

Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE
VOLUME 49, NO. 4 FEBRUARY 18, 2000

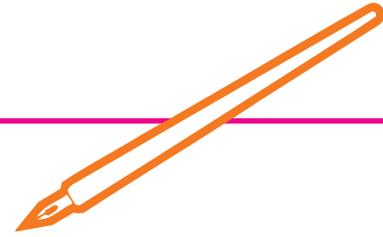


*Raising a
Christian Family*

Numbers

10:1-10

By G.Ph. van Popta



Private Schools Shut-out

Reading the newspaper lately has left me scratching my head. The January 19th *Hamilton Spectator* reported that the private religious schools of Ontario will continue to receive no funding from the provincial government. The same paper reported that the federal government has offered to bail out the six Canadian cash hungry National Hockey League (NHL) franchises, as long as provincial and municipal governments will match the federal government's dollar figure.

In 1996, Toronto's Arieh Waldman, who has spent \$95,000 educating his sons at Jewish day schools, complained to the United Nations (UN) that Ontario refuses to fund non-Roman Catholic religious schools. While there are two fully publicly funded school systems in Ontario – public and separate (i.e., Roman Catholic) – Ontario is the only province in Canada not to fund private religious schools in some form.

The UN agreed with Mr. Waldman. Since Canada is a signatory to the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the UN has ruled that Canada is violating international law by refusing to fund non-Roman Catholic religious schools. The UN has given Ottawa until February 3rd to comply. The federal Foreign Affairs Department has told the Province of Ontario to comply with the UN ruling.

The Honourable Mike Harris, Premier of the Province of Ontario, and the Honourable Janet Ecker, Minister of Education, will not be swayed. They feel that two school systems – public and separate – are enough. On the one hand, the government promotes multiculturalism, but when Jews, Muslims, Sikhs, and Reformed Christians seek equal treatment and the benefit of their tax dollars that go towards education, they are rebuffed. When it comes to education, the only religion that has special constitutional rights in Ontario is Roman Catholicism.

We live in a pluralistic society. Canadian law allows all to practice religion according to conscience. Those who embrace the secular or Roman Catholic world- and life-views have the right to have their children educated under their views and they receive full government funding. What is absent is public funding for those who desire an alternative education for their children based on sacred conviction, though they are taxed for education. It is a matter of justice, impartiality, and full recognition of today's cultural and societal pluralism. To continue denying those of other religions the right to the benefit of their tax dollars to educate their

children in harmony with their religious convictions and conscience is theft. As Reformed Christians, we believe that the Gospel is relevant not only for salvation but also for learning. Our conscience requires us to base the education of our children on Scripture and to circumscribe it by the Reformed Confessions. It is a corrupt government that taxes for education but gives no service back.

This inequity becomes the harder to take when one reads article after article about the proposed NHL bailout. The Honourable John Manley, Minister of Industry, is trying to keep the six remaining NHL franchises from following the Quebec Nordiques and the Winnipeg Jets south to the more lucrative US markets. Mr. Manley, prompted by the Ottawa Senators' threat to move south, proposed to give financially troubled teams up to \$3.5 million annually for four years, on the condition that provincial and municipal governments, as well as the league, match the grants. Those who live in a municipality with an NHL team would get a triple tax whammy.

In 1991, the average NHL salary was \$271,000 US. Today the average salary is \$1.3 million. That is a 480 per cent increase in a decade. Not bad! Ottawa Senators' Alexei Yashin, who has a \$3.6 million US contract this year, refused to report to work unless he got a \$5 million per year raise for the next two years. Right!

The Honourable Minister John Manley said that federal, provincial, and municipal tax dollars should support this industry. What is he going to do when the Canadian Football League (CFL), whose players earn a fraction of the average NHL salary, comes hat in hand for money? What about the baseball and the basketball teams?

Funding to offset the burden average income Canadians bear to educate their children according to conscience is withheld; tax dollars are offered to multi-millionaire owners and players. Think about it! Welfare for the wealthy.

Mr. Manley says that we must keep the hockey teams in Canada to preserve Canadian culture. If hockey is such a part of Canadian culture – and it is – hockey in Canada will outlive the NHL. Does no one play hockey anymore in Winnipeg now that the Jets have gone?

To preserve and promote Canadian culture, it is more important to open the public purse for the promotion of education for all citizens than to bankroll a league that is a victim of its own excesses and ridiculous player salaries.

On January 19th, it was: NHL 1, private schools, 0. A shut-out!

**He who oppresses
the poor to increase his
wealth and he who
gives gifts to the rich –
both come to poverty.
Proverbs 22:16 NIV**

Within a week, Mr. Manley withdrew the offer because of the hue and cry raised by Canadians from East to West. The owner of the Ottawa Senators said that he will put up the for sale sign and entertain Southern suitors if he does not get some big tax breaks. Then a week later, we read about how the chartered banks have been promised an additional \$100 million to help make up for students who default on their loans. If it's not the NHL, then it's the very wealthy banks that get the handouts; the Christian schools get not a farthing, not a copper coin. Shut-out. **C**

TORONTO, Nov. 5 /CNW/ - Earlier today, the United Nations Human Rights Committee released to the federal government its decision in the matter of Waldman v. Canada. The Minister of Education, Janet Ecker, upon learning of the decision made the following statement::

Ontario has just learned about the United Nations Human Rights Committee decision.

The Ontario government is committed to providing an excellent public education system, that is open to all students regardless of religious or cultural backgrounds. We remain committed to the existing publicly funded education system.

The Ontario government will continue to uphold its constitutional obligations and fund public and separate schools fully.

Open Statement from the Honourable Janet Ecker Minister of Education.

What's inside?

Raising children has always been a challenge. It was a challenge for Adam and Eve. It is a formidable task for parents today. Recently, the Burlington Reformed Study Centre sponsored a series of speeches on the topic "Hope for the Christian Family." We are very pleased to publish the speeches in this and succeeding issues. The meditation, by the Rev. Jack Moesker, touches on this theme as well.

An important aspect of raising children is preparing them to live in this world as responsible citizens of their country and fruitful subjects of the Kingdom of God. The Christian School movement was born out of reflection upon this task. In the Dominion of Canada, although all are taxed for the public education systems, those who are conscience-bound to have their children educated by a non-public system derive little or no benefit from their tax-dollar. The editorial ruminates upon this inequity.

Rev. Peter Feenstra continues his doctrine primer focussing this time on how Jesus Christ is, according to his divine nature, the Son of God begotten from eternity.

Rev. VanRietschoten, who has been in Australia for awhile, met up with and interviewed the Rev. C. Kleyn who has served churches in the Netherlands, Australia, and South Africa.

You will also find a few other items. Enjoy the reading!
GvP



Published biweekly by Premier Printing Ltd., Winnipeg, MB

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Editor: C. Van Dam

Managing Editor: G.Ph. van Popta

Coeditors: R. Aasman, J. De Jong, J. Geertsema,

N.H. Gootjes, G.Ph. van Popta

ADDRESS FOR EDITORIAL MATTERS:

CLARION

46 Sulphur Springs Road, Ancaster, ON L9G 1L8

Fax: (905) 304-4951 E-Mail: clarion@compuserve.com

ADDRESS FOR ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: (subscriptions, advertisements, etc.):

CLARION, Premier Printing Ltd.

One Beghin Avenue

Winnipeg, MB, Canada R2J 3X5

Phone: (204) 663-9000 Fax: (204) 663-9202

Email: clarion@premier.mb.ca

World Wide Web address: <premier.mb.ca/clarion.html>

SUBSCRIPTION RATES FOR 2000

	Regular Mail	Air Mail
Canada*	\$36.00*	\$60.00*
U.S.A. U.S. Funds	\$39.00	\$52.00
International	\$60.00	\$90.00

* Including 7% GST – No. 890967359RT

Advertisements: \$11.75 per column inch

Cancellation Agreement

Unless a written subscription cancellation is received we assume you wish to continue to subscribe. You will be invoiced prior to the subscription renewal date.

Agreement No. 1377531

Publications Mail Registration No. 09907

ISSN 0383-0438

Copyright © Premier Printing Ltd.

All rights reserved. No part may be reproduced in any manner without permission in writing from the publisher, except brief quotations used in connection with a review in a magazine or newspaper.

IN THIS ISSUE

Editorial – Private Schools Shut-out — G.Ph. van Popta	74
Treasures, New and Old — J. Moesker	76
Hope for the Christian Family – Raising a Christian Family in today's world — R. Wynia	77
Living by the Doctrines of Scripture – The Values of Knowing Jesus is the Son of God — P.G. Feenstra.....	82
Observation Deck — J. Van Rietschoten	83
CD Review — Emily Vegter	85
Keeping History Alive — Lydia Schulenberg	85
Letter to the Editor	86
Our Little Magazine — Aunt Betty	86

By J. Moesker

*Turn my eyes from worthless things;
preserve my life according to your Word
Psalm 119:37*

Just recently in Carman, Manitoba we had a couple of weeks of *TV Turn-Off*. A committee encouraged the community to do without TV or visual media entertainment for two weeks. The idea was to experience what it is like to have reduced exposure to the visual media, especially TV; the purpose was to consider the negative effects visual media can have on you. Spending an inordinate amount of time with TV and other visual entertainment such as video, Internet and computer games takes away from interaction with each other and from more socially rewarding activities. The consistory of Carman East Canadian Reformed Church encouraged the congregation to participate in this effort. As Reformed people we are not immune to the negative effects of the visual media, and we of all people should be supportive of attempts to increase awareness of those effects.

One of the negative effects of TV, brought to our attention in this *Turn-Off* campaign, is that one can waste a lot of time watching TV, surfing the Internet, or playing video games. It is fine to relax sometimes, but it is so easy to become enslaved by those things. The result is that it is possible to waste a lot of valuable time watching TV or playing video games – time which could better be spent doing something more up-building to yourself and your fellow men. How that verse of Psalm 119, written thousands of years ago, applies to us today too!

However, there are more reasons for the Christian to be vigilant when it comes to the visual media. The committee here in Carman emphasized the time aspect. But the visual media are also a means which Satan makes use of in order to desensitize us to Biblical morals and values. That is part of that “worthless” in the text too. TV producers do their utmost to win as many watchers as possible, and most then seek to deliver the sort of programming that people want to see. The result is that many

movies shown on TV or distributed on videos and DVDs keep you on the edge of your seat, so to speak, so that they are hard to turn off. This is exactly how Satan then also tries to desensitize you to sin and to take away your life, the eternal life you have in Christ.

**You hear
Christians say they
watched
this or that movie and
“it was so good.”
And you wonder:
Did they not see
the adultery?**

You watch a movie like that and the main characters are a beautiful young woman and a nice young man. In the middle of all the action it becomes obvious they’re attracted to each other. They meet alone in an apartment and you know where things are headed. You think, “I don’t think I should be watching this. I’ll turn it off.” But you don’t turn it off. You have been drawn into the movie by means of the suspense, by the story line and the realistic filming and the accompanying music. You wonder what is going to happen. You want to see how it is going to turn out. So you keep watching.

You see, movie makers draw you in. You keep watching because you want to see how things turn out. Oh, you wish the adultery wasn’t part of it all. You hope the characters won’t use any more bad language. If there were children, you would surely turn it off. But not now. *You* know what’s right and wrong. You can handle it. So you leave it on to see what will happen. Your conscience sort of bugs you about it. But you push it away. You want to see. You end up watching “worthless things”

because it is such a good action story and because you want to see how things work out in the end. But Satan gets you, as member of Christ, to look at things which God has called sinful and which lead to death, even eternal death. You hear Christians say they watched this or that movie and “it was so good.” And you wonder: Did they not see the adultery?

Do you see how relevant Psalm 119:37 is for today and for our age of visual media? And do you also see how necessary it is for us to pray with this ancient psalmist: “Turn my eyes from worthless things; preserve my life according to your Word?” By nature we are sinners too, who can easily become desensitized to sin. How can we who have been delivered from the uncleanness of sin just sit there and take it in? We know how the story of unbelief and sin will turn out, don’t we? We also know where those who struggle to keep Christ as Lord of their lives will end up. . . . Our suspense is waiting and watching for his return. C



DECLINED the call to the church of Houston, British Columbia:
Rev. P.G. Feenstra
of Owen Sound, Ontario.
* * *
CALLED by the church at Smithers, British Columbia:
Rev. R. Schouten
of Abbotsford, British Columbia.

Hope for the Christian Family

Raising a Christian family in today's world

By R. Wynia

The board of the Burlington Reformed Study Centre has asked me to speak about the topic, "Raising a Christian Family in Today's World," with a special focus on raising Christian teenagers. Before I even begin to address that, I would like to make a few disclaimers. First of all, I was given 30 minutes to speak. The more time I spent getting this speech ready, the more I realized that we could talk about this subject for thirty hours, or thirty days, and still have more to say. Secondly, although as of yesterday, I am the father of four teenagers, I am by no means the most qualified to give this presentation. And I'm very much aware that in much of what I have to say to you this evening, I'm in the uncomfortable position that parents find themselves in much too often – in other words, I'll have to say to you, "Do as I say, and not as I do." While my children are too polite to contradict me or embarrass me in public— I hope – they could give you and me many examples of my own shortcomings as a father. And they would be right.

The task of parenting

The first thing that we need to do is to come to an understanding of what the Bible says about our task as parents. The texts are probably very well known. In Deuteronomy, at several places, the Lord explicitly gives parents the task of impressing on their children the ways of the covenant. For example, He says through Moses in Deuteronomy 6, "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." In the New Testament, the Lord says through the apostle Paul, in Ephesians 6, with a very similar instruction

in Colossians 3, "Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."

The psalmist of Psalm 71 prays for the opportunity to carry out that task. "Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, Your might to all who are to come." And in Psalm 78, Asaph speaks of the determination of faithful covenant parents when he says, "What we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us, we will not hide from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders He has done."

**It has to become personal.
It has to become real.
Our teenagers have to learn
to see that their baptism
speaks about them.**

In the Reformed churches, we ask parents to make that same commitment when they bring their children for baptism. The last question of the Form for Infant Baptism that we use asks, Do you sincerely promise to do all you can to teach these children, and to have them taught, this doctrine of salvation? That's the task of parents: to do all they can to teach their children, and to have them taught, the doctrine of salvation. To teach them the way of life, the way of covenant fellowship in Jesus Christ with God and with their neighbour. To teach them all of those things that are symbolized in their baptism: that they were conceived and born in sin, and so, they need a cleansing which only God can accomplish. To teach them that God in his sovereign grace has brought them into a covenan-

tal relationship with Himself, for their salvation from sin in this life and the life to come, and that for no other reason than the grace of God, they are the privileged heirs of the promises of the Triune God Himself. Precisely because they were born into this covenantal relationship, they have an obligation to believe God, to take hold of the promises, and to live as God's faithful covenant partners, in fellowship with God and their neighbours.

Parents are to teach these things to them as living truth, as personal truth, as truths that don't only speak in general, but apply specifically and personally to them. Teaching the Lord's commands to our children doesn't just mean, laying down the law. It means, as Psalm 78 says, telling them about all the wonders He has done, in creation and in redemption. It means also impressing on them the command to exercise living and genuine covenant fellowship with God, through the blood and the Spirit of the Lord Jesus.

It has to become personal. It has to become real. They have to learn to see that their baptism speaks about them: I was conceived and born in sin. I need to be saved from my sin, and I can't do it myself. Then the need for conversion, and the need for daily repentance, and the need for daily communication with God, become clear. And then the gospel that is preached in their baptism really becomes good news for them.

To become a little more specific, we now turn to the question of the goal of raising teenagers.

The goal of raising teenagers

The teenage years of our lives are different than any other years. It's during those years that we come to a crucial turning point in our lives. Physically and spiritually, and even, legally, we move from childhood to

adulthood. We move from our lives under parental responsibility to lives of personal responsibility. We move from having decisions made for us to making decisions for ourselves. We move into that time when humanly speaking, we take the reins of our lives out of the hands of our parents, and we take control of them ourselves.

There are all kinds of decisions that are typically made, especially in the late teenage years, that will affect, and in some ways, even determine what the rest of our lives are going to be like. Decisions about education, and career. Decisions about boyfriend and girlfriend relationships. Decisions about our own walk with the Lord.

On top of that, there is the reality that at that time of our lives, we face a particular set of temptations, and we have to deal with a particular set of weaknesses, that seem to belong to those teenage years. It's not for nothing that David singles out that time of his life in Psalm 25, when he prays, "Remember not the sins of my youth and

my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for You are good, O Lord." That prayer also rings true for us as adults. It's against the background of my own youth, my own rebelliousness, my own indifference, that I can see the grace of the Lord most clearly.

In his book, *Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens*, Paul David Tripp identifies some of the characteristics that belong to the teenage years. He based this on what he read especially in the first seven chapters of the book of Proverbs.

First, he says that when we're teenagers, we have no hunger for wisdom or correction. We tend to hate discipline. We tend to be very defensive.

Second, we have a tendency toward legalism. We go by the letter of the law, especially when it comes to our parents' instructions.

Third, we tend to be unwise in our choice of companions. We choose our social group for the wrong reasons, and this is one of the things we're most defensive about. Parents know that

challenging their teenager's friendship with a particular boy or girl often tends to have exactly the opposite effect that they were hoping for. Their child only increases his or her attachment to the friend the parents found objectionable.

Fourth, we're especially susceptible to sexual sin. Many so-called sexual addictions begin in the teenage years and continue to exercise power in our lives for years afterward.

Fifth, we have what Tripp calls, "an absence of an eschatological perspective." We don't think very much about eternity. Or, we could probably even say it this way: we don't think all that much about tomorrow. We don't think things through, to their consequences. We don't understand that fundamental fact, that a man reaps what he sows.

Sixth, we lack heart awareness. We don't examine ourselves. We don't test our own motives or attitudes. We have a very hard time seeing our own weaknesses and shortcomings.

OPENING COMMENTS

by Herman Faber¹

On behalf of the Burlington Reformed Study Centre, I would like to welcome all of you to this year's series of public speeches. You may have noticed from our pamphlets that our motto is: "Illuminating modern issues in the light of the Scriptures". This year we are returning our focus to the family.² More than ever before in our generation, the family as an institution is under attack.

The challenges to the family unit come in many forms. Recently, the Supreme Court of Canada, in a case called *M. v. H.*, struck down the definition of spouses. "Spouses", meaning persons of the opposite sex, whether married or not, was found to offend the equality provision of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. As a result, in Ontario, the government has recognized the legality of "same sex partners". In the media, in our mainline churches, and in many aspects of Canadian life, the notions of two-parent families, marriage and life-long commitment are considered unusual. How will today's children manage under these conditions? What, as parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters, can we do to maintain the family?

We read from Joshua 24, including the last part of verse 15 "But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." In many ways, we stand in the same position as the people of Israel in the days of Joshua. We stand before a new millennium, before a culture which has great riches, many attractions, and great idolatry. Perhaps, as immigrants, we have a sense that we have arrived, as the ancient Israelites must have felt. At the same time, this is perhaps the time for a renewal of the covenant, a re-evaluation of our response, as heads and members of households, to God's promises. As we spend the next two evenings listening and discussing these matters, it is our hope that you will share some sense of the importance of these issues, and a desire to work a little harder to nurture the future generation in the ways of the Lord.

Tonight³ we welcome two speakers who will address us on the topic of preserving the family: Rev. Richard Wynia, minister of the Covenant Christian Church in Wyoming, Ontario, and Mrs. Sarah VanderGugten, teacher at Credo Christian High School, who comes to us from British Columbia. Tomorrow evening, Prof. Michael Goheen will speak on the topic of Family Worship.

¹Mr. Faber is Barrister and Solicitor and a member of Fellowship Canadian Reformed Church in Burlington-South.

²For the earlier occasion, J. Mulder, ed., *Marriage and the Family* (Premier, 1996)

³November 11, 1999 at Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Burlington, Ontario.



Rev. R. Wynia

Add to that a world that has its eye on our children. Add to everything else that's going on in those years, and those weaknesses that our children have to wrestle with, the constant and persistent effort of the world to draw them away from the Lord, using precisely those weaknesses against them.

So in a home where there are teenagers, there is all in all, a very volatile mixture. Teenagers with the urge for independence that sometimes is expressed in terms of rebellion, over against the reluctance and the fear of parents to let go. Teenagers sometimes excited and sometimes afraid because of all of those decisions to deal with, while they're just moving out of childhood and into adulthood. Teenagers with a particular set of challenges and temptations, but not being self-aware enough to understand them or recognize them. Parents who see those weaknesses all too well, and worry that their children are going to make a mess of their whole lives because of some stupid decisions they made when they were teens. On top of all that there is a world whose culture, whose entertainment industry and whose educational institutions want to swallow those children up.

But it is exactly all of these components of life in the teenage years that set the goal of raising teenagers in clear relief. The goal of raising teenagers is to bring them into that time of their lives,

and through that time of their lives, to the moment when they're able and ready to leave their time of minority behind, and enter the time of majority, the time of adulthood. The goal is to bring them to that time when they're ready to make those life decisions, in the context of covenant fellowship with their God, and his people and stand before God and his people, and they give their answer to the promises that He gave them when they were baptized.

The goal of raising teenagers is to bring them to that time when they're ready to stand before God and his people, and to give their answer to the promises that He gave them when they were baptized.

How do we do that?

But how do we do that?

First, we take that vow which we made at our child's baptism seriously and do everything that we can to teach them the doctrine of salvation. We adopt that pattern of life that's described in Deuteronomy 6: "Talk about them when

you sit at home and when you walk by the way, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands, and bind them on your foreheads; write them on the doorframes of your houses, and on your gates." Again, that doesn't just mean, reciting the commandments, or quoting texts, and sending them to the Christian school or catechism. That means using the opportunities that are planned and scheduled, like devotions at mealtimes. We should not just say the same memorized prayer every time and just read the Bible at the table, or, coming home from church, without any comment or discussion. Then we train our kids to think that devotions and church attendance are just duties that we have to do, and part of the routine of a Christian life.

But it also means using the opportunities that just seem to arise when you hear the news or read something in the paper, or when you talk about the school day, or when something sad or wrong or joyful happens in the family's life, or when you find yourself riding in the car with one of your children, to put those events, or the things you see, or the songs you hear, into Biblical and confessional perspective, by exposing the foolishness or the sinfulness or the destructiveness of the world's way, and of the way our own hearts are inclined to go. You'll be amazed at how many opportunities you really have to instruct your children in the doctrine of salvation. It means, for example, showing them that their daily chores in the home aren't just to make their lives miserable. But that doing the dishes, and mopping the floor, and doing some laundry, and keeping their rooms clean and neat are really ways to express love and consideration for their mother. It means, for example, helping them to understand that their work, whether it's in school or in the part-time job, is an opportunity to serve the Lord and to serve others, and that is where its dignity and joy lie. Of course, this all means that you have to spend time with your kids. You actually have to talk to them and not just sit down and watch a movie or a game together. You do not necessarily need to take them out to a restaurant, like some people suggest. One of the most worthwhile things that you can do with your kids is to work with them and not just send them out to do it, but to do it with them.



Sometimes when I'm in the car, I listen to Dr. Laura. The other day she was quoting the results of a survey of teenagers, and what they really wanted, and one of the things the survey found was that teenagers want their parents to talk to them and not to talk at them or lecture or criticize or judge or nag them. I know that sometimes that's about all the talking we do to them. But they wanted their parents to have conversations with them, to discuss issues and events and problems. They wanted their parents to listen to what they had to say.

One of the questions that I was asked to touch on was the question of negative peer pressure. I don't think that I would be far off if I would say that the pressure in negative peer pressure comes from the need that our teenagers have to be accepted and to be included. Now, because of the way teenagers are, because of those weaknesses that belong to those years, being accepted in their circles comes at a cost. You have to measure up. You have to conform. You have to wear the "right" kind of clothes, and have the "right" kind of hairstyle; you have to like the "right" kind of music and movies and TV shows. You have to use the "right" kind of language. You need to be popular, athletic, talented, attractive.

That's the pressure of peer pressure. And that pressure most often conflicts with the pressure, or the influence, that you want to put on your kids. So we need to find a way, we might say, to equalize those pressures, to protect our home and family life, to protect our teenagers, from that negative pressure. The key to establishing that kind of

influence in our children's lives is to provide the acceptance that they crave in our homes and families. We need to show our acceptance of them by conducting our own lives, and treating them, with integrity and honesty. We need to show them the truth about that peer pressure that acceptance based on outward appearance, or any kind of conditional acceptance, isn't acceptance at all. It's cruelty.

When the people in our own family make insulting or critical remarks

**You have to spend time
with your kids.
You actually have to
talk to them.**

about people's appearances or talents or mistakes, we need to say that because of God's command to love our neighbour as ourselves, those remarks are out of line and entirely beside the point. They reflect a worldly and shallow way of evaluating others. We need to show them that sometimes, the price of acceptance by others may be too high. We need to be the ones that they can talk to in an honest manner. We need to show them that we're not subject to and that we're not held hostage by peer pressure, but that we respond to a completely different influence – the influence of the Word and Spirit of the Lord Jesus. And that conformity to Him is the only worthy goal in our lives.

Finally, this evening, I'd like to touch briefly on the challenge of parenting.

The challenge of parenting

Some aspects of that challenge are quite obvious from the things that have already been said, and I'll try not to repeat that. But I would like to suggest that the challenge of parenting can be summarized under two headings. First, the challenge from outside. And second, the challenge from inside.

The challenge from outside is reflected in those last three words of the title of this presentation: "Raising a Christian Family in *Today's World*." On the one hand, we need to acknowledge that today's world is an especially hostile place to raise children. The practice of abortion makes that clear already. But spiritually speaking, there is a preoccupation and obsession with sex in our society. You can't turn on the radio, or read the newspaper, or watch a television show or a movie, or even open the Sears catalogue anymore, without being confronted by that reality.

The dominant ethical philosophy of our time is relativism. The educational institutions and the justice system advocate the view that there is really no such thing as right or wrong, or absolute truth. We often worry that the justice system will imprison innocent people, but the reality today is that judges and juries acquit guilty people. Think of Robert Latimer in Saskatchewan, and even the president of the United States. These wolves are at our doors. In fact, they're inside our homes, via the media, and the computer. Technology and affluence have brought many temptations within reach of our teenagers, and our teenagers within reach of the temptations.

But on the other hand, we shouldn't imagine that the world was ever a friendly place for Christians, or that the world has ever been hospitable toward the work of God in our lives. The Bible makes that very clear. Nor should we imagine the world and its temptations are the cause of all our trouble.

When we first lived in Calgary, a member of our congregation took me and my two oldest daughters along one time when he went to do some work on a Hutterite colony. The Hutterites' intention to separate themselves from the world to help them live a holy life was obvious in all kinds of ways – in their housing, their clothing, their meals, their approach to possessions, and their whole social structure. But toward

the end of our visit, we went to the home of a colony member who repaired the computer controls that our friend used for ventilation systems in their barns. While our friend was talking to that man, one of my daughters nudged me, and pointed at a calendar that was hanging on the wall. The calendar featured a picture of a very scantily clad young woman. That gave me the opportunity to teach my daughters that you can try to hide from the world in a colony, but you'll never run away from sin because you carry it with you, in your own heart and will and mind.

And that's the other face of the challenge of parenting: the challenge from inside. The challenge from inside is the challenge of our own sin, the challenge of our own shortcomings and neglect as parents. The sins of materialism, selfishness, and laziness. The sins of impatience and self-righteousness and anger and spiritual pride. The sins of judgmentalism, and a critical spirit. Facing this challenge, fighting against our own sin, is really the key to dealing with the world and its temptations. Now, just like the enmity of the world, this is a problem that we always have with us. But the fact that we need to address this issue explicitly and honestly is reflected in something that has been brought to light by some things that we have particularly experienced in the congregation in Wyoming, and that have also been an issue in Canadian Reformed circles recently.

I am referring to the movement of members of Reformed churches into evangelical churches which practice believer baptism. In the interest of brevity, I will simply suggest that one of the main reasons for that exodus is not strictly speaking, theological in the first place, but the result of an observation that many of these people have made about our families, and our teenagers. It is that there seems to be some degree of presumption among us. We are communicating to our teenagers the message that they're safe because they're baptized, that they don't need to be concerned about what they might call, personal holiness, because they're covenant children, and they're in the right church. Baptism and church membership have become substitutes for repentance and personal faith in Jesus Christ. So it is the doc-



Rev. R. Wynia, Mrs. Sarah Vandergugten

trine of infant baptism that is to blame. They come to that conclusion because they see indifference and arrogance and even immorality among our young people, and they don't get the idea that our churches and our parents and our schools are really all that concerned about that.

**Let's use our
children's baptism
as a teaching aid and an
illustration to help them
and to help us.**

Let's not spend all of our time trying to refute them on these points. We don't by any means agree with their solution of abandoning infant baptism and the doctrine of the covenant. But we all know that there's some truth in their criticism. So instead of being defensive, and finding all kinds of reasons why there's nothing to worry about, we should examine ourselves to see how things really are so that we take the challenge that lives inside our homes as seriously as we should. Let's acknowledge that, just as it does in every other aspect of our lives, our own sin gets in the way of carrying out the vows we made at the baptismal font. And let's admit that we haven't taken the sin of our children as seriously, for example, as Job did, when he would offer a burnt offering for each of them, thinking, "Perhaps my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts." Let's confess that to the Lord, and let's repent of it.

And then, rather than abandoning infant baptism, and the teaching about the covenant, let's use baptism. That's a concept and an expression I learned from the Canadian Reformed people. Let's use our children's baptism as a teaching aid and an illustration to help them and to help us. And let's keep the vow that we made when they were baptized, to do all that we can to teach our children, and have them taught the doctrine of salvation; or, as it says in the *Book of Praise*, "to instruct our children, as soon as they are able to understand, and to have them instructed in this doctrine, to the utmost of our power."

I began with a couple of disclaimers; I close with a caveat. Remember this: there is no magic formula for success. There is no guaranteed, five easy steps to raising a child. And even if there were, it wouldn't work, because there are no perfect parents, or perfect children. As one writer says, that's one of the myths that Christians seem to cherish — read a book, raise a child. It just doesn't work that way. And that tells us what our goal should really be, as parents. It should not be to raise the perfect child. And, as much as we want to make believers out of our children, that can't really be our goal, either. That's God's work. But our goal must be, to be faithful, to fulfil our vows every day, and every day, to ask the Lord to be gracious to us and our children, to forgive us our sins, and bless our work, by causing the seed of his Word to take root and grow in the hearts and lives of our children. 

The Values of Knowing Jesus is the Son of God

By P.G. Feenstra

With Article 10 of the Belgic Confession we as Reformed believers confess “. . . that Jesus Christ according to his divine nature is the only-begotten Son of God, begotten from eternity, not made, nor created – for then He would be a creature – but of the same essence with the Father, equally eternal, who reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature (Heb 1:3), and is equal to Him in all things. He is the Son of God, not only from the time that He assumed our nature but from all eternity. . . .”

The name “Son of God” stresses the foundation of our salvation and life. Jesus would not have been able to obtain our full salvation had He not been the only begotten Son of God from all eternity. Christ brings us back into a relation of communion with God because He is the Son of God. He is with God, belongs to God, knows God and is God. The Son of God reflects the very stamp of God’s nature. According to Hebrews 1:3 Jesus is literally the exact duplicate of God. He is equal to God in every one of his divine perfections.

Old wallpaper?

There are those who say they believe in Jesus but do not confess Him to be the eternal Son of God. In their view, the gospel writers may claim Christ to be the Son of God but that was their perception and opinion. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John acted like an interior decorator who puts a primer, a coat of paint, and wallpaper on a wall to make it look beautiful. If you want to get to the wall you have to rip off the old wallpaper and scrape off the paint. According to modern liberal Christianity, the disciples’ claim that Jesus is the Son of God is the wallpaper. The real Jesus is a man like you or I who served the world by being a good example. He was a man who opposed the establishment, stood up for the rights of the poor and defended those who were the targets of discrimination.

Such reasoning distorts the message of the gospel and erodes the basis of faith.

To say Jesus was the Son of God and God himself is not based on myth but is rooted in the clear witness and testimony of the Bible. Christ is the guarantee that there is a good relation between God and us, not because He was such a good human being but because He is the only begotten Son of God. To confess that Jesus is the only begotten Son is to recognize that our Saviour is not in the first place our friend, example and role model, but He is God of heaven and earth.

The Son of God has the power to give life

Jesus was with God and He was God. He knew God’s deepest thoughts. He is very God of very God. No one less than God delivered us from our sins and was capable of working our salvation. The Son of God is so great that we can trust in Him to grant us eternal life. You find this stress especially in the gospel account of John. The purpose of his book is recorded in his conclusion: “These (things) are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his Name,” (John 20:31). Jesus is the unique Son from the Father who reveals to us the glory of his Father’s works (John 1:14,18).

The Son of God has been given authority from his Father to give life to the elect, pronounce judgement on all unbelievers and to rule over all. We read in John 3:36, “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God rests on him;” and in John 5:21-23,25 we read, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will. The Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. Truly, truly I say to you the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.”

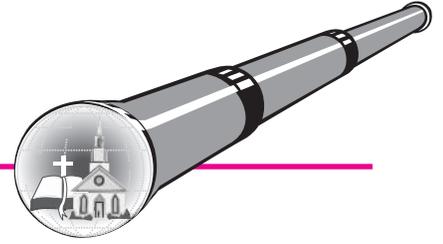
Today there is a lot of talk about Christ’s oneness with humanity and about his model for a Christian’s life in the world. What is meant is that just as Christ identified himself with us so we must identify ourselves with the world. Christians are told to “be Christ” to the world and express their solidarity with humanity. But the Scripture turns it around. The church is not to become like the world but the world must hear from the church and its proclamation that faith in the Son of God is the only hope for a fallen creation. Jesus Christ, God’s unique Son, has everything to do with us and our salvation.

Finding comfort in this confession

Knowing that Jesus is the Son of God implies that all our decisions must be preceded with, “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory for ever. Amen!” (Romans 11:36).

If we are not committed to Jesus Christ, confessing Him as the Son of God, we are putting our own life in danger. If Christ was not the unique Son of God there would be no consolation for us in this life. He, the only natural Son of God, who has a personal bond with the Father and the Holy Spirit came down to this earth to make atonement for our sins and to appease God’s wrath. Thus He comforts us immensely.

This is the great value of knowing Jesus Christ is the Son of God. As the Son of God He was sent into the world by the Father for our salvation. “God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). The Son of God has been given authority to secure our salvation. Today you can see this being accomplished in the gathering of his church. “I believe that the Son of God, out of the whole human race, from the beginning of the world to its end, gathers, defends and preserves for himself, by his Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith, a church chosen to everlasting life” (Lord’s Day 21 Q. & A. 54). 



Observation Deck

By J. VanRietschoten

Tasks and Challenge for the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa

Interview with the Rev. C. Kleyn of the Free Reformed Church of Pretoria, South Africa.

Rev. Kleyn where did you obtain your degree in theology?

At the Kampen Theological Seminary (now called University) in the Netherlands.

If I remember correctly your first congregation was in the Netherlands.

I indeed served two congregations in the Netherlands, first Zevenbergen in the South and then Meppel, a small city just north of Zwolle.

You were raised in Western Australia. Was it a great change for you to first study and then serve as minister in the Netherlands?

It was quite a change for me to move to the Netherlands. The language was not a great problem seeing I had grown up bilingual. It was more the way of life that took some getting used to. At the time life was still quite sober in Australia. The social security system was not what it is today. People were prepared to work hard for their livelihood even though they could not find work which matched their qualifications. In the Netherlands this was different. There people were insured from the cradle to the grave and many things were taken for granted. There was a far greater emphasis on the rights of people, including students, to receive handouts and to maintain a relatively high standard of living. I often missed true thankfulness for and appreciation of every guilder God provided. On the other hand life in Australia was more spacious and freer. At first I felt rather locked in. As time progressed I got used to the different living circumstances. As far as the congregational life is concerned, it was striking that the churches in the Netherlands were far more established as churches in the Dutch society. It was clear that they had their roots in that country. The membership had a natural involvement in all areas of life in society. In Australia this was quite different. The immigrant churches were rather isolated and had little involvement. One can understand this against the background of the migration. The immigrants who were uprooted from their fatherland still had to find their place in a new country and culture. My experience in those well-established Dutch churches has been of great value for my development as minister. Although those two congregations were quite different I felt very much at home in both of them and was able to work there fruitfully and with much joy.

You nevertheless returned to Australia. This time you came to the island of Tasmania. How did you experience the difference in changing from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands to the Free Reformed Churches of Australia?

Seeing I came from Australia, the move to the Free Reformed Churches was not difficult as such. There were however disappointing experiences within the bond of churches. In the Netherlands I had always experienced the major assemblies I went to (classes and provincial synods) as encouraging and uplifting. I realize this was not the case everywhere in the Netherlands, but this was my experience in the classes s'Hertogenbosch and Hoogetveen. In Australia we did not have classes, nor provincial synods. The only major assembly was the synod, which met once every two years. Sadly enough, during my time, those synods were dominated by those debates on contacts with Presbyterian Churches and the ICRC. As you know there were very strong views on these and related matters within the churches. This caused a lot of friction and frustration. Synods often ended up being discouraging rather than encouraging and we failed to make any real progress.

The church at Legana was a fairly young congregation. Was it for you a time of building or of consolidation?

It is difficult to distinguish sharply between those two. The membership had come from a congregation which had been established since the fifties and Legana had already established itself as a separate congregation for a year with the help of the ministers K. Bruning and G. van Rongen. For me it was constantly a matter of trying to build up and consolidate.

The two churches in Tasmania are quite isolated from their sister churches. Do you have a word of encouragement for isolated churches?

When you are isolated, never forget that you are part of Christ's church of all ages. Those saints of all ages and places are in fact surrounding you, urging you on to persevere towards the goal and praying with you and for you (cf. Heb 12:1). Remain focussed on Him who is walking ahead, the Good Shepherd Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith. Don't isolate yourself unnecessarily but do what you can to get into and remain in touch with others who share the common faith. After all, it is together with all the saints that we grow in faith, hope and love (cf. Eph.3:18). The present possibilities of travel, internet, the availability of Reformed books and periodicals are of great value to help overcome the negative effects of isolation. Remember also that it is not the numbers that counts but faithfulness to God.

Isolation does not seem to have discouraged you. Your next move was to the small federation of Free Reformed Churches in South Africa.

I like to think that one can learn from experience and that my experience can thus positively help me and the South African congregation which I am now serving.

How many Free Reformed congregations are there presently in South Africa?

There are presently 5 congregations in the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa. Bethel is the youngest within the bond and is the only one which does not have an immigrant background. Its members, including its minister, Rev. P. Nel, originally come from the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk.

Are they also far removed from each other?

Bethel is about 2 hours south east of Pretoria. Then we have the church of Johannesburg, about 1 hour's drive from Pretoria. The Capetown congregation is about 1500 kilometers away from the closest sister church. Finally, we have two churches in Pretoria which officially split up two and a half years ago, the Pretoria congregation and the Maranata congregation, at each others doorstep.

Have these changes from one country to another and from one church federation to another contributed to your growth as minister of the Word?

I believe so. In his providence, God has allowed me to work in different countries. In the process God has moulded me as minister of the Word. I suppose my background as immigrant child has helped me not to take things for granted and to appreciate whatever possibilities God still gives. When I received the simultaneous calls from Pretoria and from Coaldale two years ago many people advised me against accepting the call to Pretoria because of the insecurity in South Africa. Yet to an extent that physical and financial insecurity attracted me. It helps our people to focus on those things that really matter in God's kingdom.

Could your family grow with you and handle these changes well?

For our family, which started in the Netherlands, the change to the Australian language and way of life was more difficult than the change to the South African situation. Their Dutch background and their experience in Australia have served them well as preparation. We are very happy to see that the children, four teenagers, have adjusted well and are happy to be here and to be part of the Pretoria congregation.

The Free Reformed Churches in South Africa have been enriched by ministers of the Word who came to them from other Reformed churches. Could you tell us something of the reasons why they would have left other Reformed Churches and joined the Free Reformed Churches?

Like any reformation it was a matter of freeing themselves from unscriptural teachings and practices and returning to the biblical doctrine and the biblical church government. In the Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerk liberal theology (which negates the unique authority of Scripture) is being propagated more forcefully by leading figures and is starting to determine the direction of their synod. At the same time members who protest against this and refuse to accept certain practices which they consider to be contrary to Scripture are put under pressure to submit to the ecclesiastical assemblies and to the theologians. As was the case in the Netherlands and in North America the breaking point for a number of concerned members was the issue of women in the teaching office and the admission of children at the Lord's Supper. These issues are seen as clear symptoms of a changed view of Scripture. This changed and liberal view is also evident in the way those theologians deny that the story of Adam and Eve and of Jonah in the fish are historical and in their defense of homosexual relations.

Will you please bring us up to date on the plans of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa to establish their own training of ministers of the Word?

Our churches have started with their own training two years ago. Four ministers and one missionary do the lecturing, assisted by guest lecturers, if possible, also from overseas. We now have one student going into the third year of training and two first year students.

Does the changed political climate in South Africa affect the life of the members of the Free Reformed Churches of South Africa?

It certainly does. There is far less job security, especially in the public service, because of what they call "affirmative action." Many jobs are being taken over by black workers even though they don't always have the needed skills and expertise. This causes great frustration for white workers who have to work together with or under blacks who lack skills and expertise. This also leads to the loss of many skilled people who either migrate or look for something else in the private sector. Sadly enough the changed political situation has also resulted in greater unemployment, more crime and corruption, a deteriorating education and health system. All this affects our members. Some have expressed that the political changes have made racism even worse. When one works together with or under people who just don't take their responsibilities seriously, and don't perform, one can understand that bitter feelings arise. The effect of the changes on our people is, however, not only negative. God is also using it to help remind us of our total dependence on Him and of the purpose of our lives. As mentioned earlier, less earthly security can lead to far greater security, namely in God through Jesus Christ.

How do you see future development of the Free Reformed Churches in South Africa?

The FRCSA are becoming more and more African. In a certain sense God has opened doors not from the inside but from the outside, via people from the NGK who sought and recognized us. This has made us more aware of our responsibility in the South African church scene. There is much confusion among the Afrikaners, politically, socially and spiritually. The large church federations are visibly declining. Since the nineties this has taken a very quick pace. Our churches have an important role to fulfill in supporting those who contend for the faith that once for all was delivered to the saints. We have something great to share with others and others can keep us on our toes, so that we too keep growing in faith, hope and love. The contacts with other church groups and the influx of members from other churches could well change the immigrant character of the churches. Besides that there is the exciting growth of the mission churches at our doorstep. Via that work we are enabled to make a most valuable contribution towards the future of our country. God gives us numerous possibilities in our country for the spread of the gospel and for the building up of the saints. For us the task and the challenge to be what we confess we are in Christ, namely the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

Thank you, Rev. Kleyn, for informing the readers of Clarion of the welfare of your churches. May it serve to strengthen the bond between us all.



CD REVIEW

By Emily Vegter

"Northwind" by Pacific Salt

The musical efforts of two Canadian Reformed families have resulted in a very impressive CD entitled "Northwind."

Opening the CD is the beautiful Scottish tune "Skye Boat Song." It leads you on a pleasant path through different countrysides.

With "Northwind" Pacific Salt offers a variety of traditional folk music, as well as original compositions with Celtic and South American influences. You may find yourself in the Welsh countryside the one moment, only to be tapping your feet the next moment to support a fiddle tune, or simply enjoying a Scottish melody which was meant to "draw families together."

These families have drawn together, and to enjoy their music is to realize that everyone has God-given talents, to be used for all (something which is acknowledged on the CD cover as well). The goal of the group is "to promote the love of making music between the two families and sharing their music with the community at large."

Pacific Salt was formed in 1993 by Andy Emmens and Andy Luiten. They certainly have passed on their love for music to their children, for it did not take long for Matthew and Jonathan Luiten to join, as well as Karen, Cindy and Nadia Emmens.

The moving sound of the seven-member group is made through the use of a variety of instruments including

the six and twelve string guitar, banjo, mandolin, fiddle, recorder, flute, clarinet, harmonica, bodhran (drum), tin whistle, spoons and shakers.

Each selection features the use of a different combination on instruments, creating a beautifully unique and diverse sound for the listener. The contrast of gentle and rich melodies with the rhythmic, bright tunes are yours to enjoy!

The CD is highly recommended for your listening pleasure, and can be ordered at:

e-mail "aemmens@intergate.bc.ca" or by writing/phoning to:

Andy Emmens, 4674-207b Street,
Langley, BC V3A 7P1
Phone: (604) 534-4374



Keeping History Alive

By Lydia Schulenberg

When we speak of early church history, our thoughts immediately go to events that happened in the early years, such as the Reformation, the Doleantie, the Liberation, etc. We have learned about these former events because they were recorded by various people who lived at that time and passed on this information to others. The question begs to be asked: "What is happening to local church history here in Canada?" Many of the early church fathers who came to this land are now elderly, and some have passed on to live with the Lord. Exactly what happened is those early days? What was it like to live in simple homes, have no transportation, worship on Sundays in old buildings or even homes and stay for lunch? Who was the organist then and did they even have an organ?"

The congregations in the Niagara region of southern Ontario were faced

with these questions and have been commissioned by the local councils to form a committee to preserve all historical data for the future generations, and to store in a safe place all important documents, photos, and other interesting memorabilia.

Our first official function as Historical Committee was a luncheon with all the original members who were involved at the 1952 institution of the Canadian Reformed Church of Smithville. From then on, we have collected personal family profiles from most of the members who lived in the area during the early years of the church. At recent congregational meetings in the churches (from the one church of Smithville, we now have four) we presented a video presentation of our work, depicting early church members, the meeting place, and also had on display early church directories,

song books (remember the green supplement?), early minute books of Young, Young Peoples, Men and Women Societies, Young Peoples, and other interesting articles.

Our next goal is to publish all this information in a book, so that by this method we can preserve church history for the next generation. Another goal is to have a web page in the near future to make the information accessible to all members.

We appeal to you for any information, suggestions or comments that may be of interest to the Historical Society. You may reach us at the following address. Please contact the secretary,

Lydia Schulenberg
4538 Bartlett Rd.,
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B1
Phone: (905) 563-7478,
e-mail:

w.schulenberg@sympatico.ca.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Re: Divorce and Remarriage

I would like to comment on Rev. Visscher's reply to John VanAmerongen's letter.

Rev. Visscher claims that Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9 are what he calls "exception clauses." If we read Luke 16:18 and Mark 10:10-12, these texts show no exception. If you read Rev. Feenstra's booklet on marriage, these texts in Matt. do not imply exception, but state the obvious! If the wife was unchaste before a divorce, then the husband does not make her an adulteress, she already made herself an adulteress.

Next Rev. Visscher uses 1 Corinthians 7:15 as if it changes the meaning of 1 Corinthians 7:10-11. Paul writes in verse 10-11 that the "Lord" gives charge that a husband and wife should not separate and if they do they should remain single or be reconciled. From verse 12 on, "Paul" is quite clear that this is "His" opinion and that believers should not divorce even unbelievers, but if the unbeliever wants to divorce the believer, then we do not have to stand in the way, so as to avoid a hostile situation.

The texts Rev. Visscher has used seem to prove himself wrong when taken in a larger context.

Later in his reply to Willem Amoraal, he states that "he wishes that they, in line with so many Reformed voices in the past, would maintain that those who are divorced on biblical grounds are free to remarry." There are no biblical grounds to remarry other than. "To Death do us Part." 1 Corinthians 7:39. "A wife is bound to her husband as long as she lives. If the husband dies, she is free to marry to whom she wishes; only in the Lord.

At the end Rev. Visscher adds that "any other position is too harsh with respect to such members of our congregations," toward them he is convinced our Lord is and wants us to be much more sympathetic.

What a contrast to the Old Testament, when adulterers were stoned, and later Christ says, that the two shall become one. Let no man put asunder, and "I hate divorce."

I cannot agree with Rev. Visscher on his objections.

*John VanMiddelkoop,
Grand Rapids, MI*

Rev. G.H. Visscher responds:

My response can be brief. It seems to me that the challenge is to allow all the texts to speak. It is true that Mark and Luke state the rule, but Matthew also states an exception: adultery (porneia). Thus the Lord Jesus is telling us that while forgiveness and reconciliation is the preferred route, the consequence of adultery on the part of the one spouse means that the other spouse may divorce and hence remarry. Likewise, 1 Corinthians 7:15 does not change the meaning of 1 Corinthians 7:10-11, but we need to work equally with both passages. Reformed exegetes do not contrast what Paul says against what the Lord Jesus says either as Paul is an inspired apostle of the Lord; what he means is that the one comes directly from a saying of the Lord Jesus and the other is by his own authority as an apostle. But both are parts of the word of God (cf. 1 Cor. 7:25, 40). As to the supposed contrast with the Old Testament, let us not forget that also the Old Testament was merciful to the "innocent" party as it was only the adulterer who was stoned (and then the other party would obviously be free to remarry). 

OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



Dear Busy Beavers

Rhonda Wiersma wrote this book review for the other Busy Beavers.

THE SLAVES OF CRUEL MEN

Part One

The little girl kept her eyes squeezed shut as rough hands pulled her from the hold. Shivering from fright, she was pushed along with a group of chained huddled slaves. They were herded over the cobblestones to the middle of the plaza, where a market was going on, and a man was shouting ads about the slave auction. There were stalls of cloth, fruits, vegetables and kitchen things. Kizzy, the girl's name, felt a surge of homesickness. She wished Mammy would be here. No, it would not be good, she thought. At least Pappy and Mamma still have each other. Kizzy was lifted up on the auction block. "Come, buy this one cheap! Train her good, to do a good day of fieldwork. She's seven or eight," shouted the auctioneer. Many eyes stared at her. A man started bidding, "10 pounds." "12 pounds" shouted another. "Going and gone. To the man who bid 12 pounds," shouted the auctioneer.

Part Two

Kizzy was led to the slave pen, by a 20 inch long chain. After two hours, the slaves were bought, Kizzy's massa came. He came armed with a whip, foot shackles, and hand cuffs. Kizzy shrank into a corner. The master came toward her anyway. "Think you can get away?" laughed the cruel man. The whip lashed across Kizzy's brown legs. Kizzy cringed. She was shackled and led to a crude wagon. There she was thrown into it. Blessed darkness came to the girl's mind. No pain! Kizzy awoke to stinging slaps of a cat-o-nine-tail whip. She cried out. When Mr. McLee heard her cry out, he grabbed her by the ankles and pulled her out. She was led to a hut made out of bricks. "Bella," the master bellowed. "Take her and teach her to do your chores." "Yes, massa," whimpered the black girl.

Part Three

Two weeks later, Bella and Kizzy became fast friends. Kizzy's name was turned to Mabel. Kizzy was taught everything. One day, Mr. McLee said to Kizzy, "Mabel. . ." "Kizzy," Kizzy shot at him. "Get out, you good for nothing slave, I sold ya." The master was drunk. Kizzy blinked and ran out of the house, weeping. "I'm sold, Bella." Bella shook her head and her lips tilted to a scowl. The next day, Massa

chained up Kizzy to the wagon. Another slave brought her to town. While Mr. McLee watched her, Master jumped down and talked to a man. Then Mr. McLee unchained her and handed over to the new man. The man's eyes looked kindly at her. "Her name. . .," her old master's voice began. "No need about it," said the new man quite gruffly. "Come little girl," he said kindly. Kizzy was led into the parlour. She was surprised there was no slaves. "What's your name, little girl?" asked the Minister. "Kizzy," Kizzy answered. They talked a long time. The Minister said he would take her to freedom. A year later, Kizzy lived in the freedom of Canada, had a husband and three boys. She was happy, especially because she was in glorious FREEDOM!

WORD SEARCH

by Busy Beaver Rebecca vanDijk

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

FIND: Jesus Luke Peace Matthew John
Calm Mark Timothy Mary

March Birthdays

4	Emily Boot	23	David Smeding
13	John Boerema	23	David Winkel
19	Diana Nobel	25	Gail Schoon
21	Lydia Jongsma	28	Carolyn Van Leeuwen



FROM THE MAILBOX

Thank you to *Jolene Wierenga* for your letter and puzzle. Did you want to become a member of the Busy Beaver Club, Jolene? Yummy, I love lasagna and ice cream too. And poffertjes are also delicious. Yes, I read Nancy Drew books when I was a kid too. They are really good mysteries, aren't they.

Thank you also to *Rhonda Wiersma* for your letter, story and puzzles. You were very spoiled, weren't you with your all presents. Why do you call both your cats "Puss in Boots"? But they must be fun to play with. Write again, won't you Rhonda.

Thank you also to *Rebecca VanDijk* for your letter and puzzle. It is great to get letters from Busy Beavers, especially if they have been busy. That means that the Club members take time out to write me a letter. Did you go out and build a snowman or play in the snow, Rebecca? Thank you also for the bookmark. It's very pretty. Till next time.

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club, *Jessica Hofstede*. You have very neat writing. Thank you for your letter and pictures. Jessica, would you write to me again and tell me when your birthday is, please, so I can put it into *Our Little Magazine*, when it is your birthday. I hope you had fun singing in the Christmas concert. Write again, Jessica. C

CLARION

ADVERTISEMENTS

Births

We give thanks to our heavenly Father who has richly blessed our lives with the birth of our son

DAVID JEREMY

Born January 11, 2000

Mike and Anita VanDasselaar

A brother for *Bradley and Melanie*

3447 New Street, Burlington, ON L7N 1N4

With thanks and praise to our heavenly Father we announce the birth of our first child, a daughter whom we have named,

HANNAH GRACE ALKEMA

Born December 22, 1999

Brian and Kristy Alkema (van Meeteren)

First grandchild for Ed and Diane van Meeteren

Third grandchild for Clarence and Lina Alkema

4166 Hixon Street, Beamsville, ON L0R 1P0

See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God. 1 John 3: 1a

Our Heavenly Father has again richly blessed us, and entrusted into our care our first daughter

SYDNEY ALICE MIRJAM

January 11, 2000

A sister for: *Alaric, Taylor, Braden, Mackenzie and Carlin*

Allan and Mirjam Schulenberg (nee Van der Bruggen)

Box 1651, Carman, MB R0G 0J0

With thankfulness to our heavenly Father, who has blessed us with a covenant child, we joyfully announce the birth of our son

TYLER EDWIN

Born January 22, 2000

Rod and Jolene Tenhage (nee Vandervelde)

1st Grandchild of Art and Jeannie Vandervelde

26th Grandchild of Bert and Jane Tenhage

314 Station Street, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0