lord's Supper, but then, suddenly, it stopped. What are we to say about that?

Indeed, infants and small children participated in the Lord's Supper, especially in the Eastern church, but also in the Western church, and especially with the growth of a superstitious view of the sacrament, people feared to spill so much as a single drop of the transubstantiated blood of Christ.

But we have to bear in mind two things.

In the first place: not all the texts to which one appeals show indeed that very young children partook of the Lord's Supper. For instance in the *Constitutiones Apostolicae* (a writing from the end of the fourth century) it is said after the dismissal of the non-baptized: "Mothers, take your little children with you." But it is absolutely not sure that these little children (sometimes even babies) did indeed receive the elements of the Lord's Supper. I am of the opinion that here is only said that the mothers were not to leave the children alone in the back of the church when they came forward to receive for themselves the bread and wine.

There is also an indication that in the early church children were instructed by their parents and were led to the minister in order to show their faith. Both lines are mentioned by Calvin.

In his *Institutes* he writes first that some people say (I give here the whole quotation of Inst. IV, 16, 30).

... that there is not greater reason for

admitting infants to baptism than to the Lord's Supper, to which, however, they are never admitted: as if Scripture did not in every way draw a wide distinction between them. In the early Church, indeed, the Lord's Supper was frequently given to infants, as appears from Cyprian and Augustine (August, ad Bonif. Lib. i.); but the practice justly became obsolete. For if we attend to the peculiar nature of baptism, it is a kind of entrance, and as it were initiation into the Church, by which we are ranked among the people of God, a sign of our spiritual regeneration, by which we are again born to be children of God; whereas, on the contrary, the Supper is intended for those of riper years, who, having passed the tender period of infancy, are fit to bear solid food. This distinction is very clearly pointed out in Scripture. For there, as far as regards baptism, the Lord makes no selection of age, whereas he does not admit all to partake of the Supper, but confines it to those who are fit to discern the body and blood of the Lord, to examine their own conscience, to show forth the Lord's death, and understand its power. Can we wish anything clearer than what the apostle says, when he thus exhorts, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup?" (I Cor. xi. 28.) Examination, therefore, must precede, and this it were vain to expect from infants. Again, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." If they cannot partake worthily without being able duly to discern the sanctity of the Lord's body, why should we stretch out poison to our young children instead of vivifying food? Then what is our Lord's injunction? "Do this in remembrance of me." And what the inference which the apostle draws from this? "As often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." How, pray, can we require infants to commemorate any event

of which they have no understanding; how require them "to show forth the Lord's death," of the nature and benefit of which they have no idea? Nothing of the kind is prescribed by baptism. Wherefore, there is the greatest difference between the two signs.

So far the quotation of Calvin's *Institutes*. Calvin never denied that there is a strong connection between Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but he stressed also very much that there is a strong connection between Baptism and Profession of Faith.

Delayed response

In this respect Calvin often uses the expression "delayed response."

At the time of our baptism the LORD God, by means of His servant, sealed His promise to us. At the time we were not yet able to see or hear this, for we were not yet conscious of things. But nevertheless, God *did* speak to us at that time. Before we could utter one word the LORD had already spoken to us. And He kept on speaking to us, He kept impressing that baptism on our hearts. At one time the LORD said: "You are Mine, my child!" He told us so in baptism. And He kept calling us like that, as we grew up and matured. That is the reason why there is such a close connection between baptism and confession. At our baptism we were unable to answer for ourselves. Our parents had to do that for us. Otherwise we would have to respond to God's address then already.

Saying that confession is really a delayed response to baptism is not claiming too much. Calvin taught this already in one of his early writings, not long after the first edition of his *Institutes*. The reformer was only twenty-seven years old at that time. He writes: "Covenant children must be instructed so that they may give a testimony of their faith in the end, which they were unable to do when they were baptized."

In his *Institutes* he relates that in the early church it was also customary for the children of Christians, after they were

grown up, to be brought before the minister "in order that they might fulfill the duty required of adults; presenting themselves for baptism." For, according to Calvin, when they were baptized as small children, they could not yet make their profession.

The reformer put it like this: a small child cannot speak yet, and has not yet come to his/her senses. Therefore, for covenant children, making profession of faith is the discharge of an obligation, required of them at their baptism, but temporarily delayed.

Calvin wrote: Only one valid reason can be given to the Lord as to why covenant children would not yet be able to make confession of faith. And that one reason is that the children of the covenant lack sufficient knowledge as yet to partake in the Lord's Supper. You must be able to examine yourself, says Paul to the Corinthians, before being able to celebrate the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:28). This requires knowledge, also self-knowledge which toddlers and very young children do not have yet.

According to Calvin, there is no other possible reason that can stand up before the LORD. Certainly not this one: "I am not quite ready, I am not sure that I really believe in Christ." God has sealed His promise in baptism. Then what right does anyone have to doubt? Who may disregard these promises? Then Calvin addresses the young people and says: "You should have made profession of your faith at the hour of your baptism. Then already the LORD gave you this obligation. Only because of your weakness has this confession been postponed!"

Baptism may not be postponed, for the LORD has a claim on the child that is born into His covenant. Baptism should be administered as soon as feasible to the children of believers. "The consistory should ensure that the covenant of God is sealed by baptism to the children of believers as soon as feasible" (Article 17 of the Church Order of the Canadian Reformed Churches). We should not keep the LORD waiting! But this is also the way it is with confession. That too should take place as soon as possible for the children of the covenant. Calvin then refers to a custom in the old church, and says: this took place at the end of childhood, or at the beginning of adolescence. He writes somewhere that to him it seems best if "a child at the age of ten years would present himself to the congregation to make profession of faith." In the Dutch refugee Church of London, the cradle of the church of the reformation in the Netherlands, the age was set at fourteen — still very young by our standard. We should keep in mind that instruction in the doctrine of the church was started at an earlier age than now.

But one thing is certain: from the hour of baptism the demand for confessions calls to be fulfilled. Therefore any unnecessary delay is wrong.

Not a part of us

Once we have discovered the close connection between baptism and confession, we are more and more brought to worship God's good pleasure. It is not just "normal" that we are born covenant children. It is not just a matter of course that the LORD gave us parents who presented us for baptism. Behind this is God's gracious election, His good pleasure. It is written about the Saviour Himself that His Father in heaven spoke at His baptism:

"... stress to our children that it is a great privilege to be born as a child of God's covenant, to be baptized, and also to be instructed in the doctrine of the church, in order to be and to remain a living member of Christ's Church!"

"This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," (Matthew 3:17). The LORD addressed us likewise in baptism. He has called us by name and joined us to His Name. In doing so God has shown His good pleasure in our lives. His good pleasure goes out to us; His goodwill. The LORD honours Himself in this way. And what an honour this is for us!

This too is what we are about to discover when we make profession of faith. Then we look back to our baptism and worship God's good pleasure in our life. So this confession is not a part of us, a kind of diploma we present ourselves with. No, it is a certificate of God's grace in our lives. This is included in that address "Beloved in our Lord Jesus Christ."

When Peter made his good confession before the Lord: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" he was not complimented for having done something good. No, rather, Christ said: "Peter, this did not come from yourself." He was blessed, but not because of his own merit. The reaction of the Saviour was: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven," (Matthew 16:17). Others hadn't talked Peter into this. It was not his own idea either. The Father revealed this to him. It is God's good pleasure in his life. The LORD made him able to make this confession. It is indeed Peter who expresses himself, and he also speaks

from the heart. But he expresses what God Himself has put into that heart: the worship of God's good pleasure.

Some conclusions

There is much more to say about this topic, but I do not wish to make this series of articles too long.

I have two main conclusions.

In the first place: children may not partake of the Lord's Supper, but according to the promise of their parents at the baptismal font, they have to be instructed in the doctrine of the church and they have to make profession of faith, in order to be able to proclaim Christ's death, to examine themselves and to discern the body.

In the second place: this profession of faith is actually a delayed response to their baptism and it must be given as soon as possible; that means: when a child has grown up and when he or she is able to make important decisions in life. That time will vary for the one matures sooner than the other. If a child of the covenant is instructed for several years, and he or she wants to make profession of faith at the age of — let us say — sixteen or seventeen, there is nothing against it. But it is wrong to postpone profession of faith one year after another. Under the influence of pietism, young people were taught that they had to tell their "story of conversion," and that this was not possible when they were young. Thus many young people waited then until they were twenty-five or even thirty years old, and also many of them never dared to make profession of faith, because they could not say that they were really born again.

Let us stress to our children that it is a great privilege to be born as a child of God's covenant, to be baptized, and also to be instructed in the doctrine of the church, in order to be and to remain a living member of Christ's Church! So that they seek to pass through the door of the public profession of their faith in order to proclaim Christ's death and resurrection at His table as part of His congregation.

K. DEDDENS

No lasting city

In choosing these words as title for my farewell address I do not speak of mysterious language which you have never heard before. The words are well-known and frequently used. When one is transferred or accepts an appointment elsewhere and the family moves from one city or country to another, the comment may be: here we have no lasting city. Many of us remember the day of our emigration. When asked why we left all that which was good and familiar in our native land, the answer might have been and may be: what difference does it make; here we have no lasting city. In other words, we cannot hold onto what we have here or elsewhere for that matter; sooner or later it will slip out of our hands or be taken away from us.

Retirement is another occasion which lends itself almost naturally to the use of what, in course of time has become a kind of saying, a cliché, a standard expression. Here we have no lasting city, not only when it comes to the place where we live, but no less when it involves the work which we do. The end of active service may be quite long in coming, as it is in my case, but it does come, as it has today for me as well. And in spite of all the stories one hears how wonderful retirement is, and how busy one is, busier than one ever was during one's working days, in spite as well of the gladness that the pressure is gone, that things can be taken easier, and the hope that still some work may be done, the fact of the matter is that active service is over and it does not come back. *No lasting city indeed!* Now the instances which I mentioned may still be considered interim evidences of the transitoriness, the impermanence of everything. For despite changes, even big ones, life still continues. That too, however, comes to an end. Eventually, but at the same time definitely so, for here we have no lasting city. That's what it says and what it means as well.

And, yet, something must be wrong. "For whatever was written in former days," according to Paul's words in Roman 15:4, "was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope." The trouble with the words of Hebrews 13:14 is not in what they say, but in the way they are quoted as a saying which is



standing all by itself. One of the basic rules for sound interpretation is that words, phrases, sentences or complete verses are not read *without* consideration of any context, or *out* of context but that they are read *in* the context wherein they were written or spoken. As far as the words quoted from Hebrews 13 are concerned, there is a context indeed, and a clear one. Verse 14 starts with the word "for." That is a conjunction, a word which links up what follows with that which precedes, and gives a reason for or an explanation of it. Therefore, to arrive at the contextual meaning of the words concerned, it is necessary to pay some attention to the passage wherein they have their place and to the interpretation they have received.

This passage, which starts a couple of verses earlier in verse 9, contains a *warning* and an *exhortation*. The warning is given against "diverse and strange teachings." These teachings are not spelled out, but they have apparently to do with the consumption of particular kinds of food, eaten to promote one's spiritual well-being. Over against this idea that food was a means of salvation, the author writes, "It is well that the heart be strengthened by grace, not by foods, which have not benefited their adherents." In other words, food is no substitute for grace.

This heart strengthening grace shows up in the kind of altar or sacrifice we, new covenant people, have. It is like the sacrifice on the day of atonement from which no eating was allowed, not even to the priests. The bodies of the animals, whose blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat and in front of the ark in the holy of holies, were burned outside the camp made by Israel at the places where it stayed on its desert journey. Laden with the sins of priesthood and people, these sacrificed bodies had to be burned outside the camp because, of course, they had become, as it were, the embodiments of sin and of God's curse over it and, therefore, had to be destroyed in a profane place (v. 11). In like manner the Lord Jesus became sin and curse personified when, cast out by leaders and nation, He "suffered outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through His own blood," (v. 12). The evil which they meant against Jesus, God meant it for good, namely, to keep a people alive through Christ's blood, (cf. Genesis 50:20). The consequence is drawn in the exhortation, "Therefore let us go forth to Him outside the camp, and bear the abuse He endured (v. 13). For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come," (v. 14). You will notice the close connection between the

one thing and the other. "If any man would come after me," the Lord Jesus told His disciples, "let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me," (Matthew 16:24). And Paul writes, "But we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles," (I Corinthians 1:23). So choosing for Christ implies exposition to this reproach. As Jesus said to His disciples, "In the world you have tribulation," (John 16:33). The church which went forth to Christ experienced it over and over. But should that keep her back from following Christ? Not at all, "For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come." This contextual reading of the well-known words concerning the non-lasting city already casts a different light on them. But before we draw any conclusions, let us have a quick look at the most common interpretations of the verses which deal with the going forth out of the camp to Jesus and the city which does not last.

It comes down to it that one group of commentators understands the exodus from the camp to join Jesus as a call to break away from the world.¹ According to this view, the city which does not last refers to this world wherein we have our living place. J. Moffatt, a prominent interpreter once defined this concept with one word "unworldliness,"² i.e., the attitude of one living and working in the world without being really affected by it, because the attention of heart and soul is focussed on the world above. A dualistic worldview is behind this interpretation. The Greek philosopher Plato sowed the seed for it, the Alexandrian Jew Philo and the Alexandrian Christian Origen applied it to the Bible by means of the spiritualizing allegorical exegesis.³ To give an example, the calling of Abraham out of Ur and Haran and his journey to and wandering in the promised land becomes the pilgrimage of the earth bound soul to the heavenly fatherland. This Alexandrian world view and exegesis was adopted by pastors and teachers of the early and later Christian church up to this very day. The dualism from which this view proceeds is not the Scriptural one of sin and grace but of nature and grace, of matter and spirit, of body and soul, of earth and heaven. The devastating results showed up in a concentration on the inward and upward with a complete neglect of the downward:⁴ the cultural mandate to till and subdue the earth in the discharge of the threefold office of anointed prophets, priests and kings.

Another group of commentators⁵ understands the exodus from the camp to join Jesus as a call to break away from *Judaism*. The non-lasting city is thought to be the city of Jerusalem in the first century A.D., over which the dark clouds of impending judgment were hanging but which was not yet destroyed. This exegesis

PSALM 62

Strasbourg, Geneva, 1542/Lyons, 1548

1. In God a-lone my soul finds rest,
For in His faith-ful-ness I trust;
From Him, my God, comes my sal-va-tion.
He on-ly is my rock, my stay,
My for-tress and my help for aye,
And none shall move my place and sta-tion.

implies that the letter was written before A.D. 70 and that the addressees were Jewish Christians who were in danger of falling back into Judaism, either because they had not made a clean break with it or in order to escape the constant persecutions under the wings of a tolerated religion whereby protection was guaranteed. This whole theory is based on presuppositions for which no clear evidence from the letter itself can be advanced. The danger for the Hebrews was not to fall back into Judaism but as the admonition, basic for the whole letter, reads in 3:12, "Take care, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God." Moreover, as Prof. F.W. Grosheide in his commentary observes, "... the split from Judaism was made quite some time before the letter was written."⁶

This whole exegesis could therefore be dismissed if it had not been modified by a number of Reformed theologians among whom particularly the names of Dr. C. van der Waal and of Rev. J. Francke, who extensively wrote on the subject, may be mentioned.⁷ The point for them is not the falling back into but the discarding of Judaism. Christ's suffering outside the gate in order to sanctify the people through His own blood brought the old covenant with its ceremonies and symbols to a close, and introduced the new covenant wherein God is worshipped in spirit and truth (Hebrew 13:12, 8:11, and John 4:23). That is the reason why we have to go forth

to Him outside the camp, and why we have therefore no lasting city here. Even if Jerusalem was not destroyed it would have made no difference. For, Jerusalem has lost its special place as holy city, the city of the temple, the city of God. "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" (I Corinthians 3:16).

It is of course, true that Jerusalem has lost its special place in the history of salvation. The question, however is whether that is what Hebrews 13:14 says.

I do not think so!

As it is impossible to go into detailed discussions, let me just give my main objections against van der Waal's and Francke's exegesis. The *first* point is that the obvious meaning of a text may not always be the right one, but anyway recommends itself as the right one. The obvious meaning of Hebrews 13:14 is not that the adverb of place "here" refers to the city of Jerusalem and that the words "we have no lasting city" speak of the obsolescence of Jerusalem as the city of God. The obvious meaning is the one which I spelled out at the beginning of my address, namely, that of transitoriness, of impermanence, of change. The *second* point is based on another ground rule for exegesis, namely, that wherever possible we should interpret Scripture with the aid of Scripture. That is certainly possible with respect to Hebrews 13:14. The verse reminds us of the instability of the life of the patriarchs in the promised land, as portrayed in He-

brews 11. Though heir of all, Abraham was living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, (v. 9). He looked forward to the city which has foundations, (v. 10). All the patriarchs acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles, or aliens on the earth, making it clear that they were seeking a homeland, (vv. 13, 14). Far from returning to the land from which they had come they desired a better country, that is, a heavenly one, (v. 16).

Compare with that Hebrews 13:14, "For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come." Does this verse not summarize for the church of the Hebrews and for the church of today what was testified of the patriarchs in chapter 13? The instability wherein they lived finds its reflection in the form of the non-lasting city we have. But, as in Hebrews 11, the perspective is also opened in Hebrews 13 upon the city which is to come. The perspective, I say, for that is the meaning of that "seeking," of which is spoken in verse 13. It is not a search for a city which cannot be found because it does not exist. It is the heading for the city which does exist, which just has to be reached in order to enter it. Think once more of those patriarchs who in their life time did not receive what was promised them, but who nonetheless saw it and greeted it from afar, (11:13). In faith they understood that God's promise is as good as the thing promised. So they did see and did greet it.

And we have even more than that: "You," chapter 12:22 reads, "have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." How can that be if the city is yet to come? That is possible because, just as in the case of the patriarchs, God's promise is as good as the thing promised. Moreover, we are registered as citizens in heaven (Philippians 3:20), and Jerusalem above is our mother (Galatians 4:26). And it does not stop there! We are, as offspring of this mother, gathered together within God's holy catholic church here on earth and we seek the city which is to come.

With regard to that other city we have here, the non-lasting one, if it is not the world, nor Jerusalem, then it cannot be anything else but our life, our existence here in this world. This existence is unstable, subject to change, including the one of the putting off of the body. We spoke about it. But is that all bad and nothing else? Indeed, there is a sad side to it. Collapse is never a pretty thing. There is, however, in the context of Hebrews 13 also a glad, a comforting side to it. "Let us," the exhortation reads, "go forth to him outside the camp,⁸ and bear the abuse he endured," (v. 13). It is not so that we can manage without going to him. Far from it! Without following Jesus, our life is like a city on the point of collapse.

But thanks be then to God, who uses that non-lasting city we have to keep us going, seeking our salvation outside of ourselves in Jesus Christ, heading for the city which is to come. We are on our way, and as to the abuse we bear for Jesus' sake, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, persecution or famine, or nakedness or peril or sword?" "No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord," (Romans 8:35, 37-39).

L. SELLES

¹See the *Commentaries* by among others J. Hering, p. 123; H. Windisch, pp. 20, 106ff; F.W. Grosheide, p. 382; Idem Korte Verklaring (Short Commentary) p. 190.

B.F. Westcott though disagreeing with this interpretation, mentions that the "Fathers" i.e., the church fathers "commonly understood the phrase 'let us go forth to him outside the camp' of leaving the world," p. 442.

This breaking away from the world, or leaving the world may be understood in the Scriptural sense of I Jn. 2:15; Eph. 4:22; Mt. 16:24; cf. F.o.B.; *Book of Praise* p. 585). Prof. Grosheide undoubtedly understood Heb. 13:13 that way.

²J. Moffatt's *The Epistle to the Hebrews* in International Critical Commentaries on the N.T. (I.C.C.) Edinburgh 1929, TeT Clark, p. 235. See as well: *Theodore H. Robinson, The Epistle to the Hebrews* in the Moffatt New Testament Commentary, London, Hoddez and Stoughton, 1933, p. XIV and p. 202.

E. Käsemann, *The Wandering People of God*, an Investigation of the Letter to the Hebrews, translated from Ciezman, Minneapolis, 1984, Augsburg Publishing House, Passim.

³See for alleged Platonic — Philonic influences of the Letter to the Hebrews, the Commentaries.

For special study see: *Ronald Williamson, Philo and the Epistle to the Hebrews*, Leiden, 1970, E.J. Brill.

⁴The words "and outward," as suggested by an attentive listener on Sept. 5, may be added.

⁵This group, as might be expected in light of the references to the O.T. Day of Atonement is by far the larger one.

See the commentaries by F.F. Bruce (N.J.C.) pp. 403-404.

J. Calvin, Eerdman Edition, 1963, p. 210; however he adds at v. 14 "he (the apostle) continues the idea of the going forth which he has mentioned to make us realize that we are strangers and pilgrims in this world and that we have no fixed abode except in heaven" p. 214.

J. Owen in the VII volume of his commentary writes that although a local departure may be intended in connection with the impending fall of Jerusalem . . . that which principally is intended is a moral and religious going forth from the camp," p. 448.

Ph. E. Hughes, who writes on p. 580 of his com-

mentary: "Going forth" to Christ "outside the camp" certainly meant for these original readers as it does for us, separation from the fallen values of unregenerate society, but in their case it meant also departure from the old Jewish order of their upbringing"

F. Delitzsch, Klock & Klock, reprinted edition, Vol. II, p. 389.

H.M. Montefiore, p. 246; C. Spicq, Vol. II, p. 248.

E. Riegenbach in *Kommentar Zum Neuen Testament*, ed. Th. Zahn, pp. 403-404.

A. Schlatter, p. 431; H. Strathmann, p. 151 in *Das Neue Testament Deutsch*.

B.F. Westcott, p. 442 "Christians are now called upon to withdraw from Judaism, even in its purest form. It had been designed by God as a provisional system, and its work was done."

⁶F.W. Grosheide; *De Brief aan de Hebreëren en de Brief van Jacobus*, Amsterdam; H.A. Van Bottenburg, 1927, p. 382.

⁷See: J. Francke, Patris, Polis en Politeuma in *De Reformatie* Vol. 44, Nos. 27-35.

C. van der Waal, *Sola Scriptura*, Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, Goes 1968, p. 186 "Alle offers zijn in Christus vervuld. Maar dit heeft voor het leven der Kerk grote consequenties: De gemeente heeft hier geen 'blijvende stad, d.w.z. zij houdt zich niet meer aan Jerusalem beneden vast, de joodse tempeldienst, die nabij de verdwijning is" (all sacrifices have been fulfilled The congregation has no lasting city here, i.e. she does not cling to Jerusalem below)

Compare the quotation from B.F. Westcott sub. 5; H. Koester, *Outside the Camp*, Heb. 13:9-14 in *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 55 (1962) pp. 299-315.

G.W. Buchanan, *To the Hebrews* in Anchor Bible, Garden City, N.Y. Double Day 1972, "The main thrust of the verses 10-16 is anti-Jerusalem . . ." "Since Jesus suffered outside the gate, 'here' [at Jerusalem]" we do not have "a continuing city."

G. Van Rongen, *Strangers*, address delivered to Kojonup Meeting 1976, Stencil. Related writings of Dr. van der Waal.

Wat Staat Er Eigenlijk, Ch. XII Over de Vreemdeling hier beneen; Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, Goes 1971; Ch. XIII Ons Politeuma.

De Harten Omhoog, Idem, 1976.

Die Wereld is ons Woning, N.G. Kerkboekhandel Transvaal, Pretoria, 1985.

Cp. Dr. J. Douma, *Cultuur en Vreemdelingschap in Fides Quadrat Intellectum Almanak* 1968-1969, pp. 140-161.

⁸Another attentive listener asked me how "outside the camp" in v. 13 should be interpreted for the congregation of the Hebrews in the first century A.D. and for us today. I did not go into the matter in my address because the essential point in v. 13 is the going forth to "him" i.e., the Lord Jesus, and I had no ready answer to the question regarding the exegesis of "outside the camp" in contemporary setting. Let me pass on what Floyd V. Filson writes in *Yesterday, A Study of Hebrews in the Light of Chapter 13*, S.C.M. Press, London, 1967. . . "the exhortation to 'go forth to him outside the camp' urges the Christians addressed to break ties with whatever would prevent full loyalty to Christ who offered himself as the once for all sacrifice for sin" p. 61.

Women's Savings Action

The first College evening, held in September 1969, I could not attend. I am therefore the more grateful that after all these years and all that has happened, the Lord spared my husband and myself. We may now retire together.

Since this is also my farewell speech I may take you through a few highlights in the history of the W.S.A.

At a meeting of the Board of the League of Women Societies in Ontario, a proposal was made to do "something" as women together.

The following meeting with delegates from all societies worked out the plans to organize it. We wanted the women of all churches to be involved. It worked. The W.S.A. was born. Our first project was to make a home out of the College building; such a home were staff and students could work with pleasure. Glass curtains were made by volunteer hands, drapes were bought, also dishes and all that was necessary to make the kitchen functional. In short we brought "gezelligheid" into the building. In those days much work was done by volunteers. Without mentioning names, I want to mention *this fact*. Those who gave of their skill and time will remember.

When the building looked the way that it could pass our critical eyes, we did not stop. Staff and governors were more than eager to feed us ideas. Some of these we filled and they were a success, others turned out not so well. A failure was the stencil machine. My husband sometimes came home covered with ink. He thought he knew how to handle the machine, only it would not work the way he wanted it. Not his fault of course. The small photocopier has since long been replaced by a better and bigger one with more possibilities. The gowns and "hoods" are still a pleasure to watch and I suppose also to wear.

The micro-film reader is around and I saw more than once someone bending over it, so it must be useful.

Our latest contribution, a huge one, is the complete computerizing of the library. Those who know about computers

are aware of what it involves. I said highlights so I leave it with this. I don't want to overstep my time.

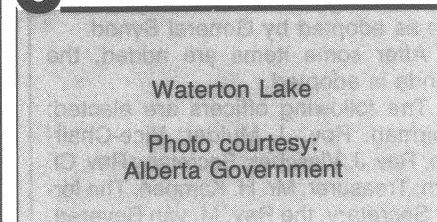
Year after year, I repeated the wish that we would be able to renovate the garage into a library or that we could help to buy a new building. Finally the chance came. I received a call from the financial committee: "How much money do the ladies have!" Why? "Because we can buy a suitable building with opportunity to make a real library. But . . . we cannot do it without your support." So far the speaker. Well, it was our wish wasn't it? I never signed such a large cheque with so much joy because the money was available. This fact due to a combined effort from women East, West and Middle Canada. If you read the plaque in the College you will see how we feel about this accomplishment.

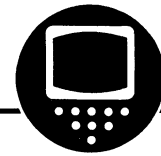
Due to the rising costs for church and education we may have to fall back to the nickels and dimes we started out with, instead of the dollars and the cheques we have gotten used to. Please keep collecting so that we can continue to fill the hungry open spaces on the bookshelves in the library. Lorraine Lindhout and myself

were happy to have the support and advice of our husbands. Without them we could not have worked as we did. From now on the amount set aside for purchasing new books, I will not present publicly anymore. Yet, I hope to be for the time being a representative in the Library Committee. In any case, it makes your waiting for coffee shorter. There is the well-known saying, "the minister must say 'Amen' before his congregation does." A wise rule. Before I start stumbling or stuttering I say thank you all. For listening all these years, for supporting the W.S.A. Thank you for your cooperation.

GERALDINE SELLES

OUR COVER





“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, August 15, 1986

The vice-president, br. G. Lodder opened the meeting with prayer and Scripture reading and welcomed everyone present.

The minutes of the previous meeting were adopted.

The director reported on the activities in and around “Anchor Home.” Miss R. Beijes has started working full-time, she is in charge about half the time. During the other half of the time the director is at the Home. The director’s family has moved out of the Home to Grimsby in anticipation of the relocation of “Anchor Home.”

The Building Committee reports that hopefully by the end of the month the purchase of the house at Thirty Street in Grimsby will be closed.

The board discussed at length an application for residency at Anchor Home and the attached report from the Advisory Committee. The board decided not to admit this applicant and to inform the applicant of the reasons for this decision.

The treasurer reported that the books of the Association had been audited and were found to be in excellent order. The treasurer will continue to handle all financial transactions for the Association and the Home.

The meeting was closed with singing and prayer.

W.J. GODSCHALK
Recording secretary

Board of Governors, Thursday, September 4, 1986 at the Theological College in Hamilton, ON

The Chairman, Rev. J. Mulder, opens the meeting with Scripture reading and prayer. He welcomes the brothers present, especially the newly appointed members of the Board: H. Buist, C.G. Heeringa and M. VanderWel. They are requested to sign the declaration for Governors as adopted by General Synod.

After some items are added, the agenda is adopted.

The following officers are elected: Chairman, Rev. J. Mulder; Vice-Chairman, Rev. J. Visscher; Secretary, Rev. Cl. Stam; Treasurer, Mr. H. Kampen. The former Secretary, the Rev. M. van Beveren,

had requested to be relieved of his duties. The Chairman expresses the appreciation of the Board for all of the work done by him over the years.

The Minutes of the Board of Jan. 24, Feb. 19 and April 18 are adopted.

The Senate requests the Board to appoint Dr. K. Deddens as Vice-Principal, and wishes it to take note of the fact that Prof. J. Geertsema has been appointed as Recording Secretary and Dean of Students and that Dr. C. VanDam has been appointed Secretary and Registrar. This is done. To accommodate certain changes in the structure of the Senate, several deletions and additions are made to the By-Laws.

The Academic Committee of the Board reports that a logo for the College is being worked on vigorously by Br. A.J. Hordijk. A report is anticipated. A letter from Br. L. VanZandwijk is taken note of and a reply will be sent. The Brs. H. Buist, K. Deddens and J. Mulder are appointed to the Convocation Committee. Br. K.A. Kok makes a request to the Board regarding a certain academic matter. The Board decides not to grant his request but to endorse the response of the Senate.

The Board appoints Prof. L. Selles, NT, professor-emeritus, to the Senate for a three year term. The Board does not endorse the proposal of the Church at Hamilton that a practical training period be incorporated into the academic program. The Church at Hamilton, as well

as other Churches who may be interested, will be informed that they may make use of the students during the summer months.

Upon instruction of the Synod, the Senate is mandated to establish a two year program for students who are not interested in becoming ministers but who would like to pursue a course in theological studies. Those who complete this program and are in possession of a B.A. degree will be awarded a Master of Religious Education degree (M.R.E.). Those without an undergraduate degree will be awarded a Diploma of Theological Studies degree (D.T.S.). A sub-committee is appointed to pursue necessary changes in our Theological College Act from the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario.

A program in Missiology will be implemented.

Br. W.B. Slomp requests to be re-admitted to the College. The Board decides to re-admit him under certain conditions.

The Finance and Property Committee of the Board presents the Financial Statements for the year ending May 31, 1986. The proposed Budget for the year 1986/1987 is dealt with and adopted. The housing allowance for the professors is repealed effective January 1, 1987. The Fourth Annual Report is received for information.

The tuition fees for 1987/1988 are set at \$900 for Canadian Reformed students and \$2700 for non-Canadian Reformed students. Part-time student fees are set at \$10 a unit for credit and \$5 a unit for those who audit (non-Canadian Reformed students will pay double these amounts).

The Board discusses the fact that one of the churches is seriously in arrears. The Board will address itself to the Classis in which this church resides. Certain changes are made to By-Law No. 1 which deals with financial matters. Various aspects relating to the housing allowance are discussed.

The reports of the Convocation Committee, the Senate, the Principal, the Librarian, and the Registrar are dealt with.

Reports on interviews with the incoming students J. Boersma and M.H. DeJong are received and discussed. It is decided to admit these students.

The following Governors are charged to visit the classes during the 1st Semester: J. Mulder and Cl. Stam; 2nd Semester: M. van Beveren and J. Visscher.

CHURCH NEWS



CALLED and declined to the Church at Hamilton, ON for missionary in Brazil:

REV. E. KAMPEN
of the Church at Houston, BC

* * *

CALLED to the Church at Langley, BC:

REV. C. BOUWMAN
of the Church at Chilliwack, BC

The Senate is charged to investigate the possibility of having the professors visit the churches in Western Canada on a regular basis.

The Chairman makes some final remarks and the Rev. M. van Beveren leads in prayer. The meeting is closed.

For the Board,
J. VISSCHER

Classis Ontario South, September 10, 1986

1. On behalf of the convening Church at Grand Rapids, Rev. P. Kingma calls the meeting to order, requests that Ps. 85:3,4 be sung, reads Eph. 2:13-22 and leads in prayer. He extends a hearty welcome to everyone present and expresses the hope that there will be good unity at Classis for the sake of the brethren themselves and for the sake of the churches in general.

2. The credentials are examined and all the churches are found to be properly represented. The following officers are appointed: Rev. D.G.J. Agema, chairman; Rev. R. Aasman, vice-chairman; Rev. G. Wieske, clerk.

3. The chairman welcomes student Garnet Peet and his wife, student Robert Schouten and sister Fluck who came with her husband from Blue Bell.

4. The agenda is adopted with some deletions and some additions.

5. In closed session there is a discussion concerning the reason why brother Kenneth A. Kok cannot be examined by Classis for his Preparatory Examination. Classis wishes brother Kok strength in his further studies and grants him permission to speak an edifying word for the period of one year.

6. Preparatory examination of brother Garnet Peet. The necessary documents which are required for this examination, a letter from the Theological College and an attestation from the Church at Hamilton, are found to be in good order. Brother Peet presents a sermon proposal on Isa. 54:9,10. After discussing this sermon proposal in closed session, Classis decides to proceed with the examination. At this point Classis breaks for lunch, after which the afternoon session is opened with the singing of Ps. 93:1,2 and roll call. Brother Peet is examined on Zech. 4 for O.T. exegesis and James 1:1-2:13 for N.T. exegesis. He is also examined on the doctrine of the Church. In closed session it is decided to declare brother Garnet Peet eligible for call to the Canadian and American Reformed Churches and give him permission to speak an edifying word for the period of one year. After candidate Peet promises to teach nothing in

contradiction with the Word of God and the confessions, the chairman requests that Ps. 36:3 be sung and then gives everyone an opportunity to congratulate this brother along with his wife and father.

7. Examination of brother Robert Schouten in connection with his request for permission to speak an edifying word. The necessary documents which are required for this examination, a letter from the Theological College and an attestation from the Church at Hamilton, are found to be in good order. Brother Schouten presents a sermon proposal on II Peter 1:3,4. After discussing this sermon proposal in closed session, Classis decides to proceed with the examination. Brother Schouten is then examined on the doctrine of the church with specific attention on the Canons of Dort. In closed session it is decided to give brother Schouten permission to speak an edifying word within the Canadian and American Reformed Churches for the period of one year. He is granted this permission on the condition that he submit all sermon proposals to the Professor of Homiletics at our Theological College before delivering these sermon proposals in the churches. After brother Schouten promises to teach nothing in contradiction with the Word of God and the confessions and signs a declaration to that effect, the chairman requests that Ps. 93:4 be sung and then gives everyone an opportunity to congratulate this brother and his father and mother.

8. After Classis enjoys a good supper, the chairman requests that Ps. 103:1 be sung and checks the attendance. The Church at Grand Rapids asks Classis for advice on how to proceed with the Minister at Large project. At present a number of churches have not pledged donations with the result that this project has not become financially viable. Grand Rapids also seeks advice on how to proceed with calling a minister for this project. Classis advises Grand Rapids to set a date for the calling of a minister and then notify the churches in the classical district of Ontario South of how much they are assessed for the financial support of this minister. Grand Rapids should also contact the other churches in the federation once again for financial support for this project. Classis also advises Grand Rapids that regardless of whether Grand Rapids sets her own minister apart for the Ministry at Large project or seeks another minister it should be executed by a letter of call.

9. The Church at Lincoln asks whether it is proper for deacons to be present at a church visitation when a discipline case is being discussed. Classis advises that it is in the freedom of every consistory

to decide whether or not the deacons are present during such situations.

10. The Church at London asks for and receives advice with respect to a case of discipline.

11. The Church at Hamilton asks for and receives advice with respect to a case of discipline.

12. The Church at Grand Rapids presents a report on the brethren at Palmetto, Florida. In connection with this an instruction from the Church at Smithville is also read which advises that the report from Grand Rapids go to the consistories before being discussed at Classis. Classis decides to wait until the next Classis before dealing with the situation at Palmetto, Florida so that every consistory may be knowledgeable prepared.

13. The letter from General Synod 1986 will once again not be discussed until the Acts of General Synod are published and distributed among the churches. The reason for this is that the letter cannot be properly understood without the Acts of Synod.

14. Reports on church visitations to the Churches at Ancaster, Hamilton, Lincoln and London are read and gratefully received.

15. The Church at Hamilton proposes some stylistic changes to the proposed Guidelines for Church Visitation. These are sent on to the appropriate committee. Any further changes are to be sent to the Committee for Revising the Guidelines for Church Visitation before the next Classis, at which time these Guidelines will hopefully be adopted.

16. An auditor's report on the financial report of Classis Ontario South from Aug. 1, 1985 - Apr. 30, 1986 is gratefully received. The new address of the classical treasurer is: P. Schuller; RR 2, Philips Rd.; Beamsville, ON L0R 1B0

17. Appointments:

a. Convening church for the next Classis is the Church at Hamilton.

b. The proposed moderamen: Rev. C. Bosch, chairman; Rev. G. Wieske, vice-chairman; Rev. D.G.J. Agema, clerk.

c. Date and place: Dec. 10, 1986 at London, ON.

d. Delegates to Regional Synod: first minister delegates are: R. Aasman, C. Bosch, P. Kingma and J. VanRietschoten; alternate ministers in order are: G. Wieske, J. Moesker, D.G.J. Agema and M. VanLuik.

First elder delegates are: K. Kok, J. Schouten, W. Smouter and A. Witten; alternate elders in order are: R.J. Oosterhoff, J. Bartels, H. Nobel and J. Oosterhoff. The date of Regional Synod is October 15, 1986 and the place is Fergus, ON.

18. One question is raised during the personal question period concerning the method in which the examinations of

theological students are placed on the agenda. Classis confirms that it is the personal responsibility of the students to ask that their examinations be placed on the agenda and that all the necessary documents be placed upon the table. Students must also send, at least two weeks prior to their examination, two copies of their sermon proposal to every consistory in the classical district and, in the case of peremptory examinations, a copy to each of the deputies of Regional Synod.

19. Censure ad art. 44 C.O. is not required.

20. The Acts of Classis are adopted and the Press Release is approved.

21. The chairman expresses thanks for the brotherly way in which the business of Classis was executed today and he also thanks the ladies for the wonderful food and refreshments supplied to the brothers at Classis. After singing Ps. 46: 1,2 the chairman closes in prayer.

R. AASMAN

Vice-chairman of Classis Ontario

Board of Governors of the CRTCA, September 12, 1986, Hamilton

1. *Opening.* The chairman, br. A.G. Hordyk calls the meeting to order and read a portion of Isaiah 40. He then led in prayer and welcomed all those present.

2. *Minutes.* The minutes of the last held meeting are approved as made.

3. *Finances.* The treasurer, br. J. Gelderman is on vacation and a letter from Mrs. J. Kroezen, acting treasurer, states that there is a balance of \$8,577.00.

4. *Principal's Report.* A letter drawn by br. VanderVen to Australia is discussed and approved. We are looking forward to continued support from "down under."

The college has received 30 video cassettes from Carman. This is greatly appreciated.

Mrs. Selles has been found willing to teach French at the college.

5. *Local comments.* The issue of delinquent dues is discussed.

Br. J. Jonker reports that Orangeville will support the college as a school society. This is welcome news.

6. *Next meeting* will be, D.V., Oct 3, 1986.

7. *Question Period.* The use of Clarion as a promotional medium is discussed and considered a definite benefit to the Teacher's College.

After some further discussion the meeting is closed.

8. *Closing.* Br. Tenhage closed with us in prayer.

K. BROUWER
Secretary

Classis Ontario-North, September 18, 1986

On behalf of the convening church Rev. D. de Jong opens the meeting by reading from James 1:1-17, requests that the delegates sing Hymn 3 and leads in prayer.

The credentials are examined. All churches are represented by their *primi* delegates. The Church at Fergus has a note, the Church at Guelph has an instruction and the Church at Orangeville has two (2) instructions.

The classis is constituted as follows: chairman: Rev. M. Werkman; clerk: Rev. C. Stam; assessor: Pastor R. Gleason.

Rev. Werkman remembers that the Church at Ottawa is still vacant. He states, further, that he and his wife are thankful for the grace of God in the time of sr. Werkman's sickness.

The agenda is adopted.

There is no report from the Church at Toronto regarding the auditing of the books of the treasurer. The Church at Toronto is charged to have this report present at the next classis meeting. A report from Guelph regarding financial aid reports that the sum of \$928.60 is available.

There is no report from the Church at Fergus regarding the auditing of the books for the fund for financial aid to students for the ministry. The Church at Fergus receives a similar charge as that given to the Church at Toronto above.

The classis committee from Orangeville have audited the books for needy churches. The contribution is set at \$6.50 per communicant member per year.

A report from the Church at Ottawa is received requesting that per Aug. 31, 1986 financial aid terminate. This is adopted. Further, the churches that have not paid into the fund are requested to pay 75% of the 1986 commitment. This will leave a minimal amount in the fund as a "start-up" when assistance is again required. Finally, it is requested that the budget for the fund, "Needy Churches" remain the same in 1987 as was budgeted in 1986. This money will be requested from the churches when the need arises.

A report is received from Orangeville regarding the auditing of the books of the fund, "Needy Churches."

The Church at Guelph states that it has no need of pulpit supply after Sept. 1986. Further, there is an invitation to all churches to be present on Oct. 5th in the morning service for the installation of Cand. P.G. Feenstra.

The peremptory exam of Cand. P.G. Feenstra takes place. The regional synod is represented by the deputies brs. van Rietschoten and Huizinga.

The necessary documents are examined and found to be in good order so

that the examination can proceed. The sermon proposal of Cand. Feenstra (Rev. 6:9-11) is presented. The meeting moves into closed session for discussion. The meeting comes out of closed session. The motion is made, seconded and approved to continue with the examination. Cand. Feenstra is examined in the following subjects: Exegesis O.T. (Isa. 6 & I Sam. 2); Rev. J. de Jong; Exegesis N.T. (Matt. 6 & I Cor. 5); Rev. D. de Jong; Knowledge of Holy Scripture: Rev. M. Werkman; Doctrine and Creeds: Rev. J. Mulder; Church History: Rev. M. Werkman; Ethics: Pastor R. Gleason; Church Polity: Rev. G. Nederveen; Diaconology: Rev. C. Stam.

The meeting moves into closed session to discuss this part of the examination. After the discussion, the meeting reopens in plenary session. Rev. Werkman congratulates Cand. Feenstra upon the successful completion of his peremptory examination. Rev. Werkman reads the form of subscription and asks Cand. Feenstra to sign same.

Classis approves the call of Cand. P.G. Feenstra to the Church at Guelph. Rev. Werkman offers prayer and requests that the meeting sing Ps. 135. Rev. Werkman is appointed to represent the classis at Cand. Feenstra's ordination. Afterwards the delegates are given the opportunity to personally congratulate Cand. Feenstra. The Deputies Regional Synod are given permission to leave the meeting and wished a safe and uneventful trip home.

The meeting goes into closed session to handle a letter from the consistory and deacons from the Church at Orangeville.

A delegate reports of a telephone conversation from D. Moes from the CORC, Lower Sackville, N.S. where greetings are extended to the Classis.

A letter from the Church at Fergus moves that regional synod be set for Oct. 15, 1986, beginning at 10:00 a.m. in place of the previously arranged time of Oct. 8th. The motion is adopted.

The Church at Burlington-South is designated as convening church for the following classis, which is scheduled for Dec. 11, 1986, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

The officers for the December classis are as follows: chairman: Rev. D. de Jong; clerk: Rev. M. Werkman; assessor: Rev. C. Stam.

The delegates from the Church at Guelph express their thanks to Revs. Stam and Werkman for the work that they did as counselors during their vacancy.

Classis preaching is arranged for the Church at Ottawa in the following manner: Jan. 18, 1987: Rev. P. Feenstra; Feb. 15, 1987: Rev. J. Mulder; Mar. 15, 1987: Rev. M. Werkman; Apr. 19, 1987:

Rev. P. Feenstra; May 17, 1987: Pastor R. Gleason.

Censure per Art. 44, C.O. is not necessary.

The Acts of classis are read and approved as is the Press Release.

Rev. M. Werkman closes the meeting, requests the delegates to sing from Ps. 135:10, leads in prayer and wishes the delegates a safe arrival at their point of destination.

R.N. GLEASON, assessor

“Anchor” Canadian Reformed Association for the Handicapped, September 19, 1986

After opening the meeting with prayer and Scripture reading, the chairman br. John Witten welcomed the board members present.

The minutes were examined and adopted with a few minor changes.

A letter was received appealing to the board to reconsider its decision not to admit a certain brother into the Home, because of the particular nature of his problem. Two board members and the Anchor Home director will meet with the applicants to discuss the situation.

A letter was also received from the lawyer regarding the purchase of the new Home on 30 Road (near Soby Rd.) in Grimsby; and in connection with this a letter will be sent to the Ebenezer Villa Association for the Aged, from whom we are renting the present Home, informing them that we will not be exercising the option for the second year of the lease.

The director Daryl Kooiman read his report which mainly concerned the plans for the move to the Grimsby area. Work has already been arranged at the local workshop for the handicapped, which is only about a mile from the new Home. The director also called for better communications with families having handi-

capped children, to better gauge and prepare for future demand the group Home facilities.

The Summer Camp Committee gratefully reported that the last camp broke even financially. Next year, the Lord willing, the camp will be held a week later, during the second and third weeks in July. These preparations have to be made for in advance because of the high demand for the park facilities. The committee is currently organizing a camp reunion for Saturday, October 4th in London.

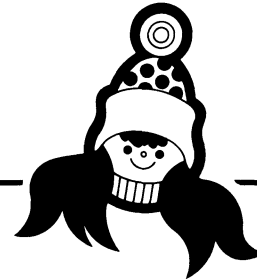
The Public Relations Committee gave a short report on its work. The next issue of the “Anchor Newsletter” will contain extensive information and pictures of the new Home purchased in Grimsby.

Subsequently, the meeting was closed with singing and prayer.

K.J. SPITHOFF

Correspondence secretary

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE



Hello Busy Beavers,

Here is a Thanksgiving Hymn.

Thanksgiving Hymn

Can a little child like me
Thank the Father fittingly?
Yes, oh yes, be good and true,
Patient, kind, in all you do.
Love the Lord and do your part,
Learn to say with all your heart:
Father, we thank Thee,
Father, we thank Thee,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

For the fruit upon the tree,
For the birds that sing of Thee,
For the earth in beauty dressed,
Father, Mother, and the rest,
For Thy precious, loving care,
For Thy bounty everywhere,
Father, we thank Thee,
Father, we thank Thee,
Father in heaven, we thank Thee.

Don't you think that's a good hymn for Thanksgiving Day, Busy Beavers?

It lists exactly for what we should be thankful! (Or can you think of more?)

And it tells us, too, HOW we can SHOW that we are thankful.

“Love the Lord” it says, and “Learn to say with all your heart: Father, we thank Thee.”

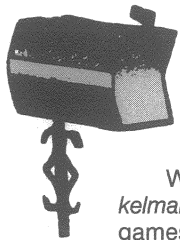
Now I'm going to ask you another question, Busy Beavers. What do you think?

Is this a hymn only for Thanksgiving Day?

You think about it!

PICTURE by Busy Beaver *Teresa Oosterhoff*





From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Mary Breukelman*. We are happy to have you join us. Do you play games with your little sister, Mary? I bet she loves it! I'm looking forward to getting that puzzle! Bye for now.

Hello, *Christina VanderVelde*. Thank you for your pretty letter and your story and pictures. It sounds as if you had a good summer. Are you happy to be with your friends in school, Christina?

Hello, *Geraldine Feenstra*. Thanks for sending in your birthdate. You didn't tell how your summer was! And how do you feel about being in school again, Geraldine?

I'm glad you had a good summer, *Alex Sikkema*. I hope you and all the other Busy Beavers, too, have a successful school year! Thanks for the interesting word search, Alex.

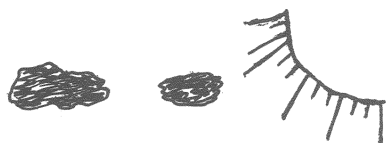
RIDDLE FUN

from Busy Beaver *Joanne De Boer*

1. What stays hot even if you put it in a refrigerator?
2. Why is a clock like a river?
3. When can you kick about a gift?
4. If you were locked up in a room with nothing but a baseball bat, how would you get out?
5. What two animals go everywhere you go?
6. What has a foot and a head but can't walk or think?
7. Why does the moon go to the bank?

(Answers below)

STORY and PICTURE by Busy Beaver *Christina VanderVelde*



Tippy

My dog Tippy never grows big because he is part terrier and cocker spaniel. He got his name from the white tip on his tail.

Tippy likes to catch a mouse.



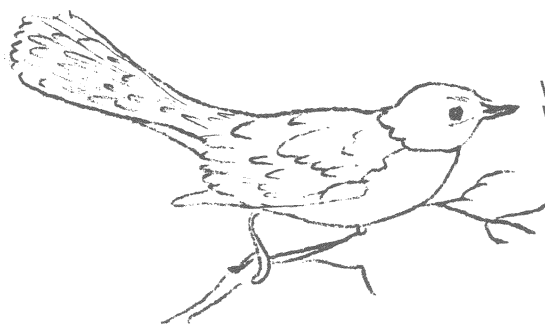
Quiz Time!

BIRDS

Word search from Busy Beaver *Alex Sikkema*



- | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------|
| song sparrow | purple martin | hawk | gull |
| shrike | barn swallow | swan | wren |
| crow | cliff swallow | mourning dove | heron |
| house sparrow | horned lark | starling | thrush |
| grackle | meadow lark | bluejay | duck |
| cowbird | cardinal | blue bird | grebe |
| kingfisher | canary | robin | roller |
| kingbird | woodcock | quail | |
| nighthawk | common snipe | pheasant | |
| bobwhite | warbler | owl | |
| killdeer | chimney swift | mocking bird | |



Willie Wagtail

Answers:

Riddles

1. pepper 2. Because it won't run long without winding
3. When it's a football 4. Strike one, strike two, strike three,
your out! 5. your calves 6. a hill 7. to change quarters

Have you sent in your story for the Finish-the-Story Contest, Busy Beavers?

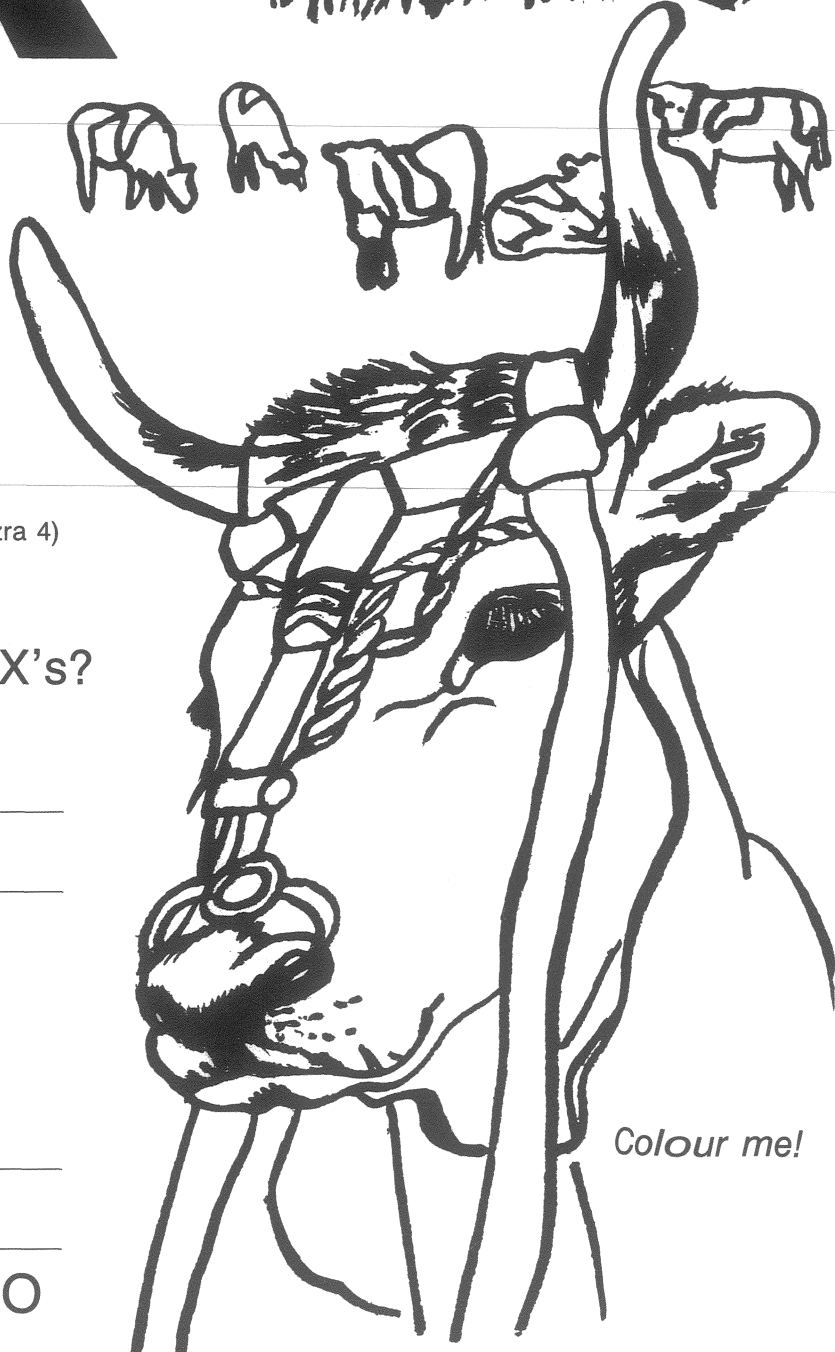
Send them in right away, please.

Till next time!

Love from your Aunt Betty

ABC BIBLE COLLECTION - by Mrs. John Roza

X x



X-Ox

(1 Corinthians 9:9)

Quiz Question

Who was the king of Persia?

_____ (Ezra 4)

Why not play O's & X's?

			X	
		O		

X				
				O

Colour me!