

Clarion

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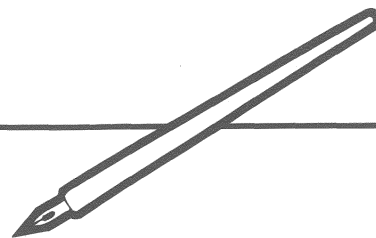


Faithfulness in Translating

Numbers

10:1-10

By R. Schouten



Doctrine or Experience?

Is Christianity to be defined as a doctrine or a life? Admittedly, this question contains a false dilemma. Christianity is both doctrine and life. Good and sound doctrine, embraced by true faith, leads to obedient living before God. Our religion includes confession and experience. Right belief ought to produce a life of love for God and man.

However, in this editorial, I want to stress the priority of doctrine over experience. When we define Christianity, we do so in terms of doctrine and not in terms of experience. Our Christian identity is based not on a set of shared experiences, but on a set of beliefs, commonly confessed, defended and promoted. To be a Christian means that a person acknowledges, states agreement with and comes out on the side of a certain set of truths.

Confessing the faith

In the NT, the word "faith" is used in both a subjective and objective sense. Often, the word refers to personal trust in the promises of God. However, the word "faith" also refers to the *content* of the faith. For example, Jude instructs his reader to "contend for *the faith* which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

When the word "faith" is used in this objective manner, it clearly means a faith that can be stated, preached, attacked and defended. This faith is equivalent to "the Gospel," and to the "good" or "sound" doctrine to which Paul refers in the Pastoral Letters (1 Tim. 1:19, 10; 4:6; Tit. 2:1). To be a Christian means to embrace the whole message proclaimed by the apostles and revealed in the Old and New Testaments. Christianity is defined from the

outside and not by the inner experiences of the self. Faith submits to an external and objective authority and not to one that is internal and intuitive.

It may be asked whether the objective content of the faith needs to be stressed within the Canadian Reformed churches. After all, do we not practice "confessional membership" and do we not enjoy regular preaching on the Heidelberg Catechism? Would it not be more necessary in our circles to warn against confessionalism than against subjectivism?

Undoubtedly, warnings against confessionalism are needed from time to time. Still, it might be asked whether the confessional knowledge within the churches is really as sharp and precise as it ought to be. One sometimes gets the impression of a certain cloudiness with regard to the doctrines of the faith. Yes, those doctrines are present in the life of the churches, but are they burning bright and clear? Or is the doctrinal awareness of the membership more like an absent-minded belief, vaguely held, and therefore largely irrelevant?

Every generation needs to work hard to acquire a confessional mind. Not passive acquiescence toward the traditions which have been delivered, but personal understanding and

appropriation of the great doctrines of the faith is the key to a healthy church life. Sometimes, people who join the Reformed churches are disappointed by the lack of clear doctrinal awareness among the membership. They had expected more of a creedally-minded church which practices so-called "confessional membership!"

Experience-based religion

What I am saying goes against the larger flow of developments within Christendom. Although there are some beautiful exceptions, the trend within evangelicalism is to take flight into experience-defined categories. Doctrine is regarded as irrelevant because Christianity is no longer defined in terms of what is believed and confessed, but in terms of what is felt and experienced in the self. Not a lot of attention is devoted to the external, defining authority of Scripture. What counts most is the religious self-consciousness of the adherent.

If you discuss or dispute the content of faith with such doctrinally careless folks, the response tends to be one of incomprehension. Their focus on inner spirituality means that careful definition of the content of faith is immaterial. The philosophy becomes, "I feel, therefore I am." Who can argue with that? Who can approve, correct or dispute a feeling? In this way, faith is privatized and public discourse about doctrine becomes impossible.

To prevent misunderstanding, it should be stressed that Christianity is more than intellectual confession. Our faith includes not only enlightened understanding but also warm hearts! As believers, we do experience the comfort of the Gospel. We know the near-

ness of God, the humility of the soul before the Almighty and the joy of faith in the midst of trouble.

The point in this article is that Christianity is not an experience detached from an intellectual framework. This framework is not irrelevant but is the source of all true Christian experience. If this framework is lacking, the danger is very great that a wanton desire for rich experiences will lead us astray from good and sound doctrine. Experience is not ultimate but needs the nurture and correction of the doctrine confessed by the Church.

Implications for unity

The priority of doctrine over experience also has implications for church unity. Where experience is exalted, we soon hear the cry, "Doctrine divides, Spirit unites" and "No Creed but Christ." If we define Christianity in terms of a set of common experiences, we may be able to quickly bypass troubling doctrinal questions. If Mother Theresa has the same religious experiences as do I, why worry about her devotion to Mary? Since he seems to have a similar experience of God as do I, why quarrel with the

If experience is ultimate, then the Reformed confession has become only the private prejudice or preference of a few.

Arminian Christian's glorification of free will? Why be upset with the Baptist's disdain for God's covenant of grace with believers and their seed? After all, the Baptist has the same experience of regeneration as do I.

If experience is ultimate, then the Reformed confession has become only the private prejudice or preference of a few. In a doctrinally careless environment, people who insist on the necessity of the Reformed Confession will be looked upon as unbelievably intolerant zealots. After all, the great sin of our time is not error in doctrine, but narrow-mindedness.

Do we deny that there is a genuine work of God among folks who are not Reformed? Far be it from us to say so. We are saying, though, that it is wrongheaded and contrary to Scripture to minimize doctrine while seeking an experience-based unity. Unity must always be unity in "the true faith" (compare Lord's Day 21). Attempts to reduce the doctrinal heritage of the church to some minimal "core confession," a kind of confession within the confession which would be acceptable to all should be resisted.

We live in an experience-dominated Christian world. An anti-theological mood is prevalent. The danger is not imaginary that we might experience a loss of nerve and so be unwilling any longer to stake out the confessional boundaries of genuine Christianity. Let's pray, then, for courage to keep the good confession. **C**

The Stranger

*The service ended, the organ played
the people left their pews.
And all around me, feet were shuffling,
slowly out the door.*

*The voices droaned, the faces smiled,
but the stranger stood alone.
They did not see her standing there,
they turned and walked away.*

*Was this the parable again,
of the good Samaritan?
Would he or she come to relieve
the pain this stranger felt?*

*The stranger heard the Book of Love
these people came to hear.
But now the church was over,
the time of truth was here.*

*Who would show this stranger love?
Who in the church did care?
I saw a few who wished to talk,
but no one seemed to dare.*

*Is this how God looks down on us,
as we worship him each week?
Are we a channel of His love,
to strangers far and near?*

*Perhaps on Sunday you may meet,
a stranger in your midst.
Will you just turn and walk away,
or show the stranger love?*

Annette Pol



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Meditation

By G.Ph. van Popta

Read Acts 4:32-5:11: “. . . and distribution was made to each as any had need.”

COMMUNISM OR COMMUNION

Josè Miranda begins his book, *Communism in the Bible*, with the thesis: “Christianity is Communism.” He cites Acts 2:44-45 as well as the latter part of Acts 4 as proof that original Christianity was communistic. According to Miranda, the personal possession of wealth is evil. A true Christian will be a communist. Right after Pentecost “. . . all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need” (Acts 2:44-45). Acts 4 tells us that the believers were united in heart and soul. They had everything in common. People sold land and houses and brought the money to the apostles for distribution to the needy. Barnabas sold a field he owned and gave the money to the church.

Cults and sects often take these verses and, like the Anabaptists of the 1500s, “. . . introduce a communion of goods” (Belgic Confession, art. 36). So do people, such as Josè Miranda, who subscribe to Liberation Theology. They say that communism is the purest form of Christianity. They reach this conclusion because they have ripped these few verses out of their context.

The immediate context proves the thesis wrong. In Acts 5:4 Peter very clearly affirmed the privilege of private ownership of property. He told Ananias that before he had sold the piece of land in question it was his. Ananias owned it. And after he had sold it, the proceeds were his. They were at his personal disposal. They were his either to spend or to bank. Ananias was under no obligation to donate them to the church.

Further, the communist interpretation shows no sensitivity for the historical situation. This was a crucial time.

The Lord had recently ascended to heaven. He had empowered His church with the Holy Spirit and charged it to bring the good news of salvation through faith in Him to the ends of the world. The believers had to begin this great work. Critical times call for drastic action. The normal routine of owning a house, some land and a business had to be suspended for awhile. There can be times when the church is faced with such a momentous task that the only responsible thing to do is to pool resources and get to work. But we cannot lay this down as an abiding principle for all places and times.

Finally, the early church knew that Jerusalem was soon to be destroyed. The Lord had warned them many times of the judgment which would come upon the city. From a practical point of view, owning land and houses in Jerusalem made little sense.

Communism is not found in the Bible. It is a human invention. The principle of communion, however, is taught in the Bible. If a brother has need, I must help him. As James wrote: “If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace, be warmed and filled,’ without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?” The Communist says: “What’s yours is mine.” The Christian says: “What’s mine is yours.”

We are stewards over personal property. We may use it and enjoy it. We must, however, always use our material wealth to advance the gospel. We must also be ready at all times to exercise communion with the brotherhood by giving to those in need, perhaps to the point of selling everything.

What’s inside?

We receive the Scriptures as holy and canonical, for the regulation, foundation, and confirmation of our faith. The Holy Scriptures contain both *what we must believe* in order to be saved and instruction on *how we must live* in order to please God. In two articles, the Rev. R. Schouten of Calgary, one of our editors, addresses these two points. In the editorial, he speaks about the need to hold on to the doctrines of the faith as revealed in Scripture (and the implications this has for church unity). In the youth column, he focuses on the need to live holy lives according to the law of God.

Since the Scripture is the only vital source for both doctrine and life, we need a good English translation. The RSV, the translation we presently use in the churches, is being replaced by the New RSV – an unacceptable translation heavily influenced by the feminist agenda. Our upcoming General Synod will recommend an English translation to the churches to replace the RSV. The Committee on Bible Translations will serve Synod with a report. In this issue you will find the first of three installments summarizing the very lengthy report. The Rev. G.H. Visscher, minister of *Rehoboth* Church in Burlington has put together this condensed version.

GvP

REMEMBER YOUR CREATOR

By R. Schouten

The Ten Suggestions

The scene is the Arabian desert. The time is the year 1446 B.C. A strange sight greets your eyes. Six hundred thousand men, not including women and children are camped in the sand and grass before the craggy peaks of Mt. Sinai.

Three days earlier, these people were told to get ready to meet the living God. They were to stay away from anything unclean. Holiness was to be their goal. Clean clothes were to adorn their bodies.

These people are special. God calls them His treasured possession, the apple of His eye. Three months earlier, the Lord had brought them out of Egypt after 430 years of slavery. These are the sons and daughters of Abraham, with whom God had made an everlasting covenant. Now it was the Lord's plan to form them into a holy nation to live before Him in the land of Canaan.

On the morning of this the third day, terrifying thunder fills the ears of the people. Lightning flashes before their eyes. Mt. Sinai is covered with smoke, because the LORD has descended on it in fire. The smoke billows up from it like smoke from a furnace. The whole mountain trembles violently. The sound of a trumpet grows louder by the minute. Every person in the camp trembles before this awesome display of God's majesty.

Then God spoke all these words: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before Me . . ." (the other nine commandments follow).

Constitutional assembly

What an incredible scene! This is nothing less than the constitutional assembly of God's people, Israel. Here God is forming the offspring of Abraham into His own precious people. At this astonishing beginning, God shows Himself in great majesty and glory to His people. He has brought them out of Egypt, showing grace and love to them and doing mighty acts on their behalf. Now, at Mt. Sinai, God meets with

His people and makes known to them His royal Law for their lives. The ten words of the covenant, which we call the ten commandments, describe the conditions for life with the holy God.

These ten commandments form the basic constitution for covenant life. In terms of this Law, or else not at all, Israel must live with God.

Trembling before God

What an impressive and unforgettable beginning to covenant life! The glory of God revealed on the mountain underlined His holiness and so strengthened the impact of the Law. The effect was immediate, for we read that "when the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear" (Exodus 19:16; 20:18). God's glory and God's voice proclaiming His law filled the people with reverence and awe toward the living God. The question that arises is whether we, too, have a sense of wonder and respect when we hear the words of the living God proclaimed to us in His law.

Do we still tremble before the Word of the Lord? Does this charter document of the covenant fill us with reverence and awe? It should. We read in Scripture that there is a certain kind of person with whom God is pleased: the one who is humble and contrite in spirit, and "trembles at His Word" (Isa. 66:2). Do we tremble, or do we just let God talk? Has repeated exposure to the Law dazed our minds and numbed our hearts? As we listen time and again to this charter document of the covenant on Sunday morning, the danger is very real that we develop a casual attitude before the Lord. The question needs to be asked: are we serious when we listen to God's Law? Do we understand who is speaking to us? Do we sense the presence of our holy and glorious God in His Law?

It is important to realize that, like Israel of the Old Covenant, we are being addressed in the ten commandments. It is true that believers in Christ are people of the New Covenant. Yet God's revealed Law remains the stan-

dard for their lives. After all, God Himself proclaimed this Law in His own voice (compare Deut. 4:4). Later, with His own finger, the Lord wrote the Law on the two tablets of stone (Ex. 31:8). In these ways, together with the display of majesty on the mountain, God wanted to show the permanent character of His Law. It could not change, for it was an expression of His own eternal, unchanging holiness.

Non-negotiable law

It would seem that people sometimes regard the Ten Commandments as merely *Ten Suggestions* or *Ten Proposals for Christian Life*. Or, as we might say, *Ten Helpful Tips* or *Ten Useful Hints* for a good life. When it comes to suggestions or hints, we can sometimes be excused for being slow or neutral in our response. After all, advice needs to be weighed and measured before implementation. Advice is always negotiable and changeable. You can take it or leave it.

However, God does not come to us with mere advice or proposals or opinions. Instead, the Ten Commandments confront us with the entirely non-negotiable will of God. Against all human opinion and deception, the Lord states the abiding truth. The Lord has no patience with progressive and relative views of right and wrong. Instead, He confronts us with an eternal and unerasable revelation of His holy will. The Law is absolute. Firm and fixed forever, it contradicts and condemns all moral relativism.

Therefore, when we hear God's Law, there should be a response of fear and reverence for the Lord together with a sincere desire to do what He commands. God's Law does not allow us to "take it or leave it."

Better listening

What can we do to prevent trivializing the Law? How can we ward off complacency and hardening of heart? We can start by trying to get a feel for what it must have been like on that incredible day long ago. Think about the

loud voice of the living God heard from the fire proclaiming His holy will for His special people. Such memories will prevent you from trying to negotiate with God to make exceptions for you in your situation. Don't we all do that? We hear the Law and yet so quickly begin to justify our particular transgressions of it.

Another way of keeping yourself focused is to mentally interpret the commandment. For example, the list of sins mentioned in the *Form* for the Lord's Supper follows precisely the order of the ten commandments. You could follow along in the *Form* as the Law is read. You might also prepare for the reading of the Law by reviewing the explanations of the commandments given in the Catechism (Lord's Days 34-44).

Furthermore, you have the duty of examining yourself in the light of the Law. Think about specific transgressions of each commandment during the

previous week. The impact of the Law should be a stronger conviction of your helplessness and hopelessness outside Christ. The reading of the Law should have the result that you feel appalled by your remaining sin as well as by your original sin. If you can hear the Law while sitting smug and confident in your pew, you have not truly heard it. If truly heard, the Law always brings a sense of despair about your position outside Christ. Your conscience will accuse you because of the hearing of the Law. The Law drives people to their knees to seek grace from above.

If you listen in a serious way to the Law, then the prayer of repentance which follows the Law will have a much deeper meaning for you. Through that prayer, your self-despair will give way to confidence in Christ. Grief and sorrow about sin will yield to the greater joy in Christ. When the minister, in the name of the congregation, asks

God not only to forgive sin but also to write the holy law on the hearts of all the members, you will find your own heart strongly seconding this prayer! Yes, you will have a deep longing to carefully fulfill not just some but all the commandments of God.

If you leave the worship service without any sense of renewed determination to do the will of God, you have not really heard the Law. You are still treating the Ten Commandments as merely Ten Suggestions. You are trivializing the Law and so disdaining the God who gives the Law. People who disdain and make light of God are in imminent danger of destruction. Today, when you hear His voice, say the Scripture, do not harden your hearts!

Will you pray to God this day to write His Law on your hearts? Do it, for blessed is the young man and young woman whose delight is in the Law of God. **C**

NASB, NIV, or NKJV: Which Version Now? Report to Synod Abbotsford 1995

Faithfulness in Translating

First of three parts

By G.H. Visscher

Because of the expected demise of the version presently being used in the churches, the Revised Standard Version, Synod Lincoln 1992 appointed a Committee on Bible Translations with the mandate to study carefully the New American Standard Bible, the New International Version, and the New King James Version and to recommend to the next Synod one of these translations for usage within the churches. The synod appointed to this committee: Rev. P. Aasman, Prof. J. Geertsema, Elder W. Smouter, Prof. C. Van Dam and Rev. G.H. Visscher.

Setting down to work, the five of us initially despaired about the mandate we were given. To do a comparative study was not the problem, even if it would involve a great deal of labour. The real difficulty was the fact that synod gave us a very clear directive "to determine which one translation can be positively recommended. . . ." Initially, this really looked like an impossible mandate. As we laboured and met however, it be-

came increasingly clear to us that there was one translation which stood out above the other two – not that it was perfect, for even in Bible translations perfection is not attainable in this broken world. The one translation that we have specifically recommended to Synod Abbotsford 1995 is the New International Version. How did we come to that conclusion? Our report has been published and been sent out to the churches. This document of 34 pages and its 17 appendices of another 215 pages tells the story. It would be good however to relate some of that here as well by way of this three part series which consists largely of adapted selections taken from the report and its appendices. In two subsequent issues, we hope to look at the three translations themselves; for now it is necessary to say something about two significant aspects of translation: the authority of Scripture and the nature of proper translating.

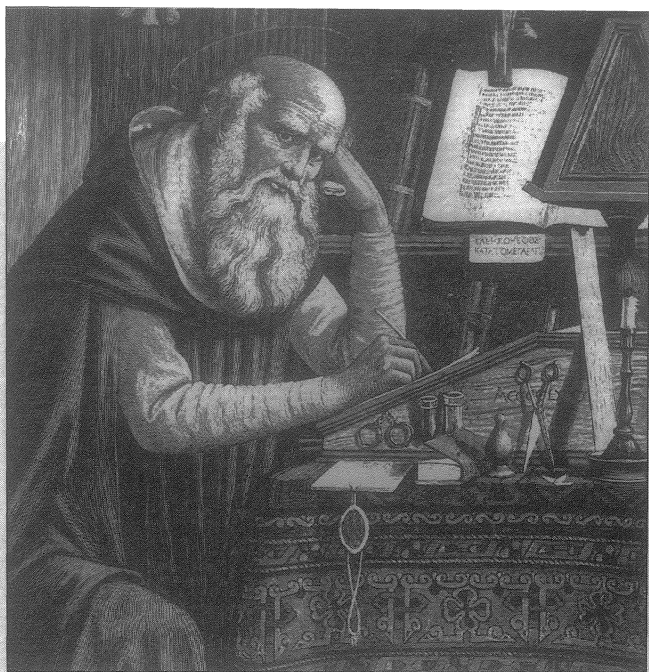
It should be mentioned that while copies of the complete report have

been sent to all officebearers in the federation, extra copies have been printed and some are still available. (They can be ordered from Rev. Paul Aasman, R.R.#2, Grand Valley, Ont. L0N 1G0. The cost, including postage, is \$7.50 in Canada, \$9.50 elsewhere. Payment must include order; the cheque or money order should be made payable to the Canadian Reformed Church at Grand Valley).

For the Committee on
Bible Translations,
G.H. Visscher

The Authority of Scripture

In evaluating a translation, a matter of great importance is how the translators regard the Scriptures. If a translator rejects the infallibility of Scripture and its divine authorship, will that not influence his eventual translation in a subtle or not so manner? Does the Bible itself not speak about the need to have the



Translator
Jerome

Spirit of God in order to understand the thoughts of God (1 Corinthians 1:10-16)? Dr. J. van Bruggen, for instance, sounded a warning to this effect some time ago.¹

It is a reason for thankfulness then, that all three of the translations being considered have stated intentions exactly in this direction.

In the Foreword to the *New American Standard Bible*, the Lockman Foundation states that the NASB "has been produced with the conviction that the words of Scripture as originally penned in the Hebrew and Greek were inspired by God." One of their chief purposes also was "to adhere as closely as possible to the original languages of the Holy Scripture."

Likewise, as the preface to the *New International Version* indicates, also those involved in this translation "were united in their commitment to the authority and infallibility of the Bible as God's Word in written form." Before commencing their work, translators had to affirm that they agreed that "the Bible alone, in its entirety, is the Word of God written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs," and that they held to a high view of Scripture as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Belgic Confession, and the Statement of Faith of the National Association of Evangelicals.²

The Preface to the *New King James Version* also claims that "the translators, the committees, and the editors" have adhered "faithfully to the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts;" like those involved with the King James Bible "their reverence for the divine Author and His Word assured a translation of the Scriptures in which only a principle of utmost accuracy could be accepted." It

is said that all participants signed "a document of subscription to the plenary and verbal inspiration of the original autographs of the Bible."³

When one bears in mind that the *Revised Standard Version* appears to come from a different perspective,⁴ it is apparent already on this point that regardless of which of these three translations the churches choose, they will soon be in a better position. When we, for instance, compared these three translations to passages which our previous synods considered weak in the RSV, we came to the conclusion that indeed "the NASB, NIV, and NKJV are all better than the RSV according to the criteria that were used over the years to judge the RSV."⁵ In another study, when we compared these three translations to the manner in which the RSV dealt with the text of Hosea, our conclusion could only be the same.⁶ Our research has shown that the translators and the publishers of these three versions of the Bible do not only *intend* to do their work by acknowledging the authority of the original writings; their actual translations show that they *have* done so. That is an important gain which should be recognized with gratitude from the outset.

Linguistic character of translation

Synod 1992 made it clear that the criteria to be used was not only the matter of "faithfulness to the original text" but also "linguistic character of the translation." A considerable amount of our time was spent therefore on this matter. The questions here are several: how accurate is a translation? How much freedom in translation is permissible? When does literalness sacrifice clarity? While all translation involves a

certain amount of interpretation, how much interpretation is too much? How much emphasis should be placed on the receptor language?

To summarize some of our studies, it should be pointed out that for a long time it has been popular to divide translations into two camps, namely, *formal equivalent* and *dynamic equivalent*. *Formal equivalent* refers to a method of translating in which priority is given to the forms, structure, and phrasing of the original language. *Dynamic equivalent* gives a higher degree of emphasis to the receptor language, with more emphasis on the equivalent meanings and less concern for the form and structure of the original. In translating, the difference is not really a difference in kind, but rather one in degree with various translations seeking to place themselves differently (see figure 1 below). While helpful, this distinction between formal equivalence and dynamic equivalence can also be somewhat misleading. Our studies have shown that often translations which are considered to lean more to a formal view contain rather dynamic translations, and vice-versa. Rather than consistently maintaining one position, they are in actual fact unable to do so. While not denying that the one may tend more in one direction than the other, the tendency to reject a certain translation because it is perceived as being in either camp is then also the result of misunderstanding.

Figure 1

formal equivalent	dynamic equivalent
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Somewhat more helpful is the distinction made by John Callow and John Beekman between four types of translations, namely, highly literal, modified literal, idiomatic, and unduly free (see figure 2 below). A *highly literal translation* is then similar to that found in interlinear translations, which follow very precisely the word-order and sentence structure. While one might consider such a thing to be a translation tool, no one would consider it an acceptable translation. To give an example, a translator who is not sufficiently aware of Dutch idiom might translate the expression "De kous is af" very literally with the words "the stocking is finished," while not appreciating that the real meaning is something like "that's the end of the matter." A highly literal translation, whether it deals with a modern language or an ancient one will present problems of its own; the meaning of the original will not always be clear to the reader of the translation.

Figure 2	unacceptable types		
	acceptable types		unduly free
highly literal	modified literal	idiomatic	

At the other extreme, an *unduly free translation* would be a paraphrase approach in which there is undue freedom with respect to the historical context when referring to people, places, things, or customs. Here the translation “will misrepresent the original message and include extraneous, unnecessary information which the author did not intend in his writings.”⁷⁷ Beekman and Callow point out that while both these methods are at opposite extremes, they “share the same unacceptable characteristic of failing to communicate what the original communicated.”⁷⁸

Moving on to more acceptable types of translation, Beekman and Callow mention that the *modified literal translation* is an improvement over the highly literal as the translator realizes that some adjustment is needed. However, here the same grammatical forms are used, words are translated consistently regardless of various contexts, and the meaning is still not entirely clear. They point out that for a group of believers “who have access to reference works, and whose motivation to read and study is high, a modified literal translation is usable.”⁷⁹ For anyone else however much is still lost in the message and an *idiomatic translation* is what is really needed.

Concerning this last type, Beekman and Callow write:

In an *idiomatic translation*, the translator seeks to convey to the R(eceptor) L(anguage) readers the meaning of the original by using the natural grammatical and lexical forms of the RL. His focus is on the meaning, and he is aware that the grammatical constructions and lexical choices and combinations used in the original are no more suitable for the communication of that message in the RL than are, say the orthographic symbols of the original. The RL must be conveyed using the linguistic form of the RL.¹⁰

It is interesting in this regard to listen to one of our own voices of the previous generation. In our third appendix, we have given attention to the assessment of the late Professor B. Holwerda in the matter of Bible translations. For our purposes here, it may be beneficial to point out that Holwerda too states that he is not against a “somewhat free” translation, for he says: “A literal translation is often literal, but not a translation. And

the purpose is to have a good translation.”¹¹ Commenting on a new Dutch translation (Nieuwe Vertaling van het Nederlands Bijbelgenootschap), Holwerda stresses the need for a translation to be idiomatic.

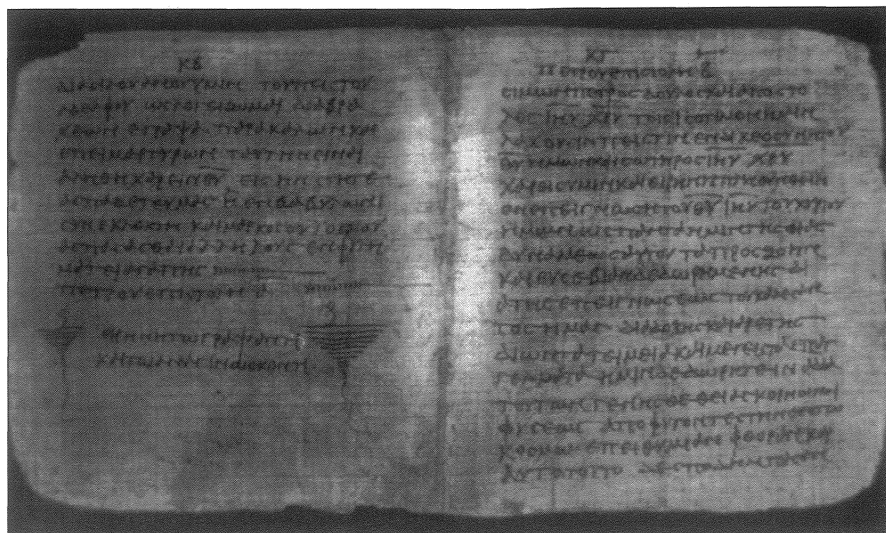
But at certain places this translation, though it wants to be a modern translation, has not freed itself from the Hebrew idiom. Thus one meets expressions which we do not use. . . . I frequently find it somewhat stilted and antiquated, and a bit purposely dignified and solemn. And I think that without resorting to colloquial or slang expressions one simply could have and even should have used the common language of today somewhat more. It would not only have made the translation easier to read and more clear, but, on final analysis, would even have made it more accurate. THIS IS TRUE BECAUSE A CAREFUL PARAPHRASE IS SOMETIMES MORE ACCURATE THAN A LITERAL TRANSLATION.¹²

Earlier too, Holwerda had referred to the need for a translation to be *clear*, taking into account the language which we now speak and write; he says that besides the question whether a translation is “correct,” there is also the question whether it is “clear.”¹³ J.H. Skilton, a former Westminster Seminary professor, says it as well:

The preference of the present writer is for a translation which sticks close to its basic text and tries to conserve as much as possible of

the details and background of the original, but which does not lose sight of the thought movement and remembers its responsibilities to the receptor language to produce a work that is intelligible, idiomatic, and felicitous.¹⁴

These are concerns and views with which we can agree. As we as churches become increasingly anglicized with a second and third generation well schooled in the English language, there is a great need for us to have a translation which speaks the language of the man in the pew. It is possible to have the highest of regard for the original languages in which God caused His word to be written but at the same time strive to have a translation in our hands which is truly *English* as we speak it and write it also in other contexts.¹⁵ Translating the Bible is not unlike translating other material. The process often involves many drafts before the final one is arrived at; so too, a version of the Bible should not seem so literal that it appears more like an initial draft. An extensive knowledge of both the original language and the language into which one translates is necessary so that the Greek or Hebrew idiom comes across in English in the best possible way – if possible, in the equivalent English idiom. Obviously this is not as easy as it may seem. As committee members we have studied these questions quite extensively and discussed them at length; the reader who wishes more information is thus referred to our report, where the results of our study and discussions are evident.¹⁶ For our purposes here though, this will have to do. In the next issues of *Clarion*, we hope to see how these translations fare in this regard.



Greek Text of Peter

¹*The Future of the Bible*, (Nelson, 1978), 35, 54.

²As noted by Robert G. Bratcher, "The New International Version," *The Word of God: A Guide to English Versions of the Bible*. Edited by L.R. Bailey (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 153, and by C.J. Youngblood in "The New International Version Translation Project: Its Conception and Implementation" *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* (Vol. 21, no.3, September 1978), 245.

³Jack P. Lewis, *The English Bible from KJV to NIV: A History and Evaluation*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 330.

⁴Compare here *Acts of Synod Coaldale 1977*, Appendix IV, 76-77 which speak about the origin of the RSV in the National

Council of Churches of Christ. See also our appendix 5, especially § 2.1.2.2.

⁵See appendix 5 of our report especially § 3.1 and § 3.2.

⁶See our appendix 14. In contrast to the RSV, which emended the text thirty times, all three took a much more positive approach to the Masoretic text.

⁷*Translating the Word of God*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 23.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹*Ibid.*, 24.

¹⁰*Ibid.* "OL" commonly refers to the "original language," the language of the original writer, and "RL" to the "receptor language," the language of the one who receives the translated message.

¹¹*Populaire Wetenschappelijke Bijdragen* (Goes: Oosterbaan & Le Cointre, 1962), 77.

The committee of our sister churches in Australia which reported to their 1990 synod also made reference to this work of Holwerda (cf *Acts and Reports 1990 of the Free Reformed Church of Australia*, 140). The translation used here and in what follows is theirs.

¹²Holwerda, *Ibid.*, 90 as translated in *Acts 1990*, 141 (emphasis is Holwerda's).

¹³Holwerda uses the words "juist" and "duidelijk" here, *Ibid.*, 69.

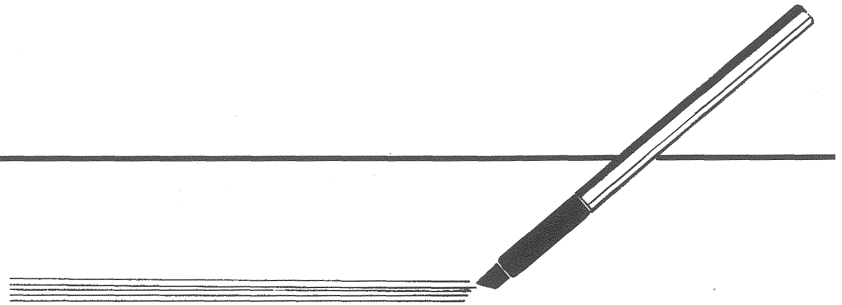
¹⁴"The Study of Modern English Versions of the New Testament," *The New Testament Student at Work*. Volume 2 of *The New Testament Student*. (Presb & Ref., 1975), 222.

¹⁵For more on this concern, see section 2 of appendix 2, "The NIV - Balancing Fluency and Accuracy."

¹⁶Especially appendix 1, 2, and 3. **C**

THE HI-LITER

By C. Van Spronsen



In a number of congregation they have "Helping Hands." In a Toronto bulletin we read about their work. "Although our primary function has been to provide meals, we would like to offer other means of support as well. Some of these would be:

1. Providing emotional/physical support to new mothers. A phone call or visit from an experienced mother to a new parent can be very encouraging.

2. Provide temporary relief to mothers of large families. When the family routine has been altered and the mother needs a helping hand, we would like to provide meals, housekeeping, babysitting or laundry, if needed."

"It's time to order cheese again," so we are told!

A congregation even caters to "all romantics" by offering a "Sweetheart Dinner" in the week of Valentine.

In Brampton an actual fire drill was held. "The church-building was evacuated in 2.1 minutes. Although this is a satisfactory time, it is possible to improve this. The next fire drill will be a surprise drill (in the spring)."

In Port Kells the road to having their own building is not without hurdles. A public hearing was held at which "a considerable amount of opposition was voiced by people from the neighbourhood." Final decision will have to be taken by the Township Council and is expected in the near future.

In Watford's building there is a chewing gum problem. After having graphically described the ill effects of sticking the abandoned gum under the pew the editor of the Bul-

letin concludes with the wish: "May all have a blessed and gum free Sunday!"

Previously we mentioned an outreach program on the campus of the University of Alberta, the Areopagus Project. We pass on the following good news: "Up to this point there has been a remarkable amount of interest from the university community in this outreach. Reformed literature has been distributed and several Bibles have been given out (for free). There has also been interest in attending a Reformed Bible study."

In Coaldale there will be a "Church to Home Phone Link" service available for members. "This would allow any member, who is unable to attend church on a regular basis, to listen to services, congr. meetings, specials functions etc. C. of A. is determining both costs and the number of potential users."

In Taber the consistory proposed to the congregation to begin construction of a churchbuilding in 1995 (as soon as feasible). "The congregation overwhelmingly supported the consistory's proposal!"

An "important, unprecedented decision" was made in Hamilton. "The consistory of the 'Cornerstone' Canadian Reformed Church at Hamilton and the consistory of the Hamilton Independent Christian Reformed Church have recently been able to make a historic decision. The two consistories have recognized each other as true Church." The adopted report of the Contact Committees suggests temporary arrangements might be considered such as receiving each other's attestations, pulpit exchange etc. Undoubtedly more will be published on this development!

* * *

In Elora the families of the congregation are urged to sing together, just as well as reading the Bible and praying together. "It is another way and another gift that God has given so that we might worship Him." A good reminder for all!

* * *

In Launceston, Tasmania, the strong room (?) was broken into during the morning service with the collections and donations being stolen, estimated at four to five thousand dollars. (Insurance will cover the loss).

* * *

In the same congregation the young people, at a certain occasion, are invited to a "Bush Dance." A different stroke for different folk!

* * *

Lisa DeGraaf of Tasmania left for Melbourne in order to participate and assist in the work done by the Wycliffe Bible Translators.

* * *

Rev. F.J. VanHulst and family had a shocking experience on their holidays. "The second week of the minister's holidays was marred by a flash flood accident in which his

life as well as the lives of his wife and two children were miraculously saved by the Lord. Consistory decides to make an extra week's leave available, expressing its gratitude for travelling mercies received."

* * *

In Burlington West the Lord's Supper Committee "recommends that we maintain our present practice with one important change: that the Supper be celebrated in two afternoon services at 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m. This will be discussed at the meeting with the congregation."

* * *

The Church of Hamilton asked the Churches in the region "to consider the feasibility of calling a home missionary for the Hamilton area."

* * *

Synod fever is grasping the nation causing various reactions in people who are infected by it while many appear to be immune. It is caused by a virus in the form of committee reports swarming out and reaching Consistory tables, homes of officebearers, congregational meetings and you name it. It is expected to last until the end of May when these reports will be quarantined in the Acts of Synod 1995 at Abbotsford, BC. There may be some aftereffects. **C**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Please mail, e-mail or fax letters for publication to the editorial address. They should be 300 words or less. Those published may be edited for style or length.

Dear Sir,

It was with pleasant delight that I read your first issue of '95. I was especially pleased to read that you have made several splendid editorial changes. Specifically, you are to honour and print all (feasible) letters to the editor and will add a reader's forum column. Bravo! It is important that your readership is valued and that their concerns and views are seen as significant. I hope that your editorial changes will lead to greater readership and help Clarion compete, as you mentioned in your editorial, "in a multi-media world."

Yours in the Lord,
with brotherly greetings,
Harry Alkema
Burlington, ON

Dear Editor,

I am one of those persons who has publicly talked in somewhat derogatory terms about Rev. VanOene's "News Medley." Upon receiving *Clarion*, however, I have always had to exercise a measure of self-control to keep myself from turning straight to his column. I

would not allow myself what I faintly felt to be an indulgence of the flesh before doing penance in the form of reading a healthy dose of Reformed rhetoric so profusely provided on the menu served up by our beloved magazine.

This indulgence has been nurtured by what I consider Rev. VanOene's un-Canadian Reformed degree of common sense. Granted, his canonization of the pipe organ does not quite warrant the epithet common sense. But everyone should nurse one vice in his bosom as T. Wilder wrote in *The Matchmaker*, otherwise one is "in great danger of making vices out of his virtues and there's a spectacle."

Great, therefore, was my dismay to see my classified champion make a spectacle of himself at the finish line of his "Medley" career.

In the concluding paragraph of his risqué ponderings on cooperation between Reformed churches he expressed his concern about the attention that is being paid to "various groups outside the churches."

We will ignore the incompleteness of the sentences in which these words were used; we cannot turn a blind eye

to the potential hurtfulness of what in context could be read as a graceless classification of a number of Reformed Churches.

For the sake of the cause of unity, it would be laudable if Rev. VanOene made a comeback to set the record straight. If only one member of other Reformed churches read his remark in the same way as I have, the damage to this cause could be considerable. Besides, he owes it to his purist reputation to blame the editor for the incomplete sentence.

Yours in Christ,
Henk van Beelen
Smithers, BC

Dear Editor:

(Re: The discussion between Dr. Van Dam and Rev. Hofford.)

Growing up in American Evangelicalism, and as a young adult, joining the OPC church, I can speak from many years of experience. When the OPC churches say they hold to the Westminster Standards, they mean something vastly different than we mean when we say we hold to the Three

Forms of Unity. To join a very typical OPC church one must meet with elders to discuss your profession of faith. Prior to doing this one might attend a Sunday School class or other such class where there will be theological type lessons. These lessons are not always required, and when they are held the people are not required to believe or adhere to all that is taught. It is also *almost never* required that a person seeking membership *has to even read the Westminster Confession* in order to become a member of the church, much less say they believe and submit to all that is in the doctrines of the church. . . .

Typical members within the OPC are largely ignorant of what their confessions teach. Of course there may be exceptions but what is most commonly the case is that the teens are not taught the standards by the Pastor or Elder, and are not memorizing before making public profession of faith, and there is no on-going regular study of the confessions as we have in our Lord's Day sermons.

The result of this lack of instruction, and a requirement to believe all that God has revealed in His Word as we say in L.D. 7, has a profound impact on the faith and lives of the church. As one example, there were some families with children in our OPC congregation that were Baptist, and though they "studied" the issue they remained firmly Baptist, year after year, after year. A typical OPC church would never discipline such members. This is a wide spread practice. Another problem would be that the Elders in a typical OPC church would allow members of their congregation to leave and go to other churches of completely different denominations, (Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, etc.). The Elders would try to discourage this happening but without confessional membership it is difficult for the elders to draw the line on what is the right church to be in. The bottom line then becomes not what has God revealed in His Word that we must obey, but what will make the member the happiest or where they will feel most comfortable.

When God in His grace and Providence has given us the Gospel that is so beautifully summarized in the Three Forms of Unity, it is of utmost importance that we not let go of these truths and thereby join hands with much sin, confusion, and error which will indeed justly anger God and weaken the church and its witness.

*Mrs. Stephen Brown
Laurel, MD*

Brief Response

Since Mrs. Brown's letter came in after I had written my response to Rev. Hofford's, I would like to refer to my reaction to Rev. Hofford which is found elsewhere in this issue. In addition I would like to note that Mrs. Brown speaks on the basis of personal experiences concerning what it takes to become a member of the OPC. Now it is difficult to carry on a fruitful discussion simply on the basis of personal experiences and to conclude from such experiences that the OPC is a false church.

It is an undisputed fact that those professing the faith in the OPC have to answer positively (among other questions) the question: "Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God, and its doctrine to be the perfect and only true doctrine of salvation?" As I showed in my article in the Year End Issue (1994) this is in substance the same as our formulation. The doctrine referred to is the Reformed doctrine.

This view is confirmed by the following two testimonies from others with long experience as OPC members. The first concerns someone born and raised in the OPC who "studied the Westminster Shorter Catechism and was expected to agree with all the Reformed doctrine before making profession of faith. It would certainly be a caricature of the OPC to suggest that all that is expected is a confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour without any further understanding of the Biblical doctrine. Also in the OPC it is the *exception and not the rule that someone has difficulty with some point of doctrine and is received into the church.* Such a person must indeed submit to the session and may not make propaganda for his divergent views." (*Clarion* April 28, 1989, p. 205 [emphasis in the original]).

The second testimony comes from a retired OPC minister, Rev. G. I. Williamson. He writes on this topic: "In discussing this matter with some of the pastors and elders of the Canadian Reformed Churches I get the distinct impression that there is hardly any difference at all *when it comes to actual practice*" (*Ordained Servant* Jan. 1994, emphasis in the original).

With regard to Mrs. Brown's point about ongoing study of the confessions, it is true that there is no "Catechism preaching" in the OPC, but there is ongoing doctrinal instruction in the adult Sunday school classes and prayer meetings held on an evening during the

week. The Canadian Reformed Churches do not have such an ongoing adult education.

By this response, I am not suggesting that when OPC and Canadian Reformed normalize relations we have nothing to talk about because we agree in every detail with each other. We will have the opportunity to raise issues like "confessional membership." Undoubtedly the OPC will also have critical questions about the way we do certain things. But it is precisely in a relationship of ecclesiastical fellowship that we can most profitably discuss questions like this and sharpen each other up for the cause of the precious Reformed faith that is dear to both the OPC and the Canadian Reformed Churches.

C. Van Dam

Dear Editor,

With respect to Rev. W.W.J. VanOene's accusation of public slander to me in his letter to the Editor in your February 10, 1995, I would like our readers to compare this to what I quote from his News Medley of September 11, 1992:

"At the Chilliwack consistory the matter of individual cups at the Lord's Supper celebration is discussed. The consistory decided not to introduce any changes."

Although it does not affect me, I am happy with this decision. I have never been asked to administer the Lord's Supper in a congregation where they use individual cups, and I hope that I shall never be asked to do so either. I don't even think I would accept an invitation to conduct that service. Retired ministers do have some privileges and possibilities."

Let the readers decide after reading Rev. VanOene's letter!

*Sincerely,
Arie J. Hordyk*

Dear Editor:

It was with great disappointment and sadness that I read the "last" Medley of Rev. VanOene in the *Clarion* of Jan. 27/95.

It is obvious, and too bad for our Br. VanOene, that he couldn't resist the temptation to show his irritation and disappointment throughout his "Medley." This, however, can be overlooked as a human weakness, such as we all may have to deal with at times.

But it is more serious when (still in the same spirit apparently) he comes to the evaluation of the work on

ecclesiastical unity done by our churches here in the Valley.


At this point the question must be asked: Why didn't he take into consideration the fact that the authority in the Church rests upon the shoulders of the local church and that therefore the initiative and the action are supposed to come from the local level? And this is exactly what we can observe here. Furthermore, they have given ample proof of understanding their responsibility in

the federation by going with these matters and their accomplishments to the "broader" (not higher) assemblies.

Seeing then how this work is done in obedience to the Word of God to serve the Church and the brotherhood, how can our brother then compare this work with "premarital sex," which is sin? No! Rev. VanOene, your plea to pardon your comparison doesn't work, and how can you as a minister expect from the readers that such a comparison

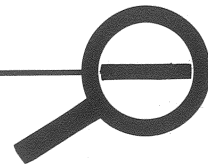
should be clear? On the contrary, for here are limits and such a comparison is simply unacceptable!

Not going any further into detail, I call upon our brother VanOene to withdraw at least this "offensive" part of his Medley. This could all have been prevented if it had not been deemed suitable for publication in the first place.

With brotherly greetings
B. Bikker
Surrey, BC 

PRESS REVIEW

By C. Van Dam



News Miscellany

Secessions from the CRC

The struggle in the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) has impacted on northwest Iowa. Last October two congregations from Classis of the Heartland were split. The oldest and largest church in the classis, First CRC in Orange City, split after classis got involved. Seventy church members asked the consistory to publish a date for Rev. R. Pontier's departure from the congregation. The consistory denied this request and published a statement of support for Rev. Pontier who has continued to speak out in opposition to unbiblical trends in the CRC. The disappointed church members went to Classis, but the majority of Classis did not want to take sides in the dispute. Instead, a committee of reconciliation was appointed and classis decided that Rev. Pontier was to take a leave of absence while this committee did its work. Since this plan showed bias against the minister by requesting his temporary removal, the consistory rejected this idea. According to Pontier, "By Classis taking sides with the appellants against the council, it legitimized rebellion against the council, and made it impossible for reconciliation to take place." The council voted on a motion for the entire council to leave the CRC. Six elders and fifty (of the 184) families followed the minister out of the CRC. Although the liberal

trends in the CRC were undoubtedly the underlying issue, an outsider may find it difficult to grasp completely the immediate need for the secession. It is noteworthy that among those who left is Dr. N. D. Kloosterman, a professor at Mid-America Seminary at Orange City.

The congregation of Sanborn, Iowa also experienced a split. Twelve of the sixteen elders and 68 of 145 families separated. This congregation was vacant. Here too concern over the authority of Scripture and women's ordination were key issues in the secession.

Other secessions within the last half year that can be mentioned include a new independent church in Toronto (formerly Second Toronto CRC) and four new independent churches in West Michigan. (*Christian Renewal and Nederlands Dagblad*)

CRCs ordain women elders

In spite of last year's synodical decision prohibiting the practice, at least seventeen CRCs have ordained women to the office of elder. More than half of these are in two classes, Classis Lake Erie and Classis Grand Rapids East. Both of these classes have adopted official positions on ecclesiastical disobedience. What will happen at this year's Synod?

At least two CRCs have hired women to serve as unordained pastors. This is in accordance with a 1992 decision of the CRC synod whereby

women are allowed to "teach, expound the Word of God, and provide pastoral care, under the supervision of the elders" of the local church. How the church member is to tell the difference between such an unordained person and a regular pastor is not clear. (*Christian Renewal*)

Japanese seminary survives earthquake

The Reformed Theological Seminary in Kobe of the Reformed Church in Japan was not damaged in the recent severe earthquake. Two Reformed churches in Kobe have however been seriously damaged and a third can still be repaired. Due to breakdown in telephone lines, it is difficult to get a complete picture of how the Reformed Church fared. It appears that at least one member of the church perished in the quake and about forty Reformed families are homeless.

The Reformed Church in Japan is a small church with a total membership of about 8,000, but in the Kobe region there are about ten congregations. This church has sister relations with the Netherlands Reformed Churches ("Nederlands Gereformeerde Kerken"); our Dutch sister churches also have contact with this church.

At the moment the seminary building as well as the residences provide shelter for those in the neighbourhood

who have either lost their homes or had to leave them. (*Nederlands Dagblad*)

Bavinck in Arabic

World Literature Ministries (WLM) of the CRC has released the final volume of a four-volume Arabic translation of Herman Bavinck's *Our Reasonable Faith*. The first volume had been published in 1990. We share the joy of WLM in being able to acquaint Arabic-speaking people with Calvinism and the Reformed faith through Bavinck's work. As readers of *Clarion* know from the Middle East Fellowship reports, it is very difficult to engage in open face to face mission work in Arab countries. (*The Banner*)

A Kampen first

Compared to what one sometimes finds in North American seminaries, there has up to now been relatively little practical work done by those studying for the ministry in the six year program of our sister institution in Kampen. Besides teaching catechism, there was relatively little "hands on" experience.

The situation is the same at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches. After Synod Ommen (1993) there has been an effort to integrate more practical work in Kampen.

The very first "practical exercise" has now been completed by five (fifth year) students who each worked a full week with a minister. The next step will be an eight week period of functioning with a minister. At this moment the program is still in an experimental stage, but first reactions from students and the congregations have been positive. The permission of members of the congregation who may be involved by way of visit or otherwise is always requested before a student shows up at the door. Most react positively.

The intention of the program is eventually to start with fourth year students. They will work with the minister and do such tasks as making several types of visits and preparing a sermon on the same text as the minister (and giving it to the homiletics professor for evaluation), but not preaching it. The difficulty of the assignments will in-

crease gradually; for example, a fifth year student would work half the week without the presence of the minister and a sixth year student will do two months of practical work. After an orientation week, such a sixth year student is "on his own." Students will be involved in all facets of the work and are of course expected to respect the sensitive nature of the labours of an office bearer, such as not speaking with others about confidential consistory matters.

Kampen is trying to integrate the practical work fully into their academic program in such a way that the academic part does not suffer or take longer.

The reason that more attention is paid to practical work is the increased demands on ministers and the desire to prepare students as well as possible for these demands. Also at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches the matter of a practical component in our program is under discussion and what transpires in the Netherlands is of more than passing interest to us. C

Canadian Reformed Home Registry

Who, What, When, Where, & Why

In September of 1993, The Canadian Reformed Home Registry officially began serving consistories across Canada by providing alternative homes for youth experiencing difficulty at home. In situations where all parties involved agreed that the best interests of all would be served if the youth would live elsewhere for a specific time, the Registry provided the consistories with names and addresses of suitable placements upon request. From the beginning it became apparent that many were unsure as to the role of the Registry. The purpose of this article is to clarify what it is that we are attempting to accomplish.

In situations where youth are experiencing difficulties we believe that the Scriptures give a mandate to assist as the communion of saints. Romans 12:13 refers to showing hospitality and 1 Peter states "... Practice hospitality ungrudgingly to one another. ..." As well, in Hebrews 13:2 it says "... Do not neglect to show hospitality to

strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares. ..." It was the Saviour Himself who stated in Matthew 25:35, in connection with those who inherit the kingdom: "... for I was a stranger and you welcomed me. ..." Along with other such words in Scripture (e.g. 3 John: 5), it is clear that it is pleasing to the Lord to open our homes to brothers and sisters in need of a place to go. This is the basis for the Home Registry. We have seen the need for such hospitality for youth who for some reason cannot remain in their own homes at least for a time.

In order to illustrate we have come up with several example where the services of the Registry might be utilized.

- A young person, sixteen years of age, out of school and without a job, lives in a dysfunctional family where the parents have lost control over the other children who show no interest in church. The sixteen year old

realizes the way the brothers and sisters are living is not right but has a difficult time finding friends and acceptance among the young people of the church. In addition the youth is under constant pressure from the siblings and wants out of the situation. Parents agree that it would be good to move the youth out of this environment to a different location to attend school or to find work. Parents are unable to support him but the deacons would help to find a home and provide support for a time.

- A youth, youngest of four, has some reactions to a marriage break-up of parents. The difficulties arise when the youth acts out physically and verbally at home and mother is unable to control the youth. No relatives are living nearby. Deacons and

mother agree that moving to a farm setting and living in a structured family not too far away from the family home for a few months would benefit the youth. Deacons of the youth's church make arrangements and provide financial help and officebearers in the new location assume supervision.


- An eighteen-year-old youth who has had some contact with the law has expressed a willingness and desire to change. Old friends, however, put pressure on him and he is unable to find meaningful friendships inside the church as he has a reputation as a trouble maker. A new start elsewhere is determined to be the best idea by both parents/consistory, and the youth agrees.

There are many other examples one could give but these represent hypothetical cases. In situations where a request is made to the Canadian Reformed Home Registry by a consistory seeking a

home, the Registry Committee meets to decide appropriateness, and where suitable, recommend a home.

It is important to understand that the Canadian Reformed Home Registry will only respond to requests for services from a local consistory. Typically a request for service would proceed in the following manner: deacons would identify a need in their congregation, they would contact the Chairman of the Registry Committee; the Chairman of the Committee would present the situation to the Registry Committee; the Committee would decide an appropriate match or home; the Chairman would relay the information back to the local appelland consistory and they would decide whether or not to proceed with the placement. In this manner, the decision remains with the local consistory and the Registry only serves to assist as required.

In order to become a national service there is still a need for suitable homes throughout the country. Some specific areas such as British Colum-



CHURCH NEWS

DECLINED to Toronto, ON
Rev. J. Visscher
of Langley, BC

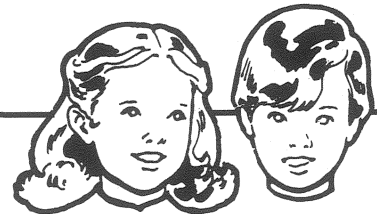
CALLED AND ACCEPTED to
Edmonton Immanuel, AB
Rev. G.A. Snip
of Lincoln, ON

bia, Manitoba, Southern Alberta and Eastern Ontario represent our greatest need. If you feel that you may be able to contribute to this work of mercy please contact your deacons for the appropriate forms.

On behalf of the Registry Committee,
Richard Aikema 

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



Dear Busy Beavers,

Some of you have sent me letters telling about books you have read. You would like to share these stories with the other Busy Beavers. Here are some of the letters. We'll start with one by Busy Beaver *Erica Broekema*.

FROM ANNA By Jean Little

This book is about a girl named Anna. She moves from Germany to Canada before World War II. She had a teacher in Germany who treated her very unkindly. Then she went on a boat to Canada where they found out there was something wrong with her eyesight. She had to go to a Sight Saving School but she was shy. Would her teacher treat her like the one in Germany?

Then came Christmas. They could not afford presents, so the children secretly made some for their parents. They doubted Anna could for they called her Awkward Anna. But could she. . . ?

Here's one from a new Busy Beaver: *Shaun Smeding*.

THE IRON SCEPTRE By John White

This book is about two boys called Wesley and Curt, and two girls, Mary and Lisa, who go to save a country called Anthropos. There were seven-headed monsters, big fights, and lots more adventure.

This book was really exciting. It's my favourite.

Busy Beaver *Lorelle Barendregt* sent in this story.

SUSANNEKE By C. J. vanDoornik

Susanneke wanted to give the LORD a birthday present, so she decorated the church for all the people to see. But when the people saw the decorations, they laughed very hard. Her Dad got mad at her. He took off the decorations, ripped them and threw them on the floor .

Busy Beaver *Miranda Barendregt* liked this book.

EMILY'S RUNAWAY IMAGINATION

By Beverly Cleary

This book is about a funny girl named Emily who is eight years old. She and her Mom and Dad live in an old, big house. One night her cousin stays over. Noises started and a ghostly figure with a pitchfork shows up in the barnyard. Later they find out that it was just their parents chasing their bull into the barn.

Here's one by Busy Beaver *Nicole Alderliesten*.

THE BOXCAR CHILDREN- THE LIGHTHOUSE MYSTERY
By Gertrude Chandler Warner

Henry, Jesse, Violet, Benny and their grandfather are staying in a lighthouse. They took Watch, their dog, too. But at midnight, almost every night, Watch would bark. Once they smelled fish! Now they have a mystery to solve.

Quiz Time!

IT'S SPRINGTIME!

Here's an activity to try in your house.

Find a potato that has sprouts growing from the "eyes." If you can't find one, leave a potato in a dark humid place for a while. Cut the potato into pieces, each one with a sprouted eye.

Get a bag of potting soil, and some small pots – drinking cups work for this.

Fill the plant containers about 2/3 full of potting soil, and the plant the seed about one inch deep with the sprout facing up. Water the soil thoroughly.

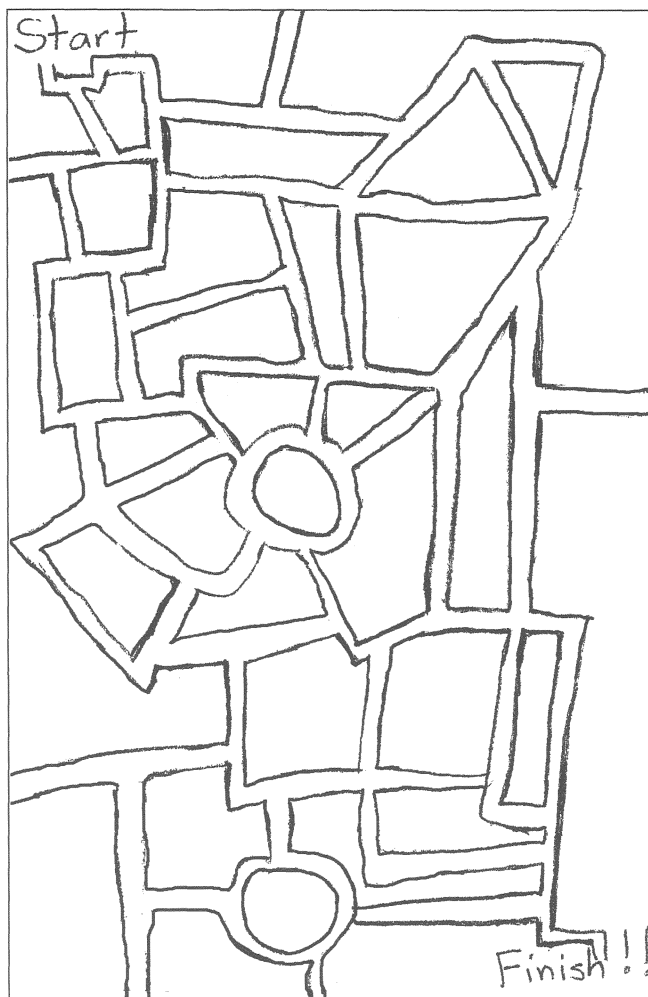
Set plants near a north window or under a grow light and wait for the seedlings to sprout. When the plants are a few inches high, transplant them into your garden, or larger pots outdoors after the risk of frost is past.

When the plants are fully mature, you'll find some delicious small potatoes under the soil!

Keep the potato's soil moist, but not wet, or it will rot.

MAZE

by Busy Beaver *Barbara Bultena*



APRIL BIRTHDAYS

We wish all you Busy Beavers who enjoy a spring Birthday a wonderful day celebrating with your family and friends. May the Lord bless you in the year ahead.

Clifford Vandersluis	2	John Witten	16
John Verhoeff	2	Jeremy VandenBos	17
Brad Bergsma	3	Jason Linde	18
Amanda Grit	6	Tammy Heemskerk	22
Jeremy DeHaan	9	Rianne Lodder	24
Alyson Bosch	9	Tim Sikkema	25
Kimberly Tuininga	9	Elissa Faber	27
Allison VanderVeen	10	Marlaine VanderHorst	29
Jolene Hulzebosch	11	Carrie Schuurman	29
Hester Barendregt	11	Lynette DeHaas	29
Bradley Bergsma	12	Amber Dykema	29
Pamela Hulst	13	Jonathan VandenBos	30
Tony VanOene	14		

PUT AN END TO IT!

Finish the group by filling in the blank.

1. Shem, Ham, and _____.
2. The Pharisees and the _____.
3. Matthew, Mark, Luke and _____.
4. Jonah and the _____.
5. Gold, frankincense and _____.
6. David and _____.
7. Sodom and _____.
8. "he (John) ate locusts and _____."
9. Ananias and _____.
10. "From Dan to _____."
11. "I am the Way, the Truth, and _____."
12. Abraham, Isaac and _____.

WORD SEARCH NEW TESTAMENT BOOKS

By Busy Beaver *Sharalee VandenBos*

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

Can You Find These Bible Book Names?

Acts	Colossians	Corinthians	Ephesians
James	John	Jude	Luke
Mark	Matthew	Peter	Philippians
Revelation	Romans	Thessalonians	Timothy
Titus			

SPRING SOLVE THE CODE!

By Busy Beaver *Candace Schuurman*

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
Ⓟ	♥	Ƨ	✱	Ⓛ	Ⓟ	✱	»	Ⓛ	➔	Ⓛ	✓	X
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Ⓛ	Ⓟ	Ⓟ	Ⓛ	Ⓛ	✱	!!	Ⓟ	∞	Ⓛ	Ⓛ	Ⓛ	Ⓛ

Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ ✓ X » Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ X

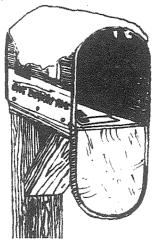
♥ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ ✱ X Ⓟ Ⓟ

Ⓟ ✓ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ Ⓟ X

ANIMAL WORD SEARCH

By Busy Beaver *Tamara Dejong*

D	O	G	X	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	G	Dog
T	C	A	T	M	P	S	W	O	C	O	E	Cat
B	A	D	E	S	R	O	H	C	O	N	E	Duck
C	D	U	O	P	C	K	M	S	P	T	S	Geese
E	F	C	N	C	N	R	E	U	R	S	E	Goose
Q	G	K	M	C	Q	K	S	U	C	N	F	Cows
												Horse



FROM THE MAILBOX

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Vanessa Hordyk*. I hope you enjoy doing the puzzles, sending in letters about what you're up to, or joining in contests. When is your birthday, so I can put your name on the birthday list? Please send further letters to the Winnipeg address, okay? Bye Vanessa.

Hi, *Francine Breukelman*. How are you and your family doing? How's spring on the farm? Is school going well for you? Hope to hear from you soon. Bye Francine.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Erin Kottelenberg*. Your letter was very interesting. I sure found out a lot of things you like or don't like. Do you play soccer even in the winter? Maybe sometimes you could play something else, so your friend will join in. Bye, Erin

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Christa Agema*. Thank you for your interesting letter. It must be fun to listen to music in school. It hardly seems like work, eh? What do you like best about Art? I was glad to see you also like Grammar, since it helps you write well! Hope to hear from you soon, Christa. Bye.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Emily Boot*. The picture on your letter looks like a Cardinal. Do those kind of birds live around your house? Maybe now that it's spring you see lots of birds! What kind of crafts do you like to make? Will you write in about them and we can share them with the other Busy Beavers. Bye, Emily.

Hello, *Laura Kanis*. I will send you a new membership card. Don't lose this one! That skip-a-thon sounds like fun. Are you raising money for something or someone? You sure know lots of different ways to skip! If your brother would like to join, please have him send me a letter. Bye, Laura.

Hi, *Michelle Linde*. Sounds like you are really busy. You like reading books, and writing them! Wow! Thanks for sending the paragraph about that book. Bye, Michelle.

Hello, *Caitlin Meints*. Thanks for writing in about your favourite book. It sure sounds exciting. Bye, Caitlin.

Hi, *Heather Grit*. You've been busy, too. The book "Ellie" sounds interesting. Probably more Busy Beavers will think so when they've read it, too. Bye, Heather.

Busy Beaver *Vanessa Hordyk* would like a penpal.
Her address is 363 Enfield Rd.
Burlington, ON
L7T 4E7

That's all for this time.

Love to you all, *Aunt Betty* **C**

Aunt Betty
c/o The Busy Beaver Club
Premier Printing Ltd.
One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2J 3X5

With thankfulness to the Lord, who has richly blessed us with another child, we joyfully announce the birth of

ERIN ALEASHA

Born on February 23, 1995

A sister for *Angela, Becca, Catie and Deanna*

Rick and Yvette Brasz
(nee Leistra)

4636 Victoria Avenue
Vineland Station, ON L0R 2E0

With thankfulness to our Heavenly Father who has richly blessed us with another of His covenant children, we are pleased to announce the birth of

BRYAN MATTHEW

A brother for *Julia*

Gerald and Wendy
VanDasselaar
(nee Vis)

PO Box 256
Lynden, ON L0R 1T0

With thankfulness to our Heavenly Father, the Creator of life, we joyfully announce the birth of our fourth child, a daughter

STEFANIE MARGRET

Born February 14, 1995

Vince and Greta Kieft
(nee Bosscher)

A sister for *Laura, Bryan and Rosalyn*

191 Old Orchard Road
Burlington, ON L7T 2G3