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# Clarion

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*The Theological College*

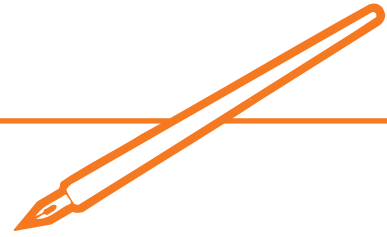
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By J. De Jong



## The Spirit Lives!

As we approach the season of Pentecost, we may be encouraged and reminded of the wonderful work of the Holy Spirit. Already in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God provided guidance and leadership as the people journeyed to the Promised Land. How much more in the New Testament age when the Spirit was poured out on the day of Pentecost!

What is the role of the Holy Spirit for God's people today? In the first place He is a Comforter, a guide to carry on the ministry of Christ through the apostles and their successors. When Christ returned to the Father, the Holy Spirit descended to carry on the work of the gospel through Christ's appointed servants. Without the Spirit we would not have an ordained ministry. Without the Spirit, there would be no missionary enterprise.

*The Spirit implants the Word in the life of the believer, and works to make that a living Word*

The outpouring of the Spirit on the apostles was indeed a special work of the Spirit to set the stage for the advance of the gospel. But since that time the Holy Spirit lives and dwells in and among the people of God. He remains a Comforter, but also a Sustainer. With Christ in heaven, the Holy Spirit serves to bring Him close to us through the ministry of the gospel. See Romans 8:9,10. The Spirit lives through the preaching of the Word!

The Spirit and the Word always go together. The Spirit implants the Word in the life of the believer, and works to make that a living Word. The Spirit inspired the sacred authors of the Scripture. The Spirit today guides and governs his church. We rejoice in the leadership of Christ who governs his church all over the world. Yet we know that Christ governs his church through his Word and Spirit.

Where would we be without the work of the Holy Spirit? Of course, He is an agent or servant of Christ. Without the saving work of Christ, the Spirit can provide no help. But his role is to implant the salvation gifts of Christ into the hearts of the believers through the preaching of the Word. He also provides support and comfort in times of pain, sorrow and stress. He also provides inner joy and happiness in the Christian life. He does not have a minor role or a lesser function. He is a living part of the one triune God! All three

persons of the Trinity work together for the salvation of God's people!

The Spirit also works individually in the life of the believer. Every person is different; every person has his or her own character. But through the process of renewal and regeneration, the Holy Spirit moulds the gifts and talents of each Christian person to make them effective servants for the kingdom of God. As we grow in knowledge, we need to monitor and develop our gifts. Through prayer and guidance, God leads his people to develop their talents and gifts through his Spirit.

The guidance of the Spirit also includes a broad range of work! The Spirit comforts in times of loss; He supports in times of stress; He provides consolation and support in times of sorrow. He also provides leadership, insight, and understanding of the Word. Without the Spirit we would not be able to understand the riches of God's Word! It is through the Spirit that our hearts are opened to receive the message of the gospel as revealed in Scripture, and as proclaimed through the ministry.

The Spirit is also the source of the gifts granted by Christ to his church. We all have different gifts, and we are called to use them for the upbuilding of the body of Christ. The most central gift of the Spirit is the ministry of the Word given to God's people. Yet the whole flock is called to share in this ministry of the Word, each with their own gifts. Romans 12:6-8 refers to the gifts of prophecy, service, teaching, exhorting, leadership, and ministry of mercy. 1 Corinthians 12:28 refers to gifts of administration, speaking in tongues, and the role of prophets, teachers, miracle workers, helps, and healers. Taking into account the changing time, we can apply these texts to the ministry today.

*The range of the gifts of the Spirit is very broad.*

However, this does not mean that the work of the Spirit is limited to the ordained ministry. We all share the gifts of the Spirit! We are called to exercise our spiritual gifts. See Romans 12:8, and 1 Corinthians 13:1-3. The gifts are given to us by the Spirit of Christ to equip the believers to serve one another as members of the one body of Christ.

The range of the gifts of the Spirit is very broad. We are called to serve each other in many different ways: care for

the sick, service to the needy, support for the lonely and injured, and guidance for those going through hard times in life. In all these things we need to be a hand and a foot to each other, as the apostle says. Indeed, in this way the Spirit truly works as a Comforter, who not only equipped the apostles for their work, but also equips the saints so that the cause of the gospel can continue to grow and spread in this world.

What then is our calling? We are called to live by the Spirit in Christ! Through Scripture and ministry we are guided in a path that helps us to use our gifts for God's service. Hence we need the regular preaching of the Word. But next to that, we should employ our own gifts for the service of the body of Christ. And as we employ our gifts, the Spirit will continue to provide the support and help needed to keep us effective in God's service.

Let us then in all these things continue to pray for the guidance and support of the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the life of his church!



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## What's inside?

In this issue we commemorate Pentecost. Both the editorial and the meditation show that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is a continual blessing to the church, and through the church becomes a blessing to the world.

We have the first instalment of a two-part speech of Rev. W.B. Slomp on education and the soul of the child. It examines the combined role of home, church and school in the upbringing of covenant children. You will see that Rev. Slomp has his own fresh approach to the subject.

Gerda VandenHaak updates us on Reformed Education in Timor, Indonesia. Some tremendous work is going on there. Keith Sikkema surveys developments in our schools across Canada and the United States.

Speaking of Reformed education, Dr. C. Van Dam informs us of what is happening at our Theological College as another school year closes. There are some interesting developments going on, also in connection with former students who have continued their education after graduating from our college.

We have a book review and two letters to the editor.

One correction should be mentioned in connection with the press release on the *Book of Praise* and the *Psalter Hymnal* committees in issue 10: the two photos were to be credited to Garry Apperloo, not the entire press release.

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By D.W. Vandeburgt

## The Power of the Holy Spirit

*"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."*

Acts 1:8

As you read this you may no longer be thinking much about Iraq. Even as I write this column we are told that the war is over, and that it is time to rebuild Iraq. Saddam Hussein's statues have been toppled in a gesture symbolic of the toppling of his regime. A nation has been broken and now it will be rebuilt although by whom and for what remains a question for many people.

We are witnesses to the rise and fall of nations. We see the exercise of a super-power and the loss of power. What does it all have to do with what the church celebrates as it remembers the day of Pentecost? In some ways it all provides a strong contrast to the day of Pentecost. There is contrast between political/military power and spiritual power. It is a contrast found in the very passage that is the basis for this meditation.

In Acts 1:6 the disciples asked the Lord Jesus, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" The question speaks of the exercise of power in the political realm. It carries with it the hope that Jesus Christ would throw off from Israel the yoke of Caesar. It may even presume some military action. Was Peter still wearing the sword he used in the garden of Gethsemane? There is in this question a desire to see an evil regime replaced with a godly one. Does this sound familiar?

Yet, Jesus in his reply promises a power that stands in stark contrast to political and military power. He says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and

in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." He was speaking of the day of Pentecost. On that day his disciples received power as the Holy Spirit came on them.

What is this power for? It is for witnessing to all nations concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. On Pentecost day there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples then these people from different language groups said in utter amazement, "we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" In Acts 4:33 we read, "With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all."

The Lord Jesus Christ does not conquer nations through military might. He does not establish his kingdom through the exercise of raw power. On the contrary, he gives power to his church to witness. This is what we celebrate as we remember the day of Pentecost. His kingdom has not yet fully come, and so we pray, *thy kingdom come*. That is, as the Heidelberg Catechism explains, so rule us O Lord by your Word and Spirit.

The witness of the church continues. The Lord said to his apostles that they were to be his witnesses to the ends of the earth. Sometimes it is said that since Rome was considered the ends of the earth, the gospel had to go as far as Rome. But the testimony of Scripture does not support this claim. Paul himself desired to go beyond Rome to Spain. Furthermore, the

phrase *the ends of the earth* understood in the light of the Old Testament means *the nations* – the various groups of people throughout the world. Jeremiah 16:19 says, "to you the nations will come from the ends of the earth. . . ." The church continues to witness to the nations concerning the Lord Jesus Christ. Her sword is the Word of God. Her constant comfort is that no matter how great the opposition the gates of hell shall not prevail against her because Christ is at work in her through his Holy Spirit.

This exercise of power may not always seem as exciting as watching live war coverage on CNN. The sword of the Spirit and what it can do may seem dull next to Bradley fighting machines and laser guided smart bombs. Yes, the exchange of an evil regime for a good regime remains as stirring a prospect to the human mind today as it did for the disciples of our Lord Jesus. However, appearances are deceiving. In remembering the day of Pentecost we remember our Lord who said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you. . . ." May the church of Christ be energized anew in reaching the ends of the earth.



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# Education and the Soul of the Child: Defining the Role of the Home, the Church and the School in the Upbringing of the Child (Part 1)

By W.B. Slomp

Teachers are very influential people. A teacher can make a tremendous difference, whether good or bad, in a person's life. There is no doubt in my mind that teachers, by far, are a positive influence. The odd teacher comes along who really sticks out, and whom his/her former students remember as the one person who made tremendous impact, changing their lives forever.

The opposite is also true; there are also teachers who change another person's life for the worse. I have had grown men crying in my office as they remembered their treatment at the hands of a certain teacher. Some are so angry with a former teacher, even ten or twenty years later, that they dream about doing some violence to the former teacher. Thankfully such teachers are few and far between.

In a speech held by the late Rev. J.D. Wielenga (1991) he too briefly mentioned that type of situation.<sup>1</sup> To him, however, the home is of much greater influence, and therefore he did not deal with that kind of treatment at the hands of a teacher much further, except to say that the school must leave the soul of the children alone.

In this controversial speech he also made some critical remarks about Reformed education. Many people in the Reformed community did not appreciate much of what he had to say. Even today there are still those who refer to the speech in a negative way. For example, last year Rev. Wielenga's speech was once again mentioned in the pages of the *Clarion* in an exchange between brother K. Sikkema

and Rev. W.M. Wielenga (JDW's son). Mr. Sikkema, who was reporting on an address from Rev. Cl. Stam, made the remark that "Rev. Wielenga didn't want teachers to touch the children's religious life, even though Peter says that we rejoice in the salvation of their souls."<sup>2</sup> Mr. Sikkema reported further that it seemed to him that "Rev. Wielenga could never come away from his own negative and unspiritual school experience, and that this background set the tone of his negative stands towards Christian schools in general. To him faith and faith education was a matter for the church."<sup>3</sup>

Rev. W.M. Wielenga took issue with this, and accused Sikkema and/or Stam of psychobabble and stated further that it was his father's aim "to try to challenge and untangle the far-too-tight knot of the too-much-assumed but questionable (to him: objectionable) triangle of the church-home-school."<sup>4</sup>

Now, it is not my intention to go into the speech of Rev. Wielenga as such. There are other important issues addressed in that speech, which have already adequately been dealt with.<sup>5</sup>

I do want to address one important aspect, however, and those are his comments about the soul of the child. What exactly is the soul of the child? And, who is responsible for it? That is, what is the connection between home, school and church in that regard? What exactly are the lines of demarcation? And then, how do you influence that soul? What is the role of the parent, and what is the role of the teacher?

## The soul of the child

What exactly did Wielenga say about the soul of the child? He began his speech by speaking about his own childhood experience, and recalled an incident in his life when a teacher, who happened to be a minister, clobbered his soul. With this expression he literally translates a Dutch expression. It refers to the fact that he hurt him in the very essence of his being.

Wielenga states that it is not the mandate of a teacher to touch or to shape the soul of the child. He must leave the soul of the child alone. According to him the school is characterized by the "analytical function." It is the function of the school to teach the student to analyze well. The school must provide knowledge, give insight and discernment in the field of creation and its created structures. The school must teach the child to stand in awe of God's creation. But, then he states further, "to make the child respond with this faith-language, however, is not the mandate of the school, and it is not in the hands of the school. It should leave the souls alone."

The question is, what does Wielenga refer to when he speaks about the soul of the child? Well, Wielenga was a keen theologian. He was steeped in the language of Scripture. And when the Scriptures speak about the soul of a person, they speak about the essence of life. They speak about the animating principle, which ultimately is derived from God who breathed into mankind. As soon as God breathed into man's



nostrils man became, as it says in Genesis 2:7, a living soul. The soul is what makes a man tick, what makes him alive. And so the soul refers to the self, complete with emotions, appetite and will.

Wielenga was concerned that teachers overstep their boundaries, by going where they are not allowed. He states that it is God's business to shape the soul of the child. No man is allowed to touch the soul of another. That is not even the function of the parent, nor even of the church. He says, "The relationship between people is not that of 'former' and 'unformed material.' That relationship is the exclusive privilege and domain of God the Creator. All souls are mine, says the Lord. Leading a child by showing it right and wrong, is one thing. But whether the child will follow, that is not in our hands."

*I have had grown men crying in my office as they remembered their treatment at the hands of a certain teacher.*

How then does God make us follow Him according to Wielenga? Well, says he, "Preaching of the Gospel by the church, and, and its own way, in the family-worship leads to faith."

Dr. James Visscher commented on the speech of Wielenga in a speech he held in 1994.<sup>6</sup> He agrees with Wielenga that the school is not in the business of shaping souls as such. But, he asks, "does that then mean that it should adopt a hands-off policy when it comes to the soul? Can one so neatly divide a person into compartments and cater to some while totally ignoring others?"

Dr. Visscher compares the triangle of a church-home-school to the Trinity. According to the Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 8, we speak about God the Father and our creation, God the Son and our redemption and God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification. However, that does not mean that only the Father was involved in our creation, and only the Son in our redemption, and only the Holy Spirit in our sanctification. No, that was a task of all three persons of the Trinity. Yet, says Visscher, "the catechism ascribes to each of the persons of the Trinity a certain main area, work or role." "It differentiates, but not in an absolutely exclusive sense.

The same should apply in the area of covenantal education."

In other words, according to Visscher, all three, the parent, the school, and the church, have a responsibility when it concerns the shaping of the soul of the children. But, each one has its own sphere of influence within certain definite parameters.

### Fatherhood

What then is the main role of the school, the church, and the parents? I know there have been many speeches by ministers and others in the past who have tried to answer that question. I have little disagreement with a lot of what has been said. Yet, there are certain things which I believe need to be emphasized more.

If you want to know what the sphere of influence of the teacher is, then you must have a clear understanding of the role of the father and how that affects the soul of the child. Also, then you have to have a clear understanding of who the father is. For you see, as has been pointed out in speech after speech, the role of the teacher is closely tied to the role of the father. However, is it true that the teacher is nothing more than a surrogate parent within a loosely defined role? Wielenga disagrees with this. So do others. What are we to think?

*Wielenga states that it is not the mandate of a teacher to touch, or to shape the soul of the child.*

Well, let's look at the biblical concept of father. For it is indeed true that the concept of fatherhood, or parent-hood, if you will, is closely tied to the education of a child. According to Andrew Hill, the differences between the Hebrews and those of their ancient counterparts in their educational ideals and practices were quite striking in comparison to their similarities. The Hebrews were unique. In what way? Well, he says, "the emphasis on the *fatherhood* (my emphasis, WBS) of God in Israelite religion brought a sense of intimacy to the Creator-creature relationship and a sense of purpose and urgency to human history."<sup>7</sup> Their sense of fatherhood made the difference.

What then does the Bible teach us about fathers? In a speech<sup>8</sup> Prof. C. Van Dam states that, "Parents, (also moth-

ers, Proverbs 1:8; 31:1) are to direct and mould their children in the ways of the LORD so that the children could live before God and live eternally under his blessing."<sup>9</sup>

According to Van Dam the concept of life is very important in the instruction of a child. That is what instruction is all about. Says Van Dam, "There are conditions for teaching and learning wisdom." "This fact is also evident from the Hebrew term used for "instruction" (*mûs-r*) in the RSV of Proverbs 1:2, 3. This term also means "training" and as the idea of discipline."<sup>10</sup> And then he writes further about what that instruction entails. He speaks about the fact that instruction is life producing. And so, he speaks about the soul of a child. For the soul is the life of the person. Writes Van Dam, "However, in disciplining, something of the love and atmosphere of the home must be present in the school. Teachers are fathers, mothers. Needless to say, the same applies to home. Discipline must be life producing."<sup>11</sup>

There is no doubt that parents and teachers are in the business together of shaping the soul of the child. They cannot help but do so. O sure, it is true, as Wielenga says, that ultimately that is God's business. He alone can shape us. But does He not use instruments for that? Parents and teachers are instruments in God's hands to bring that about. And they do more than just bring the gospel. Although it is important, you must be more than just an example to them. You also encourage them, and discipline them. You listen to them so that you can understand where they are coming from.

*There is no doubt that parents and teachers are in the business together of shaping the soul of the child.*

The same thing is true of the church. The minister and the rest of the office bearers do not just come with a message and then leave it up to the hearer to apply it or not. If that's all you do, you make a mess. You set those who are in your charge adrift. No, the office bearers must become intimately involved in the lives of the members of the church. That is also the duty of teachers and parents. They have to live the gospel. They have to apply it. They have to be intimately

involved in the lives of those God has put in their charge.

To be in a close relationship like that means that you must make yourself vulnerable. It means that you are open to criticism. In a living relationship you expose yourself to others, and you do not mind that at times that may mean that you will get hurt. You are willing to pay the price, for the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks.

### The role of the parents

Yet, there is no doubt that the role of the parent must be clearly distinguished from the role of the teacher. What then, in the first place is the role of the parent? Who has the main responsibility for the soul of the child? In another speech Van Dam states that “the distinction between the two types of father (natural father and teacher-father, WBS) is in Proverbs somewhat blurred. The use of this parental terminology underlies the fact that the parental character of the education to be received is essentially the same, whether received at home or at school.”<sup>12</sup>

This brings us to the crux of the matter. To a certain extent it may be true that distinction between the natural father and teacher-father is somewhat blurred. However, according to Helmer Ringgren, who writes in the well-respected *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, in most cases the Hebrew linguistic use of the word for father (‘abh) corresponds with our own.<sup>13</sup> In other words, when the Old Testament uses the word “father,” it usually has the biological father in mind, the birth-parent. Thus, what the Scriptures have to say about the father, in the vast majority of cases refers to the biological father.

That is of great of significance. For that is what makes the bond between parent and child so close. It is also what makes our relationship with our heavenly Father so close. That is why time and again the LORD God appeals to his own fatherhood in our relationship with Him.

Listen, for example, how He appeals to that relationship as He addresses Israel, his offspring, which is going astray. He says in Hosea 11:1-5, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son. But the more I called Israel, the further they went from me. They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images. It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they

did not realize it was I who healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love; I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to feed them.”

Because of that close relationship the LORD shows how compassionate He is. He says in Psalm 103:13, “As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.” It is interesting to note that in Hebrew the word for “compassion” is directly related to the word for womb. And so, the Lord God also shows his feminine, motherly qualities. He gave birth to Israel. He nourished her, like a mother at her breast. He clothed and protected her, and looked after every single need to make sure that nothing would be lacking. Thus the bond is great. There is a great love for Israel, his people, and thus also for us, who are his people as well.

Isn’t that the way it is with us as parents as well? How precious are not our children to us? A good mother will do everything in her power to protect and nurture her child. She feeds it, cuddles it, and nurtures it in every way possible. When the child is small she spends a lot of time with her child.

*And so, the Lord God also shows his feminine, motherly qualities. He gave birth to Israel. He nourished her.*

A father is also very much involved in the bringing up of the child. He disciplines his children so that they will go in the right direction. He encourages them during times of difficulties. He spurs them on. He teaches his children humility by being humble himself. In this way the parents are the primary teachers of their children.

If you want to know what such teaching entails then we have to look at the role of the Lord Jesus while He was on earth. In Lord’s Day 12 Christ is called our chief Prophet and Teacher. Rightly so. For time and again He is portrayed in the Scriptures as one who teaches (Cf. Matt 5:2; Mark 4:10). The people also called Him Rabbi, Teacher (John 3:2; 13:13).

How did He teach? In the first place He taught them in a formal way. That is what He did for example when he started his ministry, and gave the Ser-

mon on the Mount. Often He also taught in it in formal way, when He was asked certain questions arising out of a particular situation.

Christ especially taught by example. That is why He tells his disciples to follow Him, and to come after Him. His words and his deeds were inexorably tied to each other. His deeds were his words, and his words were his deeds.

For over three years Christ also spent a great deal of time with His disciples. He lived with them, slept with them, and ate with them. He was always there for them, to encourage, correct, and comfort them. It is impossible for teachers to have that kind of relationship with their students. No one expects that either.

This was a speech held in Neerlandia, Alberta on March 27, 2003 at a Teachers’ Convention.

<sup>1</sup>J.D. Wielenga, “Profile of the School Graduate. A few critical Remarks” held at the Teachers’ convention in Coaldale Alberta, March 21, 1991.

<sup>2</sup>Clarion, Vol. 51, no. 15, p. 367

<sup>3</sup>ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Clarion, Vol. 51, no. 18, p. 436

<sup>5</sup>For example Dr. J. Visscher, “Re-Thinking Covenantal Education” held at the National Principal’s Conference, Nov. 14-16, 1994.

<sup>6</sup>“Re-Thinking Covenantal Education”

<sup>7</sup>Andrew Hill, “Education in Biblical Times” in *Baker’s Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*. Edited by Walter A. Elwell (Baker Book House Co., 1996)

<sup>8</sup>C. Van Dam, “Educating our children within the communion of saints – Whose task is it?” in, **Fathers and Mothers at Home and at School** (The Reformed Guardian, 2000), p. 32

<sup>9</sup>C. Van Dam, “Wisdom, knowledge and teaching” in, **Fathers and Mothers at Home and at School** (The Reformed Guardian, 2000), p. 13

<sup>10</sup>ibid., p. 17

<sup>11</sup>ibid., p. 19

<sup>12</sup>C. Van Dam, “Educating our children within the communion of saints – Whose task is it?” in, **Fathers and Mothers at Home and at School** (The Reformed Guardian, 2000), p. 32

<sup>13</sup>Helmer Ringgren, *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, p. 8



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# Anak - Anak Terang Children of Light<sup>1</sup>

*Ephesians 5:8, 9*

*By Gerda VandenHaak*

Most of you here are by now familiar with the students that have come from Timor, Indonesia to study at our Canadian Reformed Theological School. We have seen the pictures of the Dethan brothers in the *Clarion* and just recently Edwar Dethan graced the cover of that magazine. Evangelism in Timor, Indonesia started in the early 1800s. The Dutch sent missionaries and planted a church and slowly the churches grew. In 1945 the Indonesian government declared its independence and all the missionaries had to leave the country. Enter the Rev. Soloman Dethan. Yes, the father of both Yonson and Edwar Dethan. He was called Rev. Dethan, but he was no minister; no he was a farmer, a rice grower and carpenter. Yes he was ordained as a minister, but not because he had attended a university. He became a minister because of his vast knowledge and understanding of the Word of God. He knew and loved the Lord. He continued to proclaim the Gospel. The Muslims told the people to limit their children to two or three, no more. Soloman and Wehelmina had twelve. Yonson and Edwar are the youngest of the boys.

## Leadership

The leadership of the churches was abandoned by white people, and yet under the Lord's blessing the churches continued growing. In 1985 it had grown to twenty churches with a total of 4456 members. Also in that year, some Christians came in through the ministry of Rev. Klamer, a minister of the Liberated Churches of Holland. The three forms of unity were discovered, with the help of Rev. Klamer and Rev. Knigge, missionary of the Canadian Reformed Church of Toronto, Rev. J. A. Boersema,

and Rev. A. Pol, presently the minister of Carman, Manitoba. In 1991 the Synod embraced the Reformed confessions. The "Reformed Calvinis Churches" now recognize as true churches the Free Reformed Churches in Australia, the Liberated Churches in the Netherlands and the Can/American Reformed Churches. Yonson has been in Timor teaching and preaching since 1999 and Edwar hopes to join him in the spring of 2003. So far I have dealt with the background. Yonson Dethan married my niece Mary-Lynn Deboer. And that is how I became involved.

## Complexity

Timor is 85% Christian and 15% Muslim. Millions of people live on some 1700 very crowded islands. They speak about 600 languages, thirty of

them primary. The government is Muslim and this is where the problem comes in. About 40% of the Reformed children attend school. Of those, not many make it to grade 6. They, for the most part, attend public (Muslim) Schools. The government wants all the children to speak the same language. The language to be learned is the Bahassa language; they have declared the Bahassa language the official trade language. So when the children go to school they learn Bahassa. The people have no choice; they must learn Bahassa. The Muslims are in charge of the whole country. Or are they? Of all the 600 languages, the Bible has only been translated in one Indonesian language. Yes, you guessed it, Bahassa. What the Reformed Churches need more than anything else, is educated Reformed



*Left to Right: Linda Gasperz, Ana Lay, Firna Padjj and Reni Hamburg*



Christians. Christian parents who can read God's Word. Christian educated men, to become elders and deacons in the church, able to read and study the Word of God.

The Muslims use transmigration as a subtle way of persecuting the Christians. They, the Muslim government, move educated young men, between the ages of twenty and thirty, to the Christian provinces such as Timor. Those young men have all the good jobs in the schools, banks, and hospitals. Notice, I said young men, not young girls. When the young men start looking for a wife, they find them among the uneducated, Reformed Christians. They have the same Allah they say, and if you marry me, you will no longer live in poverty and I will pay for medicine for your mom and I will help send your brother to school, so he can get a good paying job like me. Some of those uneducated girls think it is their Christian duty to marry those Muslim boys.

### Birth of the organization

This is when the organization Anak Anak Terang was born. The aim was to find sponsors to help send the children to school. Start with one child per family. We asked, cajoled, pleaded and put notices in the church bulletins. The sponsors came. We now have about 110 children sponsored in Canada and the United States. Forty-five more are sponsored in Australia. We have also sponsored five ministers and three evangelists. I remember that last year, on my husband's birthday, we had some people over. I went to get something and noticed the computer was still on. I quickly looked. Thirty-three names of children needing sponsors came up on my screen. The rest of the evening all I could think about was: thirty-three names. What could I do! The next day the mail brought me a request for a child; the day after four more; by the end of the week all the children had a sponsor. I was still thinking up a notice for the church bulletin. The Lord did not need me after all. He might use me, but He does not need me.

During December 2001, I received an email from Yonson Dethan. We should have Reformed Christian Schools. Let's see if we can raise dollars and start building a Christian Junior High School and with the Lord's blessings we should be able to open one in July 2002. Six months? Yes six months.

We have no time to waste. The fundraising began and the school, grade 7 only, was opened in July of 2002 with forty-eight children, four teachers and twelve part time teachers. This year we hope to have grade 7 and 8. We also have a kindergarten. Our dream is to have kindergarten to grade 7 in the islands of Savu and Rote, and kindergarten to grade 12 for Tarus/ Noelbaki. Is it impossible? No. Nothing is impossible for God.

### About the children

Now I just want to tell you about the children. I want to tell you about Iman, who was so happy to have a sponsor. But did he show it? No way! When Mary-Lynn sat him down to tell him he had a sponsor who would send him to school, buy him shoes, schoolbag, supplies and uniform and that he had to do his very, very, best, he just looked at her solemnly and nodded his head. He did not show his happiness at all. When Mary-Lynn watched him leave her house, he suddenly took a little skip and then another one. Then he started jumping up and down and calling to his friends: "I have a sponsor, I have a sponsor."

When Mary-Lynn visited his home, to bring a letter from his sponsor, she found a seven pound baby. There is nothing unusual in finding a seven pound baby, but this one was a year old. The mother had no milk and you do not grow from rice water. To buy formula cost \$24 per year. \$24 to save a child. When you send a letter, we have an excuse to enter the home and see other needs in the child's family.

### Rani

And then there was Rani. Rani had been sponsored by a very enthused young man. He right away paid for three months. After that he did not pay on time or at all. Rani however did his very best and we did not tell him that he did not really have a sponsor that supported him all the time. Rani lives on Rote Island and it cost about \$12 per month for him to go to school. His family had heard about the new Christian Junior High School. Rani wanted to go there. It is a five and a half hour trek to go to the new school. But when the new school opened, Rani was there. He had no schoolbag, no shoes, no uniform. He also had no sponsor. But Rani did not know that. He trusted that he would be looked after, and he was. He was not the only one that showed up without



Declined the call from the Free Reformed Church at Albany, WA and London, Ontario:

**Rev. R.J. Eikelboom**

of Calgary, Alberta.

\*\*\*

Called by the church at Carman East, Manitoba:

**Rev. R.A. Schouten**

of Abbotsford, BC.

\*\*\*

Effective June 8, 2003, during church renovations, the **Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton** will be conducting worship services at:

**Rehoboth URC**

77 Glancaster Road  
Ancaster, ON L9G 3K9

Worship Services:

9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.

\*\*\*

New address for the Ottawa Canadian Reformed Church:

**22 Sandhead Terrace  
Nepean, Ontario K2J 1L4  
Phone: 613-843-9056**

\*\*\*

Called by the church at Neerlandia, AB:

**Rev. J.D. Louwerse**

of Fergus, Ontario.

being registered. Seven more showed up all from the island of Rote. All without sponsors. Mary-Lynn emailed me and asked what she should do. I said: buy them shoes, books, uniform and supplies. Good, she said, I did already. That week again I learned of the providence of God. Every day the mail brought me cheques. Little cheques, a birthday party gift instead of more presents, cheques without explanations. They were just made out to COL Canada. At the end of the week when I sent the funding to Timor, we included \$510. Mary-Lynn asked: "How did you know we spent \$502?" I said we did not know, but the Lord knew. We now have a slush fund of \$8.

The children are selected by church council. Three families in Tarus church wanted to send their children to school. Council turned them down, because the

parents themselves were not faithful in attending church services. They told them to come to church for the next three months and ask again. Well, for the next three month the whole family came not only to church but to everything that went on in church. The children attended Sunday school, catechism and never missed. All three of the children now have sponsors and go to school and church.

### Refugees

In 1999 the small churches in Timor were overrun by refugees. East Timor had declared its independence and refugees came across the border. Also the church in Noelbaki did what it could. They fed, clothed and sheltered them. To put it simply, they, the refugees, were not nice people. When they finally were settled into refugee camps, a very handicapped girl in the church who had been raped by one of them, was found to be pregnant.

In May of 2000 Mofet was born. Mofet is Hebrew for "Miracle." His mother Marta is not able to look after him. Marta and Mofet live with her mother. She is a seventy year old widow. The grandmother supports herself, Marta and Mofet with a vegetable garden. She plants them and waters them by hand every day. Then she takes the vegetables to market to sell. Before grandma goes to work, she feeds and changes Mofet. Then he is put to bed again, until she returns. Do you know that after a while a child like that does not cry anymore? He does not get stimulated, played with, read to, no stories are told, and nobody teaches him how to clap his hands. A child like that does not even grow. His mother is not able to do it and his grandmother is to busy providing food for him.

Mofet is the first student to enter kindergarten at age two and a half. He now has a whole bunch of brothers and sisters. They love him to pieces

and Mofet thrives. A group of high school students have committed themselves to sponsoring Mofet. They are excited about being part of his life.

All those children are our brothers and sisters in the Lord. To think that they have to go to a Muslim School to get an education is scary. I hope and pray that I have moved you enough to open your hearts, moved you enough to open your wallets. But above all, may you be moved enough to remember them in your prayers.

Please help


**Gerda VandenHaak**

COL Canada

11-26320TWP Road 514

Spruce Grove, Alberta T7Y-1C8

[www.sponsorachild.netfirms.com](http://www.sponsorachild.netfirms.com)

<sup>1</sup>Copy of a speech held at a Christian High school. 

## ANAK-ANAK TERANG

### Children of Light

*We thankfully acknowledge receipt of the following*

For the year ending Dec 31, 2001	
All donors	\$38,599.69
For the year ending Dec 31, 2002	
Youth Groups:	
Elora YPS	\$161.25
Guelph YPS Forward in Faith	\$527.18
Lincoln YPS Sola Scriptura	\$454.50
Smithville YPS Credo	\$1,500.00
Schools:	
A.C.R.E. School Dunville	\$720.00
Carman, Man	
Dufferin Elementary and High School	\$958.00
John Calvin School Smithville	\$248.00
Ladies Groups:	
Genesis Women Soc. Fergus	\$372.00
Neerlandia Ladies Aid	\$206.11
Church Collections/Deacon fund:	
Barrhead, AB	\$1,000.00
Carman West, Man	\$2,000.00
Edmonton Immanuel, AB	\$1,538.00
Edmonton Providence, AB	\$901.97
Guelph Emmanuel, ON	\$400.00
Lynden, WA	\$1,581.60
Rockway, ON	\$339.75
Smithville, ON	\$1,000.00
All other donors	\$49,155.95
<b>Total Donated</b>	<b>\$63,064.27</b>

[www.sponsorachild.netfirms.com](http://www.sponsorachild.netfirms.com)



By C. Van Dam

## Another School Year Draws to a Close

At the moment students are writing final exams. An excellent time for an update and some concluding reflections on the past school year!

### Special lectures

Lectures are obviously an extremely important component for the training of future pastors. We are very thankful that also this year the lecture schedule could be finished without interruption.

With respect to the lectures, this semester saw a historical first. For the first time two doctoral candidates who had graduated from the Theological College were able to give a lecture at the College. Mr. John Smith, who is writing a dissertation at the University of Toronto on the ancient Greek translation of selected Hebrew Psalms, spoke on February 28 to the Junior Old Testament Canonics class on: "The Canonics of the Book of Psalms in Light of the Septuagint." The Septuagint is an ancient Greek translation of the Old Testament which was also used by the early Christian church and is therefore quoted in the New Testament. In his lecture he noted that con-

trary to the views of some, this is not an inspired translation, but it is an important interpretation of the Hebrew text. Mr. Smith took us through a fascinating tour of how clues as to the origin of our present Book of Psalms could perhaps be derived from this Greek translation. One of his conclusions was that the Psalms may have been one of the earliest books of the Old Testament to have been rendered into Greek after the Pentateuch.

The other graduate student, Mr. S. Carl Van Dam, who is writing a dissertation on Zechariah 14 for the Theological University in Kampen, The Netherlands, spoke in the context of another course, the Junior Old Testament Exegesis class (which was studying Zechariah) on "Obscurity, Symbolic Act, and Fulfillment: Some Perspectives on Zechariah 11:4-17." He used this chapter as a case study to highlight some specific aspects of prophecy. First, he dealt with the fact that this part of Scripture is hard to understand. This difficulty does not lie in the text, but in the mind of reader who has trouble comprehending it. We do not always have as much

knowledge of a Bible passage as we would like to understand all the details. Second, he dealt with the nature of the symbolic act mentioned in the text and how best to understand it. Finally, he outlined how this passage was fulfilled in the New Testament. It was amazing how many different interpretations this part of Scripture elicited. However, in spite of the many difficulties that one encounters in understanding this passage, it is remarkable that the theological message is clear. Fulfillment is not always by way of what we would call a direct fulfillment, but by analogy.

Earlier, the Junior Old Testament exegesis class was also treated to a lecture by Dr. Al Wolters, Professor of Religion and Theology and Classical Studies at Redeemer University College. Dr. Wolters, who is writing a commentary on Zechariah, lectured on interpreting the Old Testament, using the visions of Zechariah 1-6 as examples. He illustrated how interpretation involves different levels of understanding. In the process, he showed how all levels of interpreting Scripture involve one's faith presuppositions.







*Students writing final exams.*

Critical scholarship has created a contrast between so-called neutral or objective scholarship and faith commitment. However, Dr. Wolters correctly argued that one's faith commitment of knowing Scripture to be God's Word needs to be integrated in all exegetical work.

#### **Lecture tours**

Several of the professors are on lecturing tours. Prof. G. H. Visscher, Professor of New Testament, is visiting all the churches in British Columbia on behalf of the Theological College. He will speak on "The Purpose of Romans: The Unity of God's People."

Prof. J. Geertsema, emeritus Professor of New Testament, is in South Africa from April 2 to June 3. He is teaching approximately ten ministerial students for the Vrije Gereformeerde Kerken in South Africa. He also hopes to visit the churches. It is wonderful that Professor Geertsema is able to make himself available for this work for our sister churches in that vast country down under.

#### **Supporting churches**

We are very grateful for the continuing support of and interest in the College exhibited by the supporting community of churches. This interest and support is shown in a number of ways. We were very pleased to have Miss S. de Bruin and her Grade 4 of Timothy Christian School in Hamilton visit us on February 26, 2003. It provides an excellent opportunity to impress on the youth of the church the great importance of the training of future pastors and missionaries.

We also appreciate very much the support the churches give in implementing the Pastoral Training Program which is under the capable direction of Rev. J. De Gelder. This summer two students will be involved: Mr. Reuben Bredenhof in Guelph, Ontario and Mr. Ian Wildeboer in Langley, B.C. Other phases of the Pastoral Training Program are implemented during the school year in neighbouring churches. The opportunities presented by these churches and their councils to our students is much valued.

Some churches send us their weekly bulletins. To save costs, those who wish can send their bulletins electronically to the Librarian, Miss M. Van der Velde ([theocollegelib@canrc.org](mailto:theocollegelib@canrc.org)).

#### **Upcoming College Evening**

Planning has already started for the next College Evening which is scheduled for September 5, 2003. This will also be a convocation, since the graduation of student David M. De Boer will, D.V., take place then. It is always very encouraging to see the interest that the church community takes in this annual event. Please mark your calendar and join us in praising God for the continuation of the ministry of the Word.



*Dr. C. Van Dam is principal and professor of Old Testament at the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches in Hamilton, Ontario. [cvandam@canrc.org](mailto:cvandam@canrc.org)*





## Peregrine Survey

By K. Sikkema

Why do we have our own schools, what should they be like, for whom are they, and where does the money come from? Around the country, people discussed these questions during the past several months. The questions often generate a variety of views and answers. However, the underlying tone continues to be that we want to be faithful to Scripture and Confessions in training the next generation.

The Vision Committee of the Combined Boards in the Fraser Valley has completed and has published its work of revisiting some fundamental questions, which prompted the previous generation to establish our Christian day school. They did this not because our schools were moving without direction, but simply because they believed in the value of having each generation take ownership and responsibility for themselves.

Meanwhile, the Promotion/Development Committee of Credo Elementary School in Langley underlines the point with conducting a mail-out campaign to all single communicant members within the local churches: "(...) a very large group of young adults who by and large do not support the school on a financial basis. Many of you have attended our Christian schools for 12 years and the education of children in these covenantal schools is a community responsibility. Please prayerfully consider this request."

### Chinese translation

The Reformed Curriculum Development Committee (RCDC) from the Fraser Valley reports ongoing work in developing Reformed curriculum, and specifically on the *Flame of the Word* Church History series. A Chinese translation of this work has been started in Kelmscott, Australia, and a Portuguese translation is being considered. The Narration course is offered again this summer in the Fraser Valley, Ontario, and, in translation, in Sao Jose and Unai, Brasil. The committee continues to work on other curriculum developments as well, and shares the fruits of its labours across the country and with other Christian schools.

Smithers' principal reminisces on the reasons why we would school our children. After identifying that the "reason must of necessity connect to our professed faith" as an overriding theme, he suggests the following five reasons: 1) to meet legal requirements; 2) to socialize them; 3) to keep the kids out of trouble; 4) to get trained for a job; and 5) to become a good church/kingdom member. The last reason must be the driving force, and carries its own consequences. In this case, it calls for a clear focus on "training our children to be the best servants of God that they can be."

### Lynden

We look forward to some pictures of the new building of Cornerstone Christian School in Lynden, Washington, even as "construction on the new building has continued at a tremendous pace." As the building goes up, the internal organization of the school also develops, including new staff appointments, the development of a special education program, and a gratifying level of cooperation between all involved. The gratitude is clearly directed to our Father in heaven.

Together with Immanuel Christian School in Winnipeg, the staff of Dufferin Christian School in Carman enjoyed the presentation of Miss J. Kingma of Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College on "Issues in Reformed Education." At DCS, efforts are underway to prepare a new course on Faith and Discipleship. A draft rationale for the course sums up what the direction of the course is:

Christian discipleship, true faith and a Christian worldview are inseparable. Each one complements and confirms the others. Our students need to articulate their Reformed worldview, and in so doing, their discipleship and faith will shine through. This course seeks to assist this process by helping students to: 1) articulate their Reformed worldview; 2) understand today's cultural issues; 3) form Biblical responses to these issues.

### Special needs

At ACRES in Attercliffe, two special needs students, a deaf girl to be placed in seventh grade and a Downs Syndrome boy to be placed in first grade,

will join the student body the Lord willing in September. The chairman writes,

The Board is fully aware that there are extra financial costs with the enrolment of these special needs students. Since they too are God's covenant children given to us as a Reformed community, the Board felt that these special students should also have their place here at ACRES rather than having them integrated into public schools where they will be subject to different philosophies, lifestyles, and other worldly peer pressure.

### Nice surprise

Ontario's independent school supporters were granted a surprise announcement from Premier Ernie Eves regarding the Equity in Education Tax Credit. While budgetary constraints had previously put the further implementation of the tax credit on hold (increasing it from 10% to 20% for the 2003 taxation year), he now announced that it would be further implemented after all, and also be enshrined in law. When fully implemented by 2006, the credit allows for a 50% refund on tuition paid for independent schools, to a maximum of \$3000 per child. Boards are looking into ways to reap the maximum benefit of the credit. At the same time, gratitude abounds here as well.

### Foundations and purpose

Each school and each province has its own joys and challenges. Yet, the foundations on which and the purpose for which our schools were built are the same. In every individual community, as well as across the country, may the Lord continue to grant us all unity of heart and mind in our commitment to teach covenant children in the fear of his Name. Let us go forth in joy, as Fergus/Guelph's principal suggests:

All of life's goals are found in God's service. What a joy to be able to hold that before our children constantly, in all the subjects that we deal with at school. How else can one speak of this world's history, this world's physical structure, this world's intricate design, without a view of the purpose of it all!

Mr. Keith Sikkema is a grade 8 teacher and vice-principal at John Calvin School in Smithville, Ontario.  
ksikkema@juno.com



By E. Hoogerdyk

***The Christian Mind* – written by Harry Blamires**

**Publisher: Servant Books, 1978**

## Introduction

In this book, the author, Harry Blamires makes a perceptive diagnosis of some of the weaknesses besetting the church today – specifically the Christian intellect, the Christian mind. He argues that good, wholesome Christian thinking is being swept away by secularism. He laments the lack of the Christian mind. Therefore he calls for a recovery of the Christian mind, a recovery not just because of the secular assault on morals but also because of the secular assault on the view of the meaning of life and the purpose of the social order.

## The lack of a Christian mind

In this first section of the book Blamires simply argues, “There is no longer a Christian mind. It is a common place that the mind of modern man has been secularized.” He then goes on to “prove” that this argument is true. He states that there is no longer a Christian dialogue about life’s main issues. If there is a Christian argument, it’s looked at as idealistic. And idealists are being told to shut up.

He points out the fact that too many Christians are “following the wrong herd.” We’ve chosen the way of compromise. We have fallen silent. We’ve even remained silent while the secular view of the “full life” is being hammered into our young impressionable children.

Finally, Blamires points out very strongly that the Christian mind has died of neglect and disuse. If you speak christianly (even in the church) about a topic, then you are assumed to be “preaching.” And “preaching” belongs only on the pulpit, behind closed doors.

The marks of the Christian mind

In this second and final section of his book, Blamires outlines what he be-

lieves to be the marks of a Christian mind. These marks are as follows:

### 1. Its supernatural orientation

The Christian mind “cultivates the eternal perspective” (i.e. it looks beyond this life to another one). The Christian mind considers the fact of heaven and the fact of hell. This type of thinking should affect our life in the present, not just the future.

### 2. Its awareness of evil

The Christian constantly thinks of and is constantly aware of the battle between the forces of good and evil. Our sin of pride has asserted the self as the centre of the universe; this is the evil we must be aware of. A key virtue in Christian thinking is obedience to God (heart, soul and mind), for it is God who is the centre of the universe.

### 3. Its conception of truth

The Christian mind understands that truth is supernaturally grounded. Secularism states the opinionated self as the only judge (and maker!) of truth. The Christian mind insists that we worship God because He is God, not because we’ve made something out of him. The Christian mind thinks in terms of Revelation (i.e. God’s truth is revealed to us). You don’t make the truth; you reside in the truth.

### 4. Its acceptance of authority

The Christian mind is dominated by submission and obedience to God.

### 5. Its concern for the person

Christian thinking is incarnational. The Christian mind remembers that God became man, taking upon himself our nature, and exalting that nature for eternity. The Christian mind laments the fact that we’ve become so dehumanized by all kinds of technology (which only has its place if properly used) which is also “drugging the bodies and minds” of our youth.

### 6. Its sacramental cast

The sacraments are visual. They are used to strengthen our faith. They in a sense “show” us what God is doing for us. Therefore the Christian mind and Christian faith present a sacramental view of life. Christians “show” the richness of living under God. Christians “present” a life to our youth that is something much more exciting than a whole bunch of prohibitions (don’t do this, don’t do that). The Christian mind constantly thinks in terms of God’s demand and man’s response.

## Conclusion

I think this is a book worth reading, for teachers and parents alike. After reading the book, I thought of some questions that may help us re-evaluate what we’re doing in our schools, and why we’re doing what we’re doing:

Have we as Christians (Reformed Christians) become afraid of our own convictions? (Blamires feels that too many Christians have). Are we maintaining our schools just to be “comfortable” and just to “feel safe?” Or is there a firm basis underlying the relevance of our schools? Has a lack of Christian thinking permeated our school system? Do we demonstrate the marks of a Christian mind? Are we creating enough opportunities for children to become critical thinkers?

God calls out to us, “Come let us reason together!” (Isa 1:18). He wants us to be “transformed by the renewing of our minds” (Rom 12:1). Peter wrote both of his letters “as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking” (2 Pet 3:1). God, who searches our hearts and minds (Ps 7:9, Rev 2:23) wants us to set these minds on things above (Col 3:2). Finally, He wants us to love him with all our heart, mind, and soul.

Very humbling. Lots of food for thought. So let’s think about it. Better yet, let’s think christianly about it.



*Mr. E. Hoogerdyk is principal of Tyndale Christian School in Calgary, Alberta.*



# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Letter to the Editor

As another "Filia Pastoris" I'd like to respond to the article "Please Tell Me I'm Wrong." I'm not sure I like the way this article is presented. There are a lot of truths in our sister's writing, but I feel she is really generalizing. Is she speaking about the majority of the Canadian Reformed people? When I look around me, I see, on the whole, members who are truly dedicated to serving the Lord.

Yes, I've seen and heard people criticizing the minister (or elder) right after the church service; I've never heard someone sighing or seen them frowning; I have seen them nod in agreement. I've seen people flip through their Bible or *Book of Praise*, and maybe I'm naive, but mostly I thought it was done to check on whether they heard right. I've looked at my spouse when a particular thing comes up which we had a discussion about, but I wouldn't dare nudge him in church; he wouldn't appreciate it.

Besides criticism of the sermon, I've also heard many positive comments after church. I won't comment about the other "steps." I think you can experience that to a certain degree in every congregation, and I think that every situation (and every person when it comes to that) is different. I'm not saying it is right; it is not. We all have to be careful what we speak about, or whom we speak about, and how we do it.

I also find the article one-sided. There is only a list of the wrongdoings of the members of the congregation. The minister also has responsibilities, first towards God, and then towards the congregation. The way of Matthew 18 also pertains to the ministers. I think I can quite easily come up with thirteen steps with which the minister can antagonize his congregation, but I won't. This is not a tit-for-tat.

As far as the ministry is concerned, I can and will confidently assure my grandsons to become pastors. I will also tell them it is not an easy way; it never was and never will be. If we want to live as true Christians in this world, we know that we will have troubles and sorrows. This is true for pastors as well as lay members. I support, encourage and protect my pastor, and try to be patient with his weaknesses and shortcomings. I don't know what lives in anyone else's mind, but to me to belong to the body of Christ is a great treasure. To know and feel the communion of saints as it is practised on Sunday and during the week is a great

comfort. I don't know how many young men will line up at the College in Hamilton. But I do know that Christ will maintain his church.

Dear sister in the Lord, I do not tell you that you are (completely) wrong. But you are being sarcastic, and, in my opinion, you generalize. For me, and many others, it is still a joy to go up with God's people under the proclamation of God's Word, whether this is being proclaimed by one of his ministers, or whether it is a sermon read by one of the elders. When I see my grandchildren in church and hear them sing psalms and hymns off by heart, I rejoice, and I am thankful for all the wonderful gifts the Lord has given his church here on earth, and that includes the one "who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace!"

E. Hamoen  
Neerlandia, Alberta

## Dear Editor,

What was Dr. J. De Jong's motivation when he wrote his article entitled, "The Calling Process," *Clarion*, Vol. 52, No. 7? Was he driven by a concern for a jobless candidate, was he driven by his concern for the pastoral care of several vacant churches, or does he feel the inactivity of these consistories has undermined the credibility of the Theological College? The issue appears to be pressing enough to devote an editorial to the matter! His editorial left me with several concerns:

1) He has "some questions . . . concerning the calling process among our churches." Is the issue really about "the calling process" or is Dr. DeJong concerned that a graduate of our seminary does not have a call? The six vacant churches do not (yet) appear willing to call this candidate. Does this apparent unwillingness of the churches reflect poorly on the college? Of course, the professor realizes that there is more to a successful pastorate than good academic credentials. Churches have the right to decide that a candidate does not have either personality skills or *savoir faire* to successfully work in their congregation. An academic G.P.A. is not the only measure of pastoral potential, nor is the successful completion of classical examinations. He appears to understand that concept when he writes about a "proper fit." What does he mean by a "proper fit" between a candidate and a church?

2) A candidate's training must continue in his first pastorate, according to Dr. DeJong. He is quite correct. The training program involving Rev. J. DeGelder is a very positive development. Students need a lot of practical training to function well in their pastorates. But it appears to me that there are other factors that may prevent consistories from untrammelled spontaneity in extending a call to a candidate. Perhaps a change in some of the prescriptions of the Church Order would facilitate a smoother transition from seminarian to pastor. Article 38 (CO), for example, states that "as a rule the ministers of the Word shall preside" as chairmen of the consistory. Therefore, soon after ordination, for example, the novice pastor will receive the gavel to chair consistory meetings, though he is not familiar with the dynamics of the local consistory nor the history of the issues on the agenda. Furthermore, it should not be assumed, *a priori*, that the novice minister will be the most capable person in the consistory to chair its meetings.

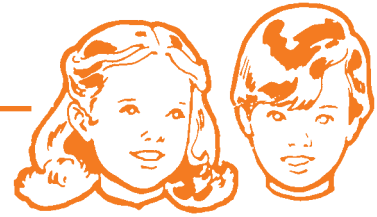
In the second place, Article 11, 12 (CO), both in ecclesiastical practice and in theory, form a protective hedge around the ministry that make it difficult to undo a call, or to provide easier access to a change in vocation, even if there is not a "proper fit" between the minister and his congregation. Perhaps if this "hedge" were lowered, churches would be more willing to call candidates.

3) When Dr. DeJong suggests that "vacant churches should reflect seriously on the manner in which they are exercising their calling options," he appears to insinuate that they have *not* reflected seriously. Consequently, he appears to question the *integrity* of those consistories. The notion that a vacant church must "*choose from the pool and make the best of what you have*," seems to me to come dangerously close to lording it over the churches.

The seminary serves the churches to train men so that they can *become* ministers. Article 3 (CO) stresses that, "no one shall take any office upon himself without having been lawfully called thereto." If it pleases the Spirit, He will move churches to call them. Dr. DeJong will have to curtail his impatience until the Spirit acts (Rom 10:15).

Pieter H. Torenvliet,  
Abbotsford, British Columbia

By Aunt Betty



## Dear Busy Beavers:

Hello every one. I hope you are all doing well. I would love to hear from you. It's exiting to get your letters in my mailbox.

At this time of year we always remember some special things which took place many years ago but are still very important for our lives. We could celebrate Good Friday and Easter, when Christ died for all our sins and rose again from the dead. We could also celebrate ascension day where the disciples saw Jesus go up into Heaven. This time of year we also think about the time when the Holy Spirit came down on many believers. Do you know what that day is called? Isn't it wonderful to know that we have a God and Saviour who did these things for us even though we don't deserve it. Because of Christ's sacrifice we may know that God has prepared a place for us in Heaven. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Love,  
Aunt Betty



## Where Is It?

Decode the clue words below to discover the name of a well-known Bible Place.

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( ☼ | " \* " ➔ ✓ \* ♪

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■=A	▲=B	➔=C	✦=D	☼=E	(=F
✦=G	✍=H	✓=I	★=J	□=K	○=L
♪=M	} =N	✦=O	➔=P	✦=Q	♥=R
"=S	*=T	*=U	★=V	☼=W	X=X
♪=Y	✍=Z				

To get the answer, decode the word below:

★ ☼ ♥ \* " | ○ ☼

## Puzzles

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

### Find:

Aaron	Abihu	Achin	Amorites
Andrew	Asher	Benjamin	Dan
David	Gibeon	Israelites	Jericho
Joseph	Joshua	Judah	Levi
Moses	Nadab	Paul	Rahab
Reuben	Samson	Saul	Simeon



## FROM THE MAILBOX

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Denise Bartels!* I can tell you did your very best to print your letter neatly. Thank you for the stickers! You have lots of pets. A lizard must be an interesting pet to have. Do you need to feed it special food? Thank you for your letter and Bible Names word search *Nathan VanderLaan.* You must be exited about having a new baby in your family. I guess that's why you have a new bedroom. With three sisters I can understand that it would be nice to have a brother. You'll have to let me know if the baby is a boy or a girl.



### Aunt Betty

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