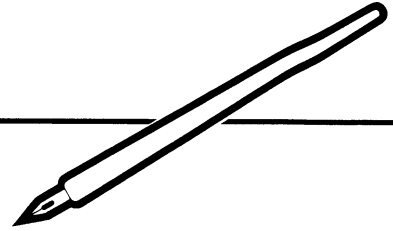




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Professor B. Holwerda September 22, 1909 — April 30, 1952 VERBI DIVINI MINISTER

“Remember”

The letter to the Hebrews admonishes us, “Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the Word of God; consider the outcome of their life, and imitate their faith” (13:7). One of those leaders who indeed spoke to us the Word of God was Professor B. Holwerda, who died thirty-five years ago at the age of forty-two years, after a professorate of six years and a ministry, preceding it of eleven years.

When the Rev. B. Holwerda was a minister of the Church at Amersfoort, he studied especially the exegesis of the New Testament. However, the Synod of Enschede, 1945, appointed him as professor of the Old Testament Department. I could write here about the results of his studies as a scholar and tell about the impressive way in which he gave his lectures, but, I think Holwerda’s greatest significance lies in his preaching of the Word of God and in his teaching regarding it. This influence is still there, also in the Canadian Reformed Churches. I mention this with great gratitude.

Holwerda himself saw in the title “Verbi Divini Minister” the highest honour and the greatest task that God could give to man. Therefore, in this article, we will remember and honour this gifted servant of the LORD by paying attention to his significance for the Reformed, Scriptural proclamation of His Word.

Revival

During the time that Holwerda was a student in Kampen, around 1930, a kind of revival in the preaching began in the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. A leader in this movement was the late Professor Dr. K. Schilder. While he was still a minister in Rotterdam, Schilder wrote his impressive, three-volume book, *Christ in His Suffering*. In it, Schilder constantly pointed at the unity of the one history of redemption, and he stimulated an approach to Scripture that was different from the so-called exemplary approach, with the emphasis on man and his (experiential) assurance of faith. Schilder wrote, for instance:

Here and there we still encounter Lenten sermons in which the figures around Christ receive the *primary* attention. There is a talk of Judas, Peter, Pilate, Herod, the Sanhedrin, Mary, etc. . . . (their inner conflict, their comfort, their hardening hearts), while the first and foremost question is forgotten, namely, what *Christ* has done, what *God* has let His Son experience, what the Son has experienced in and through the actions of those around Him.

Holwerda was very impressed by Schilder’s approach and when he became a minister of the Church at Kantens (in the province of Groningen) in the same year that K. Schilder became professor, he tried to administer the Word of God in that Christological, redemptive-historical way. And when this movement of revival in the preaching grew during the thirties, Holwerda was

fully involved in it. The Church at Amersfoort, his second congregation since June, 1938, received the benefits from it. And many members in the Reformed Churches in those days experienced this redemptive-historical way of preaching as a new spring, as new life, over against all kinds of psychological and subjective ways of preaching in which man, unbelieving or believing man, with his experiences was in the centre.

A few examples may illustrate what is meant. In a speech, held in 1942 for a ministers’ conference, which is published in “. . . Begonnen hebbende van Mozes . . .,” Holwerda gives a picture of the exemplary, subjective, moral, psychological, man-centred method of reading, explaining, and proclaiming the Word of God. The history of Abraham in Genesis 12 becomes a moral lesson about the “white lie.” Abraham’s test of faith or temptation in connection with God’s command to sacrifice Isaac, recorded in Genesis 22, becomes an example for our struggle of faith. The message of Elijah’s prayer is then that we have to learn to pray like he did. And a sermon on John 20:24-29, where we read about the doubt of Thomas, becomes a lesson about doubt. In this exemplary approach, the Bible is seen as a book that contains a whole lot of, e.g., moral, psychological, spiritual lessons; a book filled with human experiences that can be used as examples for us.

Holwerda, and others, following K. Schilder, did not deny the exemplary aspect, nor that in the exemplary method many true things were said. But the question was whether with that method *the main and proper thing* had been said: the place, the significance, the function of that specific text in the *whole* of God’s revelation of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Holwerda, with many others, saw that in the exemplary method the main point had been missed. Not God, but *man*, pious man, doubting man, the Christian, with all his problems and troubles, was in the centre. So, not God, not Christ Jesus was seen on the pages of Scripture, and was preached as Saviour and Redeemer, but actually, men and women as examples for us.

We must keep in mind that we have to do with historical texts in the above examples. Genesis 12 and 22, I Kings 18 and John 20 are not Psalms or Proverbs, but history. They are parts of the history, in which God is continuing to do His great work of redemption in the coming Christ and the Christ who has come, respectively. And in this continuing history He uses people like Abraham, Elijah, Thomas, each one wherever he has his own place. In that history He calls them to fulfill their calling and task in His service. Hereby it is God’s own work of grace through the Holy Spirit that He prepares these human instruments for the task they have to fulfil in that specific situation at that particular time of that on-going history. And since that history still goes on, and we have our place in that same history as well, as believers, as church members, God calls also us to be faithful wherever we are placed in that on-going

history with its many facets and aspects.

The exemplary method of reading and explaining Scripture and preaching it, meant a loss of depth and a psychological or experiential generalization of a certain specific historical text that deals in a prophetic way with a specific moment in that one history of God's redemptive work in Jesus Christ with which the Holy Spirit wants to touch us, guide us, and encourage us.

Certainly, God-centred, Christological preaching of God's Word, did not lose attention for man and his needs. But man and his needs received their proper place, their Scriptural place, not as in the centre, but as in God's service, on the basis of the sacrifice of Christ through the renewing work of the Holy Spirit.

Wartime

When the Second World War had started, K. Schilder was imprisoned, and after having been set free he was forbidden to publish anything. In those days B. Holwerda, although he was only 32-years-old, delivered his famous speech at a ministers' conference (which was mentioned above already), "The History of Redemption in the Preaching of the Gospel." In that speech he worked out what he had practised for many years already, very clearly placing the redemptive-historical way of preaching over against the exemplary method. Part of that speech follows here. To the ministers present at that conference, he showed that the danger of the exemplary method is that it:

Ignores the context and dissolves an ENTIRE history into a large collection of independent stories (fragments), and loses both (historical) "unity" and "progress." It is clear where this method leads as far as the history of redemption is concerned: by this fragmentary method, one simply blocks the way to preaching effectively on these historical materials. And because those who use the exemplary method have severed the historical bond between Abraham, David, and ourselves — the bond of the relationship to the one, ever-growing redemptive work of God in Christ — they must now construct another connection in order to be still able to make an application. And usually they do this in the following manner: instead of recognizing the *historical connection*, they search for the unity in a psychological resemblance.

Or to say it more precisely: one has here a *shift from the history of redemption to the ordo salutis*, which is so characteristic of Philo. As for Philo, Lagrange has defined his method very keenly as follows: He transposed history into the domain of religious philosophy. He did not evaporate history to the point of denying its existence, but the principal lesson of history became moral instruction. Philo's view can be described in this way: that God, instead of leading Israel's destiny by means of his revelation toward the Messiah, showed that He kept a watchful eye on the moral perfecting of each soul in particular.

Also Philo lost view of the history of redemption. Also for him all the parts of the historical books were independent stories with a moral lesson. He read into each story that which God did for every individual soul, and then drew a parallel with what God is doing for our own soul. Instead of maintaining the history character of the historical parts of the Old Testament in which everyone has his own time and place and function, Philo set forth the *ordo salutis*, which is the same for all.

An explanatory remark is in place here. With "ordo salutis" is meant the order of God's salvation work in a man's heart and life. For instance, God comes with His grace, and regenerates a person, making him a believer, giving him a renewed will, so that he turns away from sin to serve the Lord. Philo was a Jewish philosopher in the first part of the first century

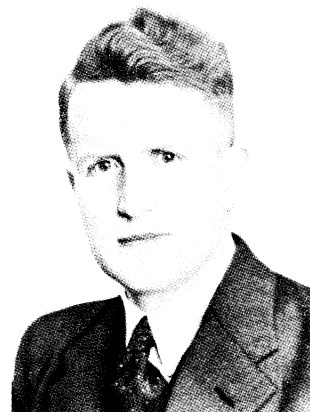
A.D. He tried to combine his Jewish faith with Greek philosophy in which human virtue had a most important place. This meant adapting that Jewish faith to Greek philosophy. In order to accomplish this adaptation, Philo used the allegorical method of explaining the Old Testament Scriptures.

When Philo, e.g., explains the meaning of Genesis 2:10-14, about the four rivers in paradise, we get the following: "In these words Moses intends to sketch out the particular virtues. And they, also, are four in number, prudence, temperance, courage, and justice." (The Allegories of the Sacred Laws, book I, 19.)

An example of the allegorical method in a mystical way is the following: Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, the place where Christ was to be born. So our souls must also make the trip that brings them to that destination where Christ can be born in them.

But let us return to the speech of Holwerda. He said: Allegory is also far from dead: Matthew 8:23ff (the storm on the Sea of Galilee) often receives an application which

Professor
B. Holwerda



deals with the spiritual storms on the "sea of life"; Luke 24:29 (the request of the men of Emmaus to Christ: stay with us, for it is toward evening and the day is now spent) is applied in the style of "Abide with me."

With this exemplary method the preacher seeks a parallel between the situation in which God was something for the Biblical saints and situations in which He will be the same for us. The doubt of John the Baptist and Thomas is then compared with our doubt. The testing of the faith of Abraham and of the Canaanite woman in the gospels is compared with the testing of our faith. But since no one can have a doubt precisely like John the Baptist or Thomas, or the testing of faith of Abraham, the consequence is that one is compelled to drop the peculiarity of Thomas' doubt and of the testing of Abraham's faith. Thus one is forced to speak of doubt, the testing of faith, and so on, in general, abstracted from the main point in the text.

Holwerda said:

You must understand me well. Some apparently suppose that the redemptive-historical method chooses to know exclusively about the "way of Christ," and that it sacrifices all else in the text; that it would ignore a certain instant that speaks of God's work in us; that it would have no consideration for the spiritual life of Thomas, etc. But nothing is less true. A text is composed of a multitude of elements, and all ought to be considered.

So far a rendering of parts of the speech of Holwerda. We may

add that, indeed, the proper redemptive-historical method pays full attention to man and the work of God in his heart and life, man and his calling in the covenant of grace and in the kingdom of God. However, with this method, which is Christological, God always is in the centre, while man receives attention as he hears the promise of redemption in Christ, and as he is called to faith and repentance and service.

Attacks

All kinds of criticism were brought in against this redemptive-historical method of preaching. It was leading to schematism, to speculation, to objectivism, and so on. One can read more about this in the dissertation of Dr. Sidney Greydanus, *Sola Scriptura*, (Kok, Kampen, 1970), in which the author approaches the redemptive-historical method from a critical point of view. It was also said that Christological preaching did not do justice to the work of the *Triune God*, and neglected especially the work of *God the Holy Spirit*.

Also recently it has been said again that in stressing the *history* of salvation, the *order* of salvation does not receive enough attention. In this manner Dr. C. Trimp wrote, more or less in *Heilsgeschiedenis en Prediking* (Redemptive History and the Preaching) (Kampen, 1986).

Of course, not everything is to be derived from the one speech of Prof. B. Holwerda, nor may we say that he has the final say in preaching. However, I would like to give some illustrations, in order to show that most of the time the criticism is not valid. I start with the really theocentric conclusion of Holwerda's essay on Matthew 1:17, "The Week of God's work of redemption," in *De Verborgenheid der Godzaligheid* (the mystery of our religion, cf. I Tim. 3:16) in which the trinitary aspect is very clear. Holwerda says there under the heading "The week of the Triune God":

God the Father worked six days, and then went to celebrate His sabbath. God the Son worked six times seven generations, and He, too, went in to His rest. The *creation sabbath* has been saved through the work of God the Son. The *redemption sabbath* is preserved in the work of God the Holy Spirit, during forty-two months. The Spirit works until now. The church can possibly be threatened, and the preaching opposed, but His work goes on, fortunately.

The week of work of the Spirit has not yet come to an end. At which "month" has He arrived? Do not ask that, but believe that He continues His work just as regularly as the Father and the Son. Also the Spirit is on His way, with a firm step, toward His sabbath.

The question is: Did Holwerda pay enough attention to the work of the Holy Spirit? But time and again one can read about the work of the Spirit in his sermons. An illustration is a sermon on Judges 6:33 - 7:14 in *Een Levende Hoop* (Vol. II, Enschede, 1953): The Spirit of the LORD took possession of Gideon:

"Then the Spirit of the LORD put on Gideon." That is the core of the report.

Easily we explain this in the following way: Gideon stood up, full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, so that he became eager to fight and take hold of his weapon. By doing this we have corrupted the text, for in this way it is Gideon who is acting after the Spirit has given him the necessary faith.

However, the text says it in such a beautiful way: the Spirit of the LORD put on Gideon, as one puts on a coat. You know how that goes. When we are about to do a certain job, we put on the proper clothes. A doctor puts on his white doctor's coat, a labourer in a factory his overalls, a servant-girl her apron, a swimmer his swim wear. Those clothes per se do not do anything; they are only the cover in which one wraps himself, when he is about to do his work. Now so it says here: the Spirit of the LORD put on Gideon. . . . So who is it who comes to action here? It is

not Gideon, but the Spirit of God. Gideon is only the instrument of which He avails Himself. The LORD stands up for battle.

And only because the Spirit starts moving and uses Gideon, this man blows the trumpet and calls the men to battle. But it is the war of the LORD, it is the fight of the Spirit of God, of which we read here.

Was Holwerda's preaching too objective, too schematic, too speculative? Did he not pay enough attention to the order of salvation? Let us listen to his moving sermon on Psalm 139, prepared after the passing away of his little daughter:

When he [David] curses the enemies of God, then this is not with the arrogant pride which says: something like that could never happen to me. But then there is with him the fear and trembling which says: if I were left to myself, I could come to do the same thing. For what is not going on in my own heart! That is why, in the end, he prays for the very thing which, in the beginning, he confessed to be the richness of his life: "*Search me, O God, and know my heart.*"

LORD, Thou knowest everything of me. Thou lookest straight through me. That is Thy love for me. For me in my small life. For me in this big world. For me from birth to grave. Thou who in Thy love knowest and searchest my thoughts, continue, please, this work of Thy grace. Let Thy love hold on to me, in my sitting, and in my standing, in my rising up and in my sleeping. And especially in my thoughts! "*Try me, and know my thoughts!*" For in what I am thinking there is not much that is nice and good. So easily my fretting, my worrying, my brooding, produces sin. There are so many who hate Thee. I do not do that. And I do not want to. But my heart, too, is so sinful; and what my heart comes up with is by nature just as evil. And before I knew it, I, too, could come to such an "*offensive way*" that leads me to an abyss and brings me to the company of men of blood. Interfere, therefore, in my thinking, Thou who knowest everything of it. Keep Thyself, in love, busy with me. Lead me away from my evil thoughts, my evil ways. "*And lead me on the way everlasting.*" On the way that abides and leads to the eternal joy.

LORD, with my whole heart have I said "yes" to Thee, who dost fathom me and know me. I have said "no" to those who hate Thee. But do not surrender me to myself and the passions of my heart.

LORD, I have said: Thou art always beside me. Please abide, with Thy grace, near me, Lord Jesus, in order that never the dominion of the enemy may hurt me.

This prayer certainly will be heard by God.

Beloved, I have preached to you who the LORD is for His people, for every one of His children. Will now also give Him this answer, all of you:

For this God is our God!

And do this as personal as David did it here:

Thou art my portion, my happy lot,

impossible to separate through either time or eternity.

Thou wilt lead me even until death.

And when I wake up, then I am still . . . with Thee!

Amen.

Conclusion

It strikes us how timely the sermons of Prof. B. Holwerda were, with their application and approbation. In the work of this true Verbi Divini Minister we have a very rich inheritance. Neglecting it will be to our detriment only. Therefore, let us preserve this inheritance and pass it on to the next generations, especially of the ministers of God's Word. But also the congregation has to know, since she is called to test "prophecies" and hold fast what is good, I Thess. 20ff.

K. DEDDENS

The "Volendam" congregation₂

How was the relation of the families of the "Volendam" congregation to the Protestant Reformed Church? Well, the "Volendam" arrived in the summer of 1950 and this was precisely the year that the Protestant Reformed Church formulated the well-known Declaration about election and covenant, in which God's election and covenant were seen as virtually identical. There was no place left for the doctrine that God established His covenant of grace with the believers and *all* their children. In the past Dr. Klaas Schilder of Kampen, the Netherlands, had strongly advised the liberated emigrants to join the Protestant Reformed Church. Schilder did not want to be sectarian and enjoined the emigrants to seek in their new country the church in whatever place God has established it.

Reading the archival material that our College recently received, I again became aware of the strong influence of Schilder's advice. A Protestant Reformed Church was instituted in Chatham in March 1950 and there was also a Protestant Reformed Church in Hamilton. Even as late as March 1955, H. de Bolster published a brochure about the Protestant Reformed Church in which he made some remarks about Synod-Homewood 1954 of the Canadian Reformed Churches. This Synod had appointed deputies for contact with the so-called De Wolf group of Protestant Reformed congregations and br. de Bolster defended the view that there should not be a constitution of an American Reformed Church in Grand Rapids as yet. He reminded his readers of the promise which the consistory of the Protestant Reformed Church at Hamilton made when it liberated itself from the Declaration on January 16, 1951. The promise was to return to the Protestant Reformed Church if it would again live according to Scripture and confession alone. According to de Bolster this promise had to be kept even in 1955.

It was no wonder, therefore, that when on May 25, 1950, the twelve "Volendam" families arrived, there was some confusion with respect to the Protestant Reformed Church. Br. J. Feenstra of Fenwick (lodging with "our friend Knegt") writes that every Sunday they went to church in Hamilton, where they heard the

Protestant Reformed preaching of the Rev. Veldman. "We already talked once to the minister and we see quite well that there are difficulties. We would like to wait and see what will happen in the near future. For we hear now things from the side of the Protestant Reformed Church that are different from what people told us in Holland." He wants to investigate things thoroughly and prays that God may open our eyes and that by the guidance of His Spirit He may make us see where our place will be here.

Also br. Piet v.d. Gaag in Moorestown went to the Protestant Reformed Church every Sunday, although he lived forty miles away from it. "It is quite a difference from the liberated church in Holland but there is no other or better church to go to." He, too, was convinced that by the grace of God it would become clear "what our place will be here in Canada. We also believe that everything we experience here comes from His Fatherly hand and will be to our benefit."

What br. Jac. Poortinga relates is remarkable. He writes: "When we arrived at our destination, Jarvis, we heard that my farmer already had someone else. But one of the board members of the Christian Reformed Church picked us up from the station and received us hospitably. They would try to find a place for us as soon as possible. But when it became clear that we were Liberated they ask me whether I would not rather go to our brothers in Hamilton. Now we certainly would indeed. Thus on the Monday after Pentecost brother and sister Wildeboer, chairman of the emigration committee of the Prot. Ref. Church, came to pick us up." (This probably is the late br. W. Wildeboer, JF.) In his letter of December 26, 1950, br. Poortinga continues: "We thought that we were at the church but we were wrong in this (We zaten, zoo we meenden bij de kerk, maar dat was juist mis.) Although it was a congregation of liberated brothers and sisters, they refused to admit us as members, because of our liber-



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ated view of the Covenant. We talked a lot with the Rev. Veldman. Br. Hart and br. Van Huizen (at that time elders of the Prot. Ref. Church in Hamilton, J.F.) basically agreed with us, but the decision had been taken. We had to promise to submit ourselves willingly to the instruction in the

the "Volendam" congregation was instrumental in bringing about more clarity in an otherwise confused situation.

Another letter gives us additional information. It is written by br. P.H. Wildeboer in Orangeville on November 5, 1950, and tells us of reading services, together

ing us that it was indeed a little bit strange to see baptism in the light of election. He would come back again and then we would go together to br. Van Leeuwen, with whom I had to make an appointment.

"When this time came, we travelled cheerfully to Waldemar in order to speak with br. Van Leeuwen about election. There we sat from seven o'clock till far after one o'clock in the night and the longer we talked the darker it became. I cannot write down what all we talked about for then I would need a week of work."

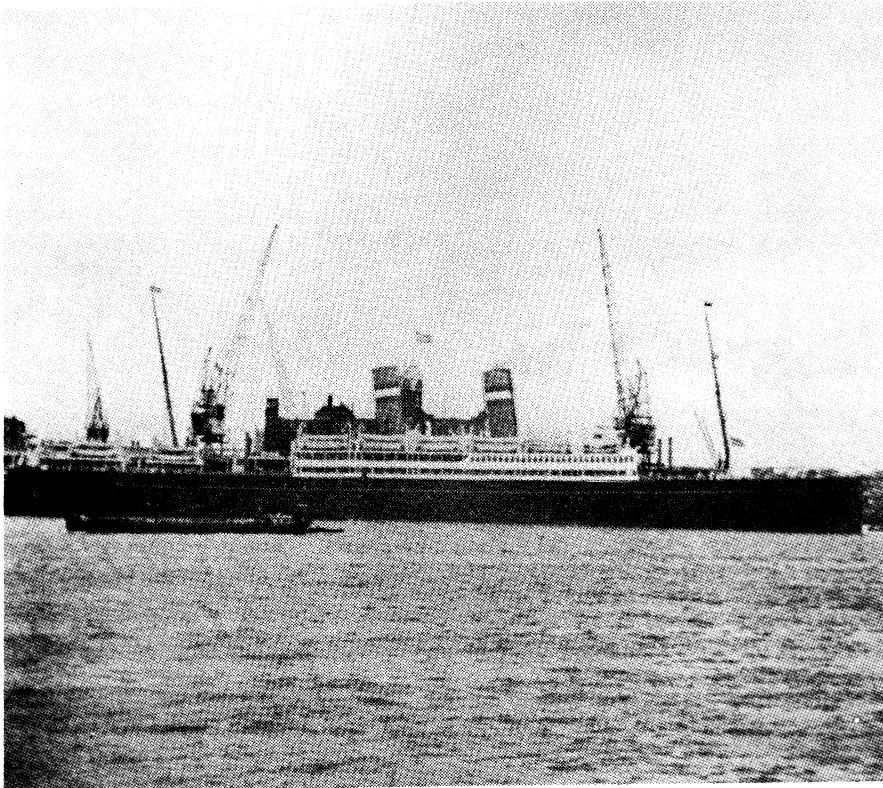
When I read these stories, I was saddened by the situation in which many of these twelve families found themselves and even more so by the situation of God's people who often in this sin-ridden world are divided by man-made theological constructions. On the one hand one can only have respect for the manner in which Protestant Reformed ministers tried to help liberated immigrants but on the other hand one again becomes aware of the fact that a speculative theological statement, such as the 1950 Declaration, goes "beyond what is written" (I Cor. 4:6) and causes division.

The situation of several families was difficult with respect to what they saw as their primary concern: the right gathering of Christ's Church. The H. Schutten family made their home in Trail, British Columbia, in the mountains. They worked on a dairy farm and had been received there in a heartwarming manner. They had everything going for them materially but spiritually they lacked everything. They missed the fellowship of the church: "Ons bedje was als het ware gespreid. We hebben stoffelijk dan ook alles wat we kunnen wenssen maar Geestelijk hebben we zoo weinig als het kan." If God does not forbid it, we easily drift away with the stream. "Therefore, it is of great importance that we try to come together."

A similar situation is sketched in P.H. Wildeboer's letter, written in Orangeville, Ontario. He describes their feelings after the disappointing encounter with the Protestant Reformed minister: "There we were in Canada, good work, nevertheless a heart full of worries. We had five children that grew up with no other instruction than that we ourselves gave them. We were two thousand miles away from *our* church (probably Lethbridge, J.F.). We were determined to try everything to organize a group of fellow believers for worship service. In the meantime we were greatly troubled (diep in de put), but in our unbelief we forgot God's Fatherly care. For God is a Hearer of prayers."

Next time we hope to see how God heard the prayers of the "Volendam" families in Ontario.

— To be continued
J. FABER



May 1950: More than sixty future members of the Canadian Reformed Churches leave the old country on the "Volendam."

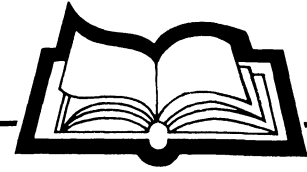
doctrine of the Prot. Ref. Church and to teach nothing against it. We could not promise this, for it would have meant a denial of the Liberation (Dat konden en mochten we niet beloven, want dat was de Vrijmaking verloochenen.) In the meantime we had made contact with some other brothers who were of the same opinion."

It is obvious that I do not relate this correspondence of the "Volendam" congregation in order to open old wounds. From the brochure of H. de Bolster I learnt that in January 1951 the consistory — and undoubtedly also the elders Hart and Van Huizen — rejected the Declaration of the Prot. Ref. Synod, thereby opening the way to the reconciliation of the liberated brothers and sisters in the Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton, instituted on May 20, 1951. The correspondence shows us that the coming of members of

with the Van Leeuwen family, after the contact with the Christian Reformed families had become impossible. "In the period when this happened, we received a visit of the Rev. Veldman of Hamilton. One night he preached for us and according to my opinion in a pure Reformed manner. Because the time was short, we could not talk together, but he would come back. He came quite soon after this night but then we could not come to an agreement. Especially my wife spoke up but the Rev. Veldman quieted us down by assur-

OUR COVER

Fort La Reine
Photo courtesy of Travel Manitoba



“ . . . and he told them, ‘I find no crime in Him’ ”

John 18:38b

“ . . . that you may know that I find no crime in Him’ ”

John 19:4b

“ . . . ‘I find no crime in Him’ ”

John 19:6b

Triple Testimony

One of the remarkable features of John's description of Christ's appearance before Pontius Pilate is the triple testimony concerning Christ's innocence given by the Roman governor. Only after repeating three times that Jesus has done no apparent crime does Pilate hand Him over to be crucified. Contrasted with this triple testimony to Christ's innocence is the marked absence of any clear declaration of guilt on Pilate's part. John's gospel has a similar wording to that of the other evangelists. Jesus is "handed over" or "given up" to the will of the chief priests and Pharisees, and the crowd that they had gathered.

This does not mean that Pilate did not declare Christ to be guilty. Pilate definitely took his place on the judgment seat and made a binding legal declaration concerning Jesus. Yet under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, all emphasis falls on Christ's innocence. He is only declared guilty after having been declared innocent three times by His judge. Clearly the inference is that He was *unjustly* condemned by the Roman governor, and this was also publicly proclaimed.

This triple testimony is significant in John, since it complements the repeated triple testimony regarding Christ's Person and office as recorded in the other gospels. When Christ was baptized, a voice from heaven declared, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," Matthew 3:17. That was His royal credential given at the *beginning* of His earthly ministry. On the mount of transfiguration, the disciples heard the same voice from heaven say the same words with the addition, "Listen to Him!" Matthew 17:5. These words constituted Christ's divine approval at the *turning-point* of His earthly ministry. The voice returned for the third time at its *end*, just before the crucifixion, with the words, "I have glorified it, and will glorify it again," John 12:28. This triple testimony was given for the sake of the disciples, that they might know and understand the nature of Christ's office and work. All three of these direct messages from heaven pointed to Christ as the one who descended from heaven, and who was also ascending to heaven again. John's constant theme is that the way of descent into humiliation is also the way of the glorification of the Son, His way to be highly exalted before the throne of His Father.

So it cannot be a surprise to us when John notes of Christ's final resurrection appearance, "This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after He was raised from the dead," John 21:14. In the final appearance John wishes to present us with Him who is the glory of the Father, our exalted flesh and blood, who perfectly

completed His work before God's throne! Three times the disciples, in themselves so slow of heart in believing, hear and see Him who descended and who was ascending to the Father.

It is John who records for us the third testimony from heaven, John 12:28. He also records the triple testimony of Pilate to Christ's innocence, and the triple testimony concerning the resurrection. And for the disciples, it all adds up to the one confession: Christ came from heaven, was innocent, but became guilty for us and for our sins. And His resurrection and ascension is proof of the perfect completion of His work on earth, and the guarantee that the full payment for our sins has been made!

How good was the Lord to His disciples in bringing them to understanding. He did not spare a triple witness of His truth to let the heart of the gospel sink in: Jesus is Messiah by perfect obedience, and by giving Himself as a perfect sacrifice for our sins. Later they also return to this triple testimony. Peter says, ". . . we heard this voice borne from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word made more sure!" II Peter 1:18.

But we also have not been left without the triple witness. Indeed, we have a greater triple witness today! For the same evangelist John who emphasizes the testimony of the threefold voice from heaven also says to us, "There are three witnesses: the Spirit, the water and the blood, and these three agree," I John 5:8. From heaven God also gave a threefold testimony, and that threefold testimony is now sealed on earth in word and sacrament through the Holy Spirit.

So we share a solid three-fold witness in the church today having received what the disciples received, and more. We have the witness to Christ's divine appointment, the witness to His coming exaltation, and the witness of the acceptance of His earthly work. Added to that is Pilate's threefold witness to the innocence of Christ. Only then did He die on the cross, after the triple witness to His exalted glory and perfect innocence in the sight of God. And then came the glorious witness of His resurrection! And the only and pure apostolic message is: He became guilty for our sakes, that we might become innocent before God's throne. He has made us whole again!

And who cannot but rejoice with such a manifold witness? God has taken good care of us! And His word cannot be broken! That remains all the more reason for us to live in thankfulness to Him!

J. DE JONG

In Memoriam

Willem Loopstra, V.D.M. 1911 — 1987

Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy I Corinthians 4:2

Willem Loopstra, whom the Lord took to Himself on March 27 of this year, a month before his 76th birthday, was born in the Frisian town of Drachten. In due time the family moved to Ureterp, another Frisian town and from there to Helpman, a suburb of the city of Groningen. Although the extra money from another wage earner in the family would have been welcome, no work for Wim was sought in the shop or office. He went to the Willem Lode-wijk Gymnasium in Groningen and from there to the Theologische Hoogeschool in Kampen. Whatever sacrifices had to be made were brought to give son Wim the opportunity to study for the ministry. Father Loopstra did not live to see the completion of the study, but mother Loopstra, who survived her husband for a long time, did. She was always grateful that her son Wim became a minister of the Gospel. There may have been an element of pride in the gratitude of this mother, and of so many other mothers and fathers whose sons became ministers, the main factor was the love for the Lord, for His Gospel, and for the flock of the Good Shepherd, which should be gathered together.

Such mothers and fathers who encourage their children to study for the ministry are still needed today!

Student Loopstra became candidate Loopstra, who in 1938 received a call from the Gereformeerde Kerk at Hijken, in rural Drenthe. It was still the time that married students were the exception to the rule. So much greater, therefore, the joy of a call which, in addition to the way to the ministry, opened the road to marriage as well. The bride was Lien Dijkstra and the wedding was in Groningen. On October 30 the ordination and inauguration as minister of the divine Word (V.D.M.) followed. Anne de Vries, the well-known author of the Children's Story Bible and of various novels was a member of the flock and became a friend of the Loopstra's.

In spite of the threat of war which became a reality in Europe one year later, and in spite of increasing unrest in the churches, the years in Hijken

were happy ones. The manifold grace of God, unconquerable by war, violence or ecclesiastical troubles was distributed Sunday after Sunday, and place could be sought and given to young men who had to go underground to escape forced labour in Nazi Germany.

In 1943 Rev. Loopstra received and accepted a call to Hoogkerk, a town close to the city of Groningen. The church situation had in the meantime become critical. The road to the pulpit was blocked for candidate H.J. Schilder, who could not promise that he would abide by the doctrinal statements issued by the Synod of Sneek-Utrecht and confirmed and made binding by its successor, the Synod of Utrecht. Office-bearers were expected to teach nothing which was not in full agreement with the synodical pronouncements and disciplinary action was taken against, among many others, Prof. K. Schilder and Prof. S. Greijdanus. Refusing "to go beyond what is written" and to have any part in the persecution of them who wanted to live holy lives according to the Word of God, the Church at Hoogkerk was one of the first congregations which liberated itself from this binding and from the disciplinary actions resulting from it. The trustworthiness required from stewards was shown.

After a ministry of three years in Hoogkerk an urgent call was extended to Rev. Loopstra by the Church at Loosduinen, a suburb of the Hague. The number of ministers in the western part of the country was small in comparison to that in the northern part. That is what brought Rev. Loopstra to Loosduinen, and myself to Voorburg, both located in the region of the Classis the Hague. Meetings at classis were complimented by family get-togethers and so a friendship developed which remained a lasting one.

But to go back to Loosduinen, a fruitful ministry was interrupted in 1951 by a call from Canada. It did not surprise me that, in spite of the many things which had to be given up, Rev. Loopstra accepted the call. The matter of emigration and immigration had

already his interest and kept it over the years, when he not only ministered among immigrants, but was also appointed as a member of an international council for the immigration to Canada. Moreover, the pastoral work among immigrants in its multi-sided character attracted him. Before the end of 1951 the family sailed for their new country.

They were more than welcome, a welcome which was not restricted to the Canadian Reformed Churches at Georgetown (Orangeville) and at Hamilton, but also extended to the first Protestant Reformed Church of Hamilton which had withdrawn from the federation of Protestant Reformed Churches in the United States, but not joined the Canadian Reformed Church at its institution. No agreement could be found in the terms of union. The arrival of the minister, the first one in the Canadian Reformed Churches in Ontario, did not change the difference. It strengthened, however, the desire to find each other. Finally the stalemate was broken by the acceptance of a compromise which led to a union, but alas not to true unity. Differences remained which developed into insurmountable contrasts. The minister who had started his work in 1951 with so much enthusiasm was in danger of becoming the victim of the disunity when the majority of the consistory tried to suspend him. However, the refusal of the neighboring Church at Burlington to cooperate prevented this. When, nonetheless, the majority of the consistory decided to suspend the minister provisionally, two classes and the General Synod of Homewood-Carman declared the suspension and the suspending consistory illegitimate and recognized the brothers W. Loopstra, J.C.J. Kuntz and J.J. Knegt the legitimate consistory of the Church at Hamilton.

This whole matter hurt the congregation at Hamilton, and in particular its minister, and not to be forgotten the wife and children deeply. Time, the saying goes, heals *all* wounds. I doubt it! Wounds were healed in Hamilton when several brothers and sisters who had followed the majority of the con-

sistory, understood that they had been wrong and returned to the congregation. That is still possible! What a joy it would be!

Rev. Loopstra's health was impeded by back troubles which affected the functioning of one of his legs, and by frequent headaches. Nevertheless he did a lot of extra work for the publication of *Canadian Reformed Magazine*, which started in June 1952. Rev. Van Dooren was for a long time his helper as editor, and br. C. Ouwersloot as administrator, not to be forgotten as fourth one sister Diny Van der Hout who typed the insert, the news medley of those days, collected by Rev. Loopstra.

The Magazine was an excellent means to knit the brothers and sisters of East, Middle, and West closer together, as it still holds for *Clarion*. The education of the youth of the church at home and in school had the attention of Rev. Loopstra from the time he arrived in Canada. So had the training to the ministry. It was a deep joy for him when in 1969 the Theological College was established and

that Hamilton became the location for it. As first president of the Board of Governors his name remains connected with it. With the opening of Timothy elementary school in 1973 it was not different. The school had been an object of wrangling in the past. Now it became a joyful reality. Guido de Brès High School became another asset and what topped it all off was the completion of the church building, different from the building of 1957, which remained the property of the congregation.

In the last years of his active ministry Rev. Loopstra witnessed the growth of the congregation, but the work became too hard for him. Early retirement was granted after a ministry of 33 years of which almost 20 years in Hamilton.

Retirement agreed with our pastor emeritus and it opened up the possibility to devote more time to his hobby of gardening. When that became too much as well the coziness of hearth and home was enjoyed until in 1980 after a short illness sr. Lien Loopstra was taken from his side. The blow was

followed by a stroke which made us fear that he would not survive his wife for long. The Lord, however, gave recovery, and not only that, He granted our brother new happiness as well in his marriage with sr. Bartha Bartels, who could give him the love and care which no one else was able to provide. For a couple of years life could still be enjoyed. A new stroke which caused a partial loss of memory changed that. The care, however, was only intensified, and when it was no longer possible at home, was given in the hospital.

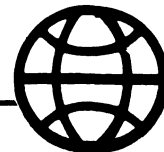
Whatever br. Loopstra forgot, he knew his wife, his and her children, the minister, his friends, and best of all his God and Father in Jesus Christ, whose grace had been sufficient for him.

"Moreover it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy." Willem Loopstra may have had his sins and shortcomings. The trustworthiness which was required of him was found with him as a gift of His Sender.

April 14, 1987

L. SELLES

INTERNATIONAL



JERUSALEM (DPA)

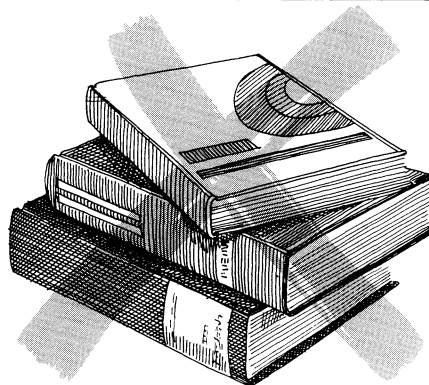
The Israeli Department of Education has issued an order forbidding the use of Bibles which contain both the Old and the New Testament.

"The Old Testament comes from God, the New Testament has been written by man," the assistant-director for religious matters declared. (ND)

WASHINGTON D.C. (ODNS)

Zulu king Goodwill Zwelethini Ka Bhekuzulu has warned that if apartheid in South Africa is "finally defeated by violence" this could lead to a full-scale tribal war.

"The whole world must know by now that democracies are not established through violent revolution, except in those truly rare historic occurrences of a Holy War being fought because there is nothing left to do. There is a lot left to do in South Africa before we reach the point where violence is justified on moral grounds."



SANTA ANA, CA (ODNS)

Unexpected developments in the drafting of Hong Kong's Basic Law, which will pop into effect when China assumes control of the British colony in 1997, has raised fears among the Christian community that religious freedoms will not be guaranteed under the new constitution. China Church expert Jonathan Chao said that if proposals currently being discussed are incorporated into the Basic Law, "One can expect that after 1997 the kind of religious freedom guaranteed by the

Basic Law would most likely be confined to pure religious activities such as worship, Bible study and prayer."

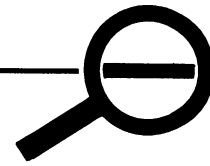
NEW YORK (RNS)

Describing secular humanism as a religion that does not believe in God, U.S. District Judge W. Brevard Hand has ordered Alabama's public schools to stop using 45 textbooks in which secular humanism is allegedly taught.

In his ruling against the textbooks Judge Hand wrote that "the most important belief of this religion is its denial of the transcendent and/or supernatural; there is no God, no creator, no divinity."

He found that the history books involved in the Alabama case "discriminate against the very concept of religion, and theistic religions in particular, by omissions so serious that a student learning history from them would not be apprised of relevant facts about America's history." (CN)

VO



Reviving the death penalty?

It appears that this Spring the Canadian parliament will engage in an extensive discussion (resulting in a “free vote”) on the controversial issue of “capital punishment.” Deputy Prime Minister Don Mazankowski introduced a motion in the House in February which seeks “in principle” restoration of the death penalty.

The discussion will undoubtedly become very heated and emotional. Those in favour of the return of the noose argue mostly in terms of deterrent or just retribution. Those who are against speak more in terms of redemption and forgiveness.

Statistics seem to bear out that the homicide rate has not increased since the death penalty was abolished in 1975. Of great concern is always that the return of the death penalty may lead to the execution of an innocent person. The death penalty is definitely irreversible.

Much use is being made of the case Donald Marshall, who spent eleven years in jail on a wrongful murder conviction, but who was released when someone else confessed to the crime. Interesting is in this regard the remark of Conservative MP Bill Domm (Peterborough) who said in *Maclean's* of March 16, 1987:

Maclean's: *Does it cheapen human life when the state takes a life?*

Domm: No, it doesn't. The sanctity of life is reinforced best by how we deal with persons who take life away from their victims. When someone violates the sanctity of life, they lose the right to their own life. Returning to capital punishment for those who take life away from an innocent person reinforces the sanctity of life.

Maclean's: *Many Canadian chiefs of police have said that capital punishment is not a deterrent, but retributive justice.*

Domm: These issues like deterrence, the cost of keeping a prisoner, the moral value of taking another person's life, are all peripheral. The main issue should be, is the death penalty just, and is it justified in the mind of society? There is a consensus in our society today that the death penalty is appropriate. I am satisfied that the victims of crime also support it as a just penalty.

Maclean's: *What about the case of Donald Marshall (the Nova Scotian who spent 11 years in jail after a wrongful murder conviction)?*

Domm: Donald Marshall was not convicted of first-degree murder. He would not have been put to death. There is not one example in Canada since Confederation of wrongful execution, as proven to be wrong by a court or government.

Maclean's: *But how would you feel if a person were wrongfully hanged?*

Domm: Upset. We're all human and apt to make mistakes. But the risk we're taking in putting deliberate murderers back on the streets again is far greater than the risk of executing a wrongfully convicted murderer. At the time of abolition in 1976 there were 13 convicts who had lost all of their appeals — murderers who are now coming up for parole. I wouldn't want it on my conscience that one of these people was back on the streets and murdering again.

The Banner, magazine of the Christian Reformed Church has also devoted some space to this issue. The gist seems to be: how can you be against abortion and then favour capital punishment? From the January 19, 1987 issue, I quote the following from an article by Robert de Moor, pastor of First Christian Reformed Church of Langley, BC.

Pro-life and pro-noose: an evangelical contradiction

I choked on my cheese bun. The federal member of parliament for the Langley, British Columbia, area attended our ministerial lunch gathering last month to listen, not to talk. That alone could have constricted a politically cynical windpipe or two. But there's more. One evangelical preacher after another held forth on the evils of abortion *and* on the need for the immediate reinstatement of the death penalty in Canada. All took a fiercely pro-life stance for the unborn. But, except for a Presbyterian and a Baptist colleague, all took an equally strong anti-life stance against murderers.

Related issues. How in the name of moral consistency can these two positions go together? If God asks us to pro-

claim the sanctity of human life in the case of the unborn, how can we suddenly pull on the reins, screech to a halt, and holler, “String 'im up,” in the case of an equally human felon?

Many Christians have never connected the two issues. Over tea one day a congregation member offered the view that the state could execute murderers because of the prohibitively high cost of sticking lawbreakers behind bars for life. He graciously dropped this position when he was reminded that the same argument would demand a pro-abortion stance. Abortion too provides the cheapest solution to unwanted life.

My Baptist preacher friend admits that like many evangelicals, he had always assumed that the Bible teaches a pro-life, pro-capital-punishment position, and that's that. But a debate in an evangelical magazine drove him to carefully weigh for himself the Scriptural evidence. That study made him reverse his previous position to adopt what he now considers a more consistent pro-life stand.

Although many people who are pro-capital punishment may not have thought through their position in connection with the abortion issue, some undeniably have. In *Faith Today* Clark Pinnock, professor of theology at McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, Ontario, writes, “Capital punishment is grounded precisely in respect for human life. It shows that society will not tolerate its cruel destruction. Simply that Olson (a mass murderer) is alive shows disrespect for life in Canada today. This view, combined with another liberal belief — that one should not intervene to prevent women from destroying innocent lives in their wombs — demonstrates the depth of moral depravity into which our society is falling. It's a sick society that allows a mass murderer to live but doesn't act to prevent the unborn from cruel slaughter.”

Pinnock's position seems sensible enough. He argues that the same Biblical principle calling us to value the life of the unborn applies to capital punishment. In the case of an unwanted pregnancy, Pinnock suggests, the state must show its respect for human life by inter-

vening to protect the fetus. And when someone has murdered another person, the state must demonstrate its respect for the life of the victim by using the strongest possible means to show the repulsiveness of the misdeed: execution of the criminal.

But does this follow? The two cases are not analogous. In the first case the state's task is one of prevention *before* the fact. In the second it is one of punishment *after* the fact. Scripture commands the state to prevent the wanton destruction of human life at any stage of its development. But that only justifies killing in self-defense or in order to protect the life of an intended victim. That does not yet force us to conclude that Scripture also demands the use of capital punishment in cases where the state has failed to prevent a murder from taking place.

Separate matters. Pinnock here compares moral apples to ethical oranges. The obligation to prevent murder and the obligation to punish it are two separate matters. Scriptural warrant to use the sword in the one instance does not necessarily require its use in the other. Would Pinnock insist that the state execute every person who willingly had an abortion and every medical practitioner who willingly assisted in one?

Pinnock also fails to prove that the state shows less respect for human life if it lets murderers live. By refusing to stoop to the same violent behavior used by the criminal and by using a form of punishment that demonstrates its resolve to prevent any further destruction of God-created life, the state may well show *greater* respect for life, not *less*, if it lets murderers live.

The very fact that Canada allows even mass murderers like Olson to keep breathing demonstrates its high view of human life. So does the fact that it commits thousands of dollars a year to keep him away from the public. That expenditure testifies to the government's commitment to protect life: regardless of cost, the state permits no more killing, by Olson or by anyone else, including itself. This makes the failure of the Canadian government to prevent abortion even more bitterly ironic. Its own high view of human life expressed in its treatment of murderers is hopelessly inconsistent with its failure to protect the unborn.

Preventive or punitive? Pinnock's argument could still hold if one could demonstrate that the threat of capital punishment acts as an effective deterrent. In that retroactive way it would be preventive as well as punitive. But the facts show otherwise. In Canada, as well as in most nations that have done away with capital punishment, the per capita murder rate has declined since capital punishment was abolished. It seems that prospective murderers harbor the thought of rotting in the slammer for the rest of their useful lives with as much distaste

as the idea of having their neck stretched. Both punishments serve equally well to make would-be murderers think twice about going through with their evil intent.

Pinnock's position is strongest when he simply argues that the Bible demands protection of the unborn and demands capital punishment and he leaves well



"It is . . . clear on what the death penalty is based, namely, respect for human life: 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in His own image' "

enough alone. His attempt to place both imperatives under the unifying principle of respect for life is too problematic.

Forfeiture of right. Another evangelical colleague with whom I talked follows another tack in trying to explain how he can be both pro-life and pro-capital punishment. He argues that the state must recognize and protect the right of life of all human beings, including unborn infants. But murderers have forfeited that right because they themselves have taken away that right from their victims. There-

fore the state must put things right. He admits that the Biblical warrant for this is not the law of Moses, because that law has been fulfilled in Christ. He points to the command given by God to Noah: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man" (Gen. 9:6). Since God owns all human life, He has the right to command when humans shall protect it and when they shall take it. Capital punishment is the payment God demands for murder. True, God can and does forgive murderers if they repent of their crime. But His forgiveness extends only to the murderer's spiritual life, and he or she must still face the consequence God has ordained for the sin.

Some nagging questions arise, though when we take this approach. True, God has the right to decide whom He wants alive and whom He wants dead. But does Genesis 9:6 really make a universal demand? If so, why does it appear in the form of a "wisdom saying" rather than in the normal command form for God-given ordinances? Furthermore, how do we explain God's protection of Cain? Why did He not require capital punishment for murderers such as Moses and David? Makes you wonder, doesn't it?

Furthermore, what does the Second Adam's creation of a new humanity and a new age mean in relation to crime and punishment? Does Romans 13:4 really refer to the executioner's sword or only to the small ceremonial sword that symbolizes the right to govern? It seems that Scriptural evidence is not clear at all. The claim that murderers have forfeited their God-given right to life remains in the fog of questionable conclusions about the intent of Scripture itself.

The study report contained in the *Acts of Synod 1981* deals extensively with those questions and provides a very responsible guide for further study. But one conclusion seems unavoidable. The Biblical injunction to protect all human life is so unambiguous that the burden of proof must rest with those who advocate capital punishment. They must show that it really *is* morally consistent to be both pro-life and pro-capital punishment. My evangelical friends have yet to convince me.

From *The Reformed Herald* (a publication of the Reformed Church in the U.S.) I take over the following article written by the Rev. Robert Grossmann.

Capital confusion

In recent years we have seen the interesting phenomenon of serious Christians making common cause with all kinds of nominal Christians and unbelievers in the important struggle against legalized abortion. This cooperation among people of various faiths have produced one of the strongest efforts for righteousness to enter the political arena in our country in years. In this attempt to bring righ-

teousness to bear in the judicial process, we rejoice. Also in the opportunity to work with others in the community toward righteous ends, we participate in the confidence that this too is a way of serving the Lord. At the same time the "pro-life" movement, as the anti-abortion movement has come to be known, raises a number of questions for serious Christians that we must face if we are truly to serve the Lord.

The question I wish to address in this brief article is that of why we are to oppose abortion. I wish to address this question because the Christian has by nature quite a different reason for disapproving abortion from the reason given by unbelievers and only nominal Christians, and it is becoming increasingly apparent that well-meaning Christians are becoming confused in their thinking. This confusion is apparent when the added subject of capital punishment is brought into the picture and Christians find themselves unable to defend being opposed to abortion while at the same time approving of capital punishment for certain crimes. There is simply no contradiction or even tension between opposing abortion and supporting capital punishment if we are doing both of those things for Biblical reasons.

The problem arises even in the name given to the "pro-life" movement because it is assumed by that title that we ought to oppose abortion because of the great, or even infinite, value of human life. Human life is indeed extremely valuable but its value does not arise in and out of itself. Human life is extremely valuable because man is made in the image of God. Abortion is murder because it is premeditatedly destroying the life of a child conceived and created in the image of God. Murder is wrong, however, not because of the "infinite value" of human life but because God forbids it. To forbid abortion because of the "infinite value" of life is to place the value of life above the law and justice of God and to confuse the issue. That is simply un-Biblical and wrong. Biblically, human life belongs to God and He reserves to Himself the ruling about when it should be given and when it should be taken.

Right from the beginning, God declares that human life is *not* of more value than is the law and justice of God. God, on the basis of His perfect justice, tells man that the very day in which he eats of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he will certainly die. That immediate spiritual death ultimately results in physical death some years later. The point is that man's life cannot claim importance above the law of God but indeed is subject to it. The fact that every man in the history of the world has died or will die, shows that the righteous judgment of God upon human life is true and universal. The special exceptions of Enoch and Elijah as well as the believers alive

at the end of the world, and the special inclusion of Jesus Christ into this rule of death do not contradict but indeed demonstrate and establish this justice of God. God is not a murderer yet He kills every human being.

On top of all this, the physical death of a Christian is no longer a demonstra-

"It must also be remembered that even if a sin is forgiven, one may still have to bear the legal consequences."

tion of God's justice, but only a "dying to sin and an entering into eternal life" (Heidelberg Catechism, Q./A. 42). Thus to believe in the "infinite value" of physical human life is to miss the point both of God's justice *and* of the difference between the spiritual nature of the death of the Christian and that of the unbeliever. Furthermore, the death even of the unbeliever is not the worst thing that can or will happen to him. The condemnation of eternal hell is by far worse than the pains of even the worst physical death. Not realizing this, the unbeliever is the slave of the fear of physical death (Hebrews 2:15): the Christian is not.

The Bible-believing Christian is opposed to abortion for exactly the same reason he is in favor of capital punishment. God's law forbids one and demands the other. What it amounts to is that Genesis 9:6 and its parallels in Scripture forbid murder as a commandment of God and require capital punishment, also as a commandment of God, because "man is made in the image of God." To accept the unbeliever's reasons for forbidding abortion is to elevate man's life above the justice of God, which is to fall into the trap of humanism. To oppose capital punishment for any reason is also to elevate something, be it man's life or whatever, above the law and justice of God.

Even worse, to oppose capital punishment in principle, is to deny the very heart of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. The gospel, the true gospel, is that God sent His Son to die in our place, that is, to suffer capital punishment for our sins. Furthermore, the Bible teaches that the death of Christ was to fulfill the *justice* of God Himself. Jesus bore the penalty which God's justice righteously demanded for our sins, a penalty which included both physical and spiritual death. Now, if capital punishment is wrong, it was wrong for God to execute His Son, and it was wrong for Jesus willingly to bear that execution for us. The Bible's teaching about the death of the first Adam and that of the Second Adam demands that we approve the principle of capital punishment as just, righteous, and good. To oppose capital punishment is fundamentally inconsistent with the heart of Christianity.

Thus we see how careful we must be in dealing with moral issues in general and in working together with unbelievers even to promote righteousness. We must be always on our guard not to accept the ways and thinking, the reasoning and the assumptions, of the world. The ends do not justify the means; they do not even justify the reasons for seeking the ends. The *only* ground on which Christians may choose goals, means to those goals, and reasons for those goals, is the authority of God speaking in His word. To stand on any other authority is to invite and to participate in capital confusion.

Perhaps all the above gives ample room for further thought and discussion. Rev. Grossman makes some noteworthy comments on the real value of human life. It must also be remembered that even if a sin is *forgiven*, one may still have to bear the legal *consequences*. The atoning death of Christ does not rule out any further retribution in specific situations.

It seems to me that the only valid ground for the reinstating of capital punishment is that the LORD demands retribution in His Word. Dr. J. Douma, professor of Ethics at Kampen, the Netherlands has written the following, "It is . . . clear on what the death penalty is based, namely, respect for human life: 'Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in His own image'" (*De Tien Geboden II*, vandenBerg, Kampen, 1986, page 172). He also points to Romans 13:4 where is stated that the government does not bear "the sword" in vain.

It should be clear that the death penalty cannot be applied today as it was in Israel. We do live in a different dispensation. It can only be a very extreme measure which must be applied with utmost discretion.

C

CHURCH NEWS



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CL. STAM

“Evangelical” and “Reformed”: synonyms, antonyms or homonyms?₂

Methodism

In the fifth place, evangelicalism has also been influenced by *Methodism*. Methodism, in turn, it has to be said has been influenced by arminianism and pietism. It is no secret that the founders of Methodism, the Wesleys, John and Charles, and to a lesser extent, George, were acquainted with the pietistic Moravian Brethren and their emotional view of faith. It is also the case that their strong emphasis on the free will of man and the need for man to make a choice for Jesus finds its roots in Arminian thought. In addition, the Methodists also placed great emphasis on the need for revivals. Mission work was one of their dominant themes; however, it was a work that transcended different churches and often by-passed them altogether. Although it would later be organized along ecclesiastical lines, Methodism has always had a strong anti-ecclesiastical disposition.

To what extent Methodism has made a totally new contribution to evangelicalism may be hard to say. More than anything else it has served to reinforce certain elements that were already present in the movement. Although if we were to look for Methodistic distinctives in evangelicalism, it may well be in the area of missions and evangelism, as well as the place of para-church organizations. Methodism stressed its revivals and its soul-winning without the official approval of the Anglican Church. It was independent, if not scornful, of the church. And that is also an aspect of modern evangelicalism. It still has a great love for mission work, for crusades or revivals, but it often channels that respect through para-church organizations like Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade for Christ, the Navigators, etc.

Dispensationalism

In the sixth place, evangelicalism has been influenced by *Darbyism* or *Dispensationalism*. In the 19th century John Nelson Darby began to gather disgruntled Christians together for Bible study. After some time, this group called itself the “Brethren” or “the Plymouth Brethren.”

Any professing Christian could join them in their informal services. They shunned all special clergy and conducted their meetings without any real liturgical structure. They looked at the New Testament church as their model. Out of this group there now emerged a new approach to interpreting Biblical prophecy called “dispensationalism.” This approach is known for literal interpretation of Scripture, for its different stages of revelation, for its distinction between Israel and the church, for its insistence on an earthly restoration of the Old Testament Davidic kingdom by Christ, and for its rapture idea.

But now in what way has this movement had repercussions on evangelicalism? To a large extent it has shaped the eschatology of evangelicalism. The fact that many evangelicals are premillennialist, that they believe in a literal restoration of Israel, that they are confused about how Israel and the church relate to each other, that they often approach Scripture literalistically indicates that dispensationalism has left its mark on evangelicalism.

Fundamentalism

In the seventh place we must pay some attention to what is called *fundamentalism*. In actual fact it arose after the first World War as a movement intent on reaffirming orthodox protestantism and defending it against the attacks of liberal theology, German higher criticism, Darwinianism, and other influences regarded as harmful to American life. It obtained its name from the fact that between 1910-15 twelve volumes were published called *The Fundamentals*. They attacked a wide range of enemies to the faith. As time marched on, a number of distinctives could be noted in this movement. It championed with great zeal the authority of the Bible, although its use of Scripture often lacked an eye for the redemptive historical development in Scripture and degenerated into excessive proof-texting. It championed as well, and it still does so, the cause against evolution. But while many of its criticisms are on target, it has to be said that often fundamentalism displays an anti-intellectual, anti-scientific attitude. Also, funda-

mentalism as a reform movement continues to be on the lookout against all that would undermine the American way of life. Fundamentalism and patriotism are never far apart. But again it has to be said that often there is excess here. The beginnings of America are idolized. The stress on so-called “Judaic-Christian values” is vague and ill-defined. There is an easy identification made between certain American institutions and Scripture, i.e., democracy is Christian, free enterprise is Christian, nuclear weapons are Christian, etc.

Yes, and now to a larger and lesser extent much of this has also found its way into evangelicalism. Evangelicals too have a high view of Scripture; however, the way that they handle Scripture often leaves something to be desired. Texts are learned and applied but often without regard to their context or their fulfillment. On the social side, issues and problems are often reduced to simple terms and simple solutions. There is little understanding of history and of how others in the church of all ages have dealt with these matters. Evangelicalism often borders on being, if not anti-historical, than at least unhistorical.

Pentecostalism

Finally, there is the influence of *pentecostalism*. Although on the one hand, pentecostalism is a relatively new phenomenon, it has to be said that many of its emphases are not new. Its stress on the emotional and the subjective can be traced back to pietism. Its stress on rebaptism can be traced to anabaptism. Its evangelistic zeal can be traced back to methodism. Its view of Scripture tends toward fundamentalism.

But in what way has pentecostalism now had a bearing on evangelicalism? It has once again introduced into evangelicalism a fresh emphasis on the subjective and the emotional. Given the fact that pentecostals are commonly said to belong to evangelicalism, that movement shows a willingness to entertain, if not the whole pentecostal position, at least parts of it. It has taken over its stress, if not its pre-

occupation, with the Holy Spirit and His gifts. It has become more favourably disposed towards religious individualism. It has placed spiritual gifts, holiness, and sanctification so much at the forefront that other doctrines often pale in significance.

Evangelical and Reformed: homonyms

Well now, such is the evangelical movement and such are some of the influences that have shaped it. In describing them you will understand already that I do not consider the terms "evangelical" and "Reformed" to be synonyms. But does that mean that they are antonyms, complete opposites? We must avoid such a reaction. Between these two designations there is much common ground: a great respect for Scripture, a stress on sanctification in the Christian life, a zeal for missions, a place for the Holy Spirit, a longing for social action and reform.

There are definitely things that we should appreciate here, even learn from. The dedication of evangelicals to personal Bible study, to prayer, to holy living, to witnessing, at times may even put us to shame.

Yet, there must also be reservations: the anti-covenantal element that comes out in their rejection of infant baptism, the championing of the invisibility of the church at the expense of its visibility, their subjectivism, their approach to conversion, their individualism, their fragmented use of Scripture, their proneness to pursue simplistic solutions to complex social problems, their view of the human will. And so while "evangelical" and "Reformed" may not be synonyms nor antonyms, the best that can be said is that they are homonyms. The two words may sound the same to many people, but there is a marked difference between them.

To be Reformed

Yet that raises the other question, "What does it mean to be Reformed?" Perhaps we have given a hint of that already because of criticisms here and there of evangelicalism, but let us try to make ourselves clear not just in negative terms but also in positive ones. Some assume that to be "Reformed" means to be an adherent to the five points of Calvinism, but such a view is too narrow. Some think that it means to be "Dutch" in background and in thought, but that is parochialism of the worst sort. John Bolt in his recent book *Christian and Reformed Today* says that "a Reformed person is trinitarian in theology and catholic in vision," (p. 20). Here we come closer to the heart of the matter, but such a definition is still too limited. It might just as well describe Ro-

man Catholics, who also consider themselves to be trinitarian and catholic.

If we are to summarize what it means to be Reformed, then we need to say more and be more aware of the distinctives. As such I would suggest to you that the following characteristics capture what it means to be Reformed in distinction from evangelicalism:

(1) The Reformed stress the sovereignty of God in salvation. While evangelicalism makes concessions to human will and ability, the Reformed view is that man is totally unable when it comes to salvation. It is the divine initiative and intervention that must be stressed over and over again.

(2) The Reformed stress the centrality of the Scriptures for all of life. As such, these Scriptures are infallible in nature, unified in content, and progressive in their unfolding. In the study of the Word, close attention must always be paid to context, to hermeneutics, to fulfillment. As regards the preaching of the Word, it must be more than a homily or a human interest story; it must busy itself with real explanation and application of the Word.

(3) The Reformed stress that the church must have a pivotal place in the lives of God's people. The church with its disciplines, its offices, its sacraments, its polity, its liturgy, its visible and invisible aspects, its striving for true unity and ecumenicity, all of these must be constantly in view.

(4) The Reformed stress the personal-corporate character of the Christian faith. God is busy today calling not just loose individuals, but His purpose remains the gathering of a people, a covenant community. At the same time all who are being gathered have a place and a calling to live in love and new obedience with the Lord. There are those who say that among us, Reformed believers, salvation is almost automatic and grace is cheap. Once you have been baptized you have arrived. If we have given such an impression, then we must state categorically that it is not so. We do not believe in easy grace, cheap grace, or presumed grace. We believe that God calls each of His children to embrace the blessings of the covenant through faith and to obey the demands of the covenant in terms of love, holiness, and complete dedication.

(5) The Reformed stress that Jesus Christ is Lord of all of life. His Word must be the norm in the social, political, economic areas of our existence. As such Christ is more than Master of the believer's soul; He is to be regarded as the One before whom all peoples must bow, before whom every enterprise must bend, and in whose light every endeavour must be seen. What this requires is more than verbal assent; it calls for thorough thought and understanding of both the intricacies

of life and the deep implications of the gospel. The Reformed do not play heart over against head, or head over against heart; they state that as believers we must work for the Lord with our heads and with our hearts.

(6) The Reformed stress that the history of God's dealings with His people in the past must be studied and not ignored. They are vigilant when it comes to upholding their links with the past and with the church of all ages. It is vitally important to them that the catholic dimension of the church not be lost sight of ever.

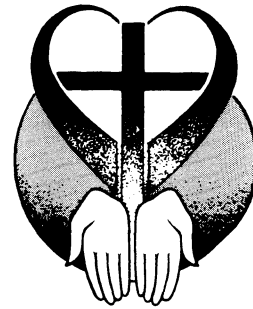
(7) The Reformed stress the place and the relevance of confessional formulations to shape and promote the life of God's people. Most of evangelicalism tends to be anti-confessional. Evangelicals have no use for what they regard as mere human formulas and are fearful that such may well come between them and the Word. On the other hand, the Reformed know from history that creeds are necessary and meaningful when it comes to educating the youth, to defending the truth, to promoting unity.

(8) The Reformed stress that the people of God must not only be Reformed but always reforming. To stagnate or to think that one has arrived — such attitudes are among the enemies that must be resisted. Constantly and conscientiously the people of God must test their life and practice, their teaching and doctrine, their assumptions and presuppositions, by the light of God's holy Word. Neither tradition or custom must govern, but the Spirit's counsel through the Scriptures must always be respected and heeded.

In closing, we must be firmly aware of what it means to be Reformed in today's world. There are so many who carry the name but who have not understood its meaning. Every time when there are some who leave their Reformed heritage behind and opt for the world of evangelicalism, for one or other Baptist, Pentecostal or Alliance church, I grieve. I do so not because they have forfeited their salvation. Who am I to make such a judgment? No, I mourn because what they are doing is impoverishing themselves. Instead of going on to something better, they go on to something less, to something filled with dangers, to something lacking consistency, depth and understanding.

Realize this, and realize it very well. It is a blessing to know the Reformed faith, and it is all the more a blessing when we consider what we deserve. We should rejoice in our heritage but we may never let it become a source of pride and arrogance. Be humbly thankful, always — and in such a spirit of humility go out and spread the beauties of the Reformed, Catholic, Christian faith to others.

J. VISSCHER



CRWRF

Plight of the refugees

The 1970s and 80s are becoming known, sadly, as the era of the homeless. Though this century has long known a refugee problem, most notably after World War II, natural disasters, famine, oppression, and war have again produced landmark numbers of displaced persons. Most recently, the news is of millions of hardy Afghans forced to flee their home by Soviet oppressors,¹ of Kampuchean refugees being turned out of the camp that has become home, of many from El Salvador and Guatemala seeking entry into Canada. They are representatives of a larger, global problem. In fact, an estimated 10 million people today have had to leave their native countries and seek refuge elsewhere.

More than half of this number live in camps in four main areas: Africa, Pakistan and India, Mexico and Central America, and South-East Asia. The prospects for these people are dismal. Most are condemned to long-term existence in camps since return to their homelands is rendered impossible by war, famine, or foreign (often communist) rule. Many, due to sickness, poverty, and lack of skills,

have little chance of resettling elsewhere.

So while the weeks stretch to months and years, how do these people, deprived of their homes, livelihoods, and often their families, survive? The answer lies in assistance by host governments, in services provided by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and in the dedication of numerous Volunteer Relief organizations.

For instance, in THAILAND, approximately 125,000 refugees are registered in camps. Additional tens of thousands live in evacuation sites at the Kampuchean (formerly Cambodian) border. The mass exodus occurred after Saigon fell to the Communists in 1975 and after the Kmer Rouge began its systematic genocide of the Cambodian people. Many lost their lives in the attempt to escape.

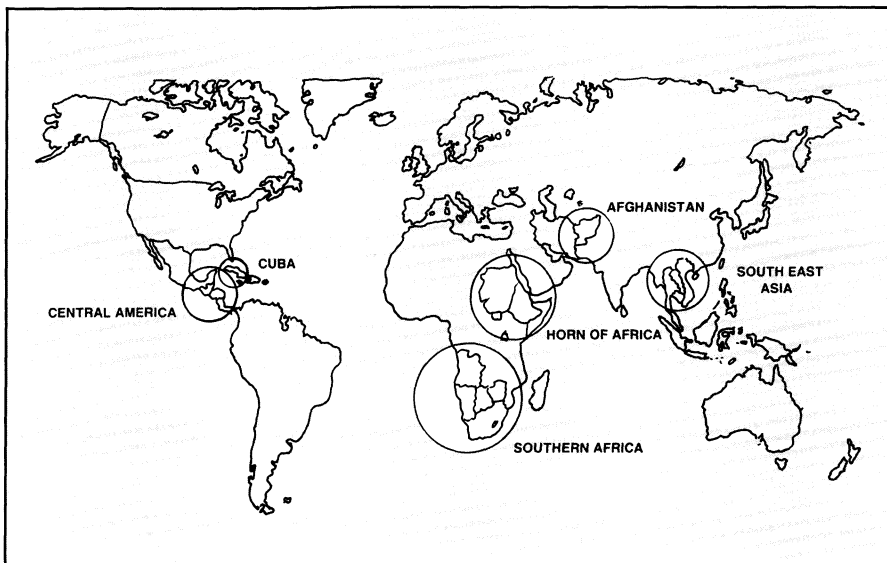
The Thai government has provided asylum and food rations to these people for over a decade now, while voluntary organizations such as ZOA provide health care and numerous other services. Understandably, the Thais are growing weary of playing host to people they expected would be only temporary guests. Through

various means, the government is attempting to put increasing pressure on people to leave. For example, the refugees are largely restricted to the camps (approx. 45,000 in a mere 1.4 sq. km. in Ban Vinai alone), food rations are being reduced, and as of January of this year, all salaries to refugee workers in the camps are greatly reduced or discontinued. And Ban Vinai is considered fortunate when compared with a camp such as Khao I Dang, which has been officially closed. (See separate article for more information and ways to help.)

Still, in spite of government pressure, the numbers at Ban Vinai diminish only slowly. Some resettle, but babies are born and new refugees arrive. For most, the option of living under communist rule is no option at all. Very few volunteer to go back "home" to Laos even when the UNHCR encourages this route and attempts to guarantee the safety of those who choose it. Resettlement in the west is also impossible for many due to health, age, or even — fear. So the years in the camps drag on.

Kor VanderHelm, ZOA's new Director for Thailand, reported recently that after a long wait, a Joint Volunteer Agency team came unexpectedly to Ban Vinai to pre-screen refugees who had applied for resettlement. On the basis of this, approx. 1200 people were moved to Panath Nikhom Transit camp in January. VanderHelm writes, "On the one hand, it is a relief for many refugees that doors are open again. On the other hand it causes a lot of stress, e.g., young people who have been waiting for one year to be interviewed, hoping for a new future, have a very hard time when they hear after a short conversation that they will not be accepted for resettlement. Also, families become divided again: there are disputes between parents hoping for resettlement to Laos, and their children, who often prefer to resettle in the U.S." Among parents often still retain hopes that the small Laotian resistance army will be able to overthrow the present regime and they will be able to return to their former lifestyle. Also, many are aware that repatriation in a vastly different culture is not easy.

The health care program which ZOA



The Refugee Camps

operates at Ban Vinai, and which our gifts help support, continues to operate well and contributes to the quality of life of those who must live there. Much has been accomplished in the past year towards the goal of turning over more responsibility for health care to refugee medics and nurses. The number of expatriates is gradually being reduced as Hmongs are trained to take on more demanding tasks. Thankfully, Ban Vinai's relatively stable environment facilitates the growth of the program, for compared to the war situations at the Kmer border, it is a quiet place.

Kampuchean refugees know fear again

The Thai government, long wearied by the strain of supporting tens of thousands of refugees, is taking strong measures to diminish their numbers. One way is to make life in the camps tougher. Food rations are being reduced and salaries to refugee workers are being cut or totally eliminated. Much more drastic, however, is the government's decision to completely close one of the camps — the Khao I Dang camp — and deport all the Kampuchians who have sought refuge there to the Thai-Kampuchean border.

Ban Vinai, though threatened, as all the camps, with similar closure, has received, and will likely continue to receive, more sympathetic treatment at least for some time yet, according to Mr. H. Huberts, Executive Director for ZOA. This is because most of its residents are members of the Hmong tribe; since Northern Thailand is home to many Hmongs also, there is a greater feeling of responsibility towards these people than to the Kampuchean refugees.

So far, reportedly 250 Khao I Dang refugees (possibly hundreds more by the time this article reaches publication) have been moved back to the border camps. They will likely receive food handouts and basic necessities there from the UNHCR and relief organizations, but long-term prospects are extremely dismal. Frequent armed raids during the night, particularly during the dry season, cause much fear and numerous casualties. The Vietnamese are in control of Kampuchea, but are still opposed by three factions, the largest of which is the Kmer Rouge. Often conflicts with the Vietnamese, or even amongst these three factions, "spill over" into the border areas, and the defenceless refugees suffer again.

Their situation is pitiful, for they have no official refugee status and thus are ineligible for anything more than very basic services, nor are they eligible for repatriation. They simply exist — old people, infants, teenagers, and adults — waiting for the next attack, no real future in sight. Their only hope is that the political situa-



A Hmong lady at Ban Vinai dressed in typical garb

tion in Kampuchea will change: that the Vietnamese will withdraw, allowing Kampuchea autonomy, a situation which though far from ideal, would be "liveable" for many. So far, there are few signs that this will happen.

Thai government policy is first to deport all residents of Khao I Dang who bear illegal status. This includes anyone who arrived after the camp was officially closed in 1985, people who until now have survived without rations, dependant on the daily generosity of friends and family in the camp. The government is in the process of moving this group back to the border areas.

Next to be deported will be those who have been "legal" residents for only a few years, and lastly, the approximately 13,000 who have been there the longest, many waiting eight years already in hope of finding a safe home.

Unless these people find sponsors in the West and find them soon, they will have no choice but to face the dangers and uncertainties of the border camps, all prospect of stable, healthy homes for themselves and their children lost. Thailand no longer wants them, and return to Kampuchea means, at best, the prospect of long terms spent in "reeducation" camps.

It is unlikely that all or even most of Khao I Dang residents will find refuge in

the West as they desire, but surely we can do our part to bring freedom to at least some of these unfortunate people. Resettlement in the West is not without attendant difficulties for these people who have known a vastly different lifestyle, but it is certainly preferable to living in fear.

We urge those who see themselves able to sponsor an individual or family, to act immediately. Sponsors could be church groups such as the many committees without our churches which responded generously to the "boat-people" crisis six or seven years ago. Perhaps some of these committees could be reactivated. Sponsorship could also be carried by any other group of individuals or families who agree together to share this burden. For it does involve much work and commitment. Sponsors must agree to provide moral and financial support for a refugee's resettlement for a period of up to one year (often less if those involved are able to find work). Practically, this commitment translates into finding appropriate housing, furnishings, and clothing, helping to search for employment, providing rides to and from medical appointments, etc., for the first little while, etc.

If you as a group can see your way clear to make this commitment, it will mean new hope for those who would otherwise know only despair. Perhaps (but this would have to be explored further), special collections in local churches, pledges from individuals, deaconal support, or CRWRF contributions could help provide needed funds.

Please prayerfully consider your involvement in this area. Then contact us as soon as possible for information on what the next step is. Any special donations for this particular work are, of course, most welcome!

The Burlington Ebenezer Refugee Aid Committee, active like so many others, in helping refugees from S.E. Asia resettle, most recently assisted Chou Vang in leaving the Ban Vinai Camp in Thailand and moving to Kitchener, where he was reunited with relatives. He is just one of the approx. 16,000 from this area accepted by the Canadian government each year. We felt it would be worthwhile to have an "insider's" view of the camp our gifts help support and Chou readily agreed to tell us his story.² Here it is:

I, Chou Vang, came from Ban Vinai Camp in Thailand. I am 20 years old. My nationality is Laotian, but my ethnic origin is Hmong. In April, 1980, I fled from Laos to Thailand with my cousins, leaving my parents behind in Laos. I came to live with my cousins and some relatives in Ban Vinai.

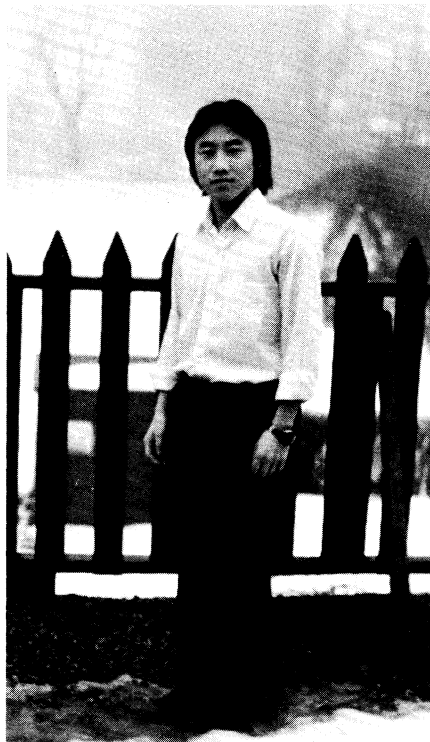
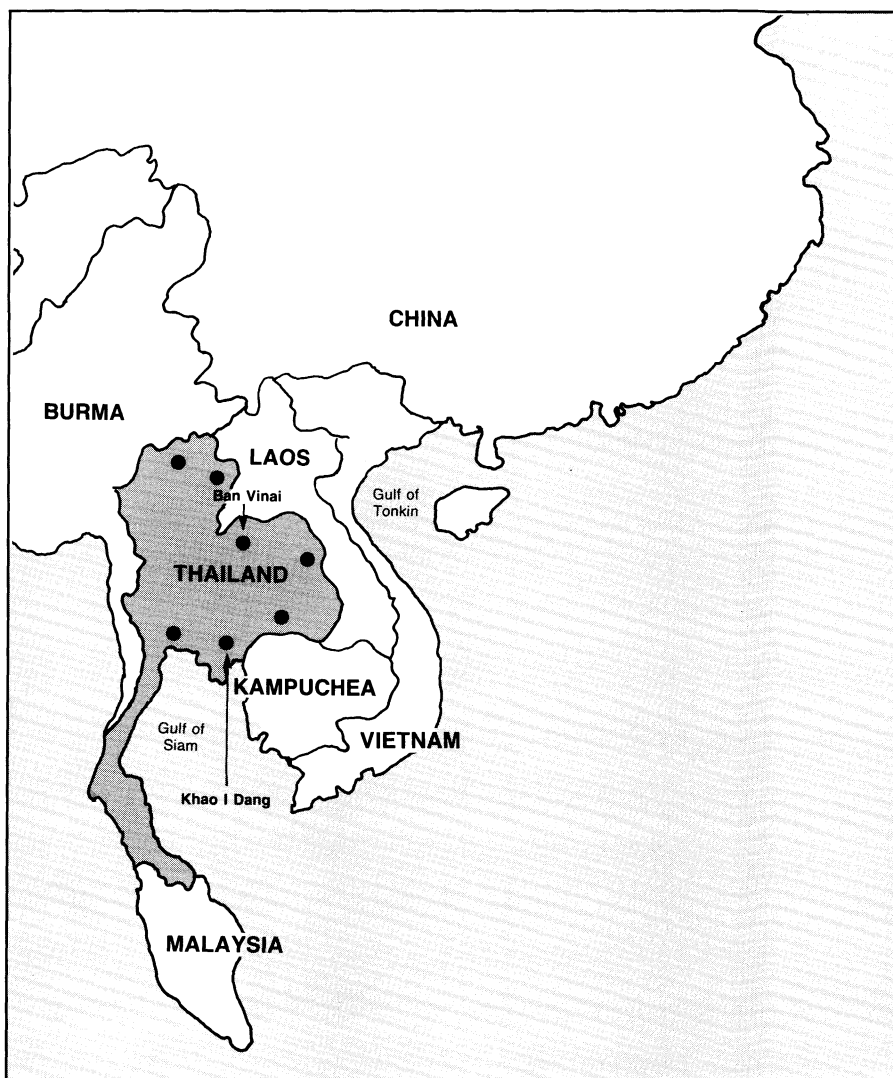
Ban Vinai Camp is divided into centres. The purpose of this is to divide the people into groups so it will be easier for the camp supervisor to distribute food,

etc. Each group has approximately 6,000 people. The population of the present camp is about 45,000 and is subject to change due to new people arriving from Laos, children being born, or people leaving the camp to go to other countries.

Some people who want to emigrate just cannot get accepted by the Immigration Ambassador. Some people feel they will be betrayed by themselves or by others if they emigrate, but others just are not able to leave because they have grandparents or parents who are not willing to leave and want to return to their homeland. These problems occur to many families in the camp, which they can't help and they are caught in the middle.

The camp is under guard by the Thai military officers and Pakchom District Police. The camp itself is very restricted, with people going out and coming in. Camp residents have to get permission from the Thai Military Officer before going outside the camp. Otherwise, if the police catch anybody outside the camp without permission, he may be put in jail. All these regulations are controlled by the Thai government with an agreement with the UNHCR. Food, water, and firewood have to be brought from outside the camp because the people are confined in a small area and cannot grow crops.

Being one of the refugee people in this camp, I think life is suffocating. It is



Chou Vang

like a mouse running from a cat who runs into a trap and is hoping to be free one day.

While I lived at Ban Vinai, I went to school and studied the Thai language for two years. After that, I went to work for the UNHCR as an assistant registrar and an interpreter among the Hmong people in the camp. Part of my job was to register all newborn babies into files and people who departed or arrived to live in the camp.

I worked for the UNHCR until June, 1984, and then stopped because I and my cousins were being sponsored to come to Canada by my brother-in-law in Kitchener and with the help of the Canadian Reformed Church in Burlington, Ontario. I was moved from Ban Vinai to a camp in Panath Nikchom near Bangkok. I waited there for my medical check-up for six months till my name was called out to come to Canada. I got here in January, 1985.

At first, it was difficult for me be-

cause I couldn't speak English well and everything was different. Of course, my language is totally different and also I was not used to the cold weather Canada has. In other ways, I was also homesick. But I was very thankful for all those who helped sponsor my cousins and me.

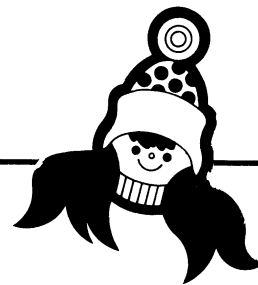
¹More on their situation in an upcoming article.

²Written in 1986.

Gifts for the work of CRWRF may be directed to:

CRWRF
PO Box 797
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y7

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



Dear Busy Beavers,

Did you stop to think about Mother's Day?
"Oh, yeah, I have to get her something yet," somebody will say.

I want to ask you just one little question.
"Why?"

Maybe you will say, "Why what?"

Why do we "get" something for Mom?

"Oh, well," you say, "I love my Mom."

Maybe somebody will say, "My Mom's special!"

But I think every Mom is special.

Don't forget there's no team exactly like you and your Mom.

You were made for each other!

That's right, the Lord gave you your Mom, and He gave you to your Mom.

Mother's Day is a great time to show your Mom "I'm glad you are my Mom."

How about MAKING something for her. You know what you can make best.

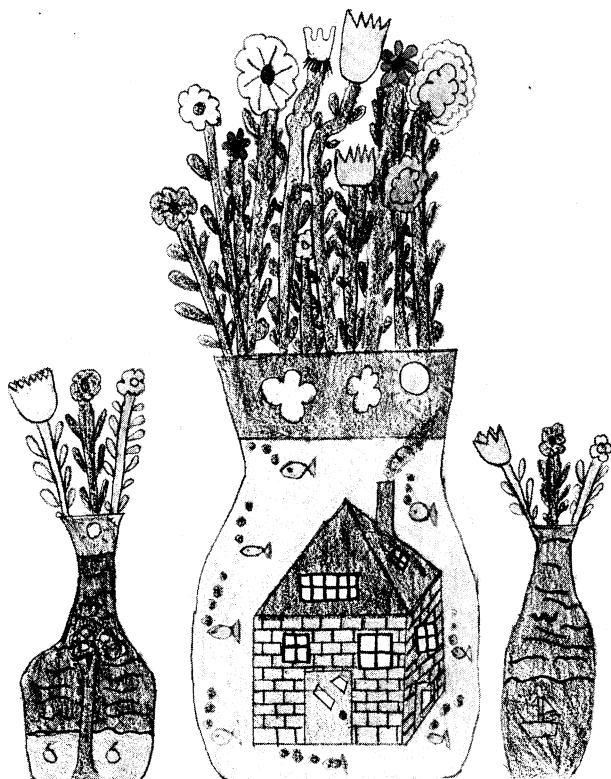
Or — how about DOING something for her. You know what you do best.

I know she'll be thankful.

And she'll say, "And I'm glad you're mine!"

Here is a picture for you by Busy Beaver Sarah Vander-Bruggen.

We could call it FLOWERS FOR MOTHER'S DAY.



MOTHERS IN THE BIBLE

- All the ladies in the neighbourhood were happy for baby Obed's grandma. His mother was _____.
- This lady became the mother of the herald of the Saviour. Her name was _____.
- This mother made a little basket boat to save her baby boy from the command of the wicked king. Her name was _____.
- _____ helped her son deceive his blind old father by pulling goat skin over his hands and neck!
- This _____ woman received her son back from the dead at Elisha's prayer.
- _____ prayed at the tabernacle in Shiloh for a son.
- _____ was the very first woman to become a mother.
- An angel called Gabriel told _____ she would be the mother of the Saviour.
- _____ received a son from the Lord long after he had been promised to her husband.
- The Saviour Himself raised from the dead the 12-year-old daughter of _____ wife.

(see answers)

May

"Happy Birthday" and "Many Happy Returns of the Day" to ALL the Busy Beavers celebrating a birthday in the beautiful month of May!

Here's hoping you have a thankful, wonderful day (or even days maybe!) with your family and friends. May the Lord bless and keep you in the year ahead.

Melanie Veenendaal	1 Jennifer Siebenga	18
Darlene Vanderpol	3 Beth Kingma	19
Hilda Buitenhuis	4 Kimberly Kamphuis	20
Felicia Viersen	5 Tracy Bos	21
Jacoba Harlaar	6 Jason Wierenga	22
Heather Krabbendam	6 Brian Jager	24
Donna Pieffers	7 Becky Heemskerk	25
Geraldine Schenkel	7 Loren Van Assen	25
Timothy Van Popta	9 Wendy Vander Veen	26
*Rebecca Boersema	10 Sylvia Admiraal	28
Sara Vanderpol	14 Michelle DeHaas	28
Quirina Bikker	16 Donald Woltjer	29
Mariet Nap	16 Bryan Bos	31
Karen Jonker	18 Christina Bredenhof	31

*Busy Beavers, Rebecca lives so far away in Brazil. Let's surprise her with lots of cards from our Club members! Send one soon because it will take a while to get there. Rebecca's address is:

Rebecca Boersema
São José da Coroa Grande, PE
55567 Brazil



From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Anna DeVries*. We hope you'll enjoy joining in all our Busy Beaver activities. Do you help look after the baby pigs, Anna?

Welcome to the Club, *Jenny Stroop*. If you would like a pen pal look in the *Clarion* of April 3 for some names. Will you write again and tell us about yourself and your family, Jenny?

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Jeremy Terpstra*. I see you are a real Busy Beaver already. Thank you for your letter and your picture. Write again soon.

Hello, *Jessica Beintema*. Thank you for a very colourful picture and the puzzle, too. Keep up the good work!

How did you enjoy your March break, *Laura Breukelman*? I'm glad you enjoy the quizzes, and I thank you for the riddles to share with the Busy Beavers. Bye for now, Laura.

Hello, *Alisha Stroop*. Have you written away for a pen pal, too, already? Thank you for the quiz and the puzzle, Alisha. Keep up the good work. Did you have a good time on your birthday?

How did your Fine Arts Evening go, *Karen VanderGaag*? Did you win a prize? Thanks for the puzzle, Karen. Write again soon. I enjoyed your chatty letter!

Thank you very much for your pretty picture, and your story, too, *Esther Hordyk*! Keep up the good work. Do you write stories more often, Esther?

Sounds to me like you're a very lucky girl, *Christina Bredenhof*, in your nice new room! I guess you don't mind helping keep it neat and tidy? Thank you for the puzzle and your picture, too. Bye for now.

How did you enjoy your vacation in Florida, *Alida Knol*? I hope you will write and tell the Buzy Beavers all about it! Thanks for the puzzle Alida. Write soon!

Hello, *Kim Vis*. I sure enjoyed your riddles and tongue twisters! Thank you for writing! Did you do something special during the spring break, Kim. Or have you forgotten already?

Busy Beaver *Anna DeVries* wrote: In school I am studying owls. Here's a story about them.

OWLS

When an owl is hatched its father does the main hunting. Only when the owlets get older does the mother leave them to help hunt.

Did you know owls can't move their eyes so they have to turn their heads?

And their ears are just a slit by the eyes?
Owls are very neat to study.

RIDDLE FUN FOR YOU

from Busy Beaver *Laura Breukelman*

1. What gets younger the longer it exists?
2. What is the crankiest musical instrument?
3. How can mountains hear?
4. What tree do you hold in your hand?
5. What vegetable belongs to the alphabet?
6. What flower can you eat?

(see answers)

Quiz Time!

UNDER ANOTHER NAME!

Do you know the Bible people known by the following names?

1. The Baptist _____
2. the Fishbite _____
3. the carpenter's Son _____
4. Israel _____
5. the Moabite _____
6. Iscariot _____
7. the Psalmist _____
8. the Friend of God _____
9. Boanerges, sons of thunder _____
10. Dorcas _____
11. Cephas _____
12. the Kenite _____
13. the Lawgiver _____
14. Didymus _____

FARM ANIMALS

by Busy Beaver *Christina Bredenhof*

P Z N T B H A F I S H S	Look for:
I Z E Q I Q O Z T Q A S	pig
G C K A X C P R S Z H A	horse
A N C R T O B T S E C H	sheep
T I I P B W I J E S I N	chicken
O C H C G I R P D X A B	cow
Z K C D M N D Z A O C F	dog
Q E Z E O A R G P D G E	cat
R N P F U H O R S E T G	mouse
P S Q G S B D E N A I H	bird
H O U S E B R E C N O F	fish

Answers:

Mothers in the Bible
10. Jairus',
5. Shunammite 6. Hannah 7. Eve 8. Mary 9. Sarah
1. Ruth 2. Elizabeth 3. Jochebed 4. Rebekah

Riddles

1. a portrait 2. a hand organ 3. by mountaineers! 4. palm
5. pea 6. cauliflower

Under Another Name

13. Moses 14. Thomas
John (Matt. 3:17) 10. Tabitha 11. Simon Peter 12. Heber
6. Judas 7. David 8. Abraham (James 2:23) 9. James and
1. John 2. Elijah 3. the Lord Jesus 4. Jacob 5. Ruth

How did you do on your Bible quiz?

Were you able to get them all (with a little help, maybe?)

Don't forget about that birthday card, all right Busy Beavers?

Bye for now.

Love to you all
from Aunt Betty