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The Theology of Liberation

*First of Two Parts**

There is something occurring today which we all in our own, often vague way, feel and sense. Politically for example the spirit of the times is such that the "left" is often given the benefit of the doubt rather than the "right." (Think for example of the fact that there was little protest against Russian and Cuban involvement in Angola.) More and more boldly we hear communism (and not just socialism) mentioned as a system that has some or all the answers to the complex problems faced by the world today.

A NEW STAGE

Now of course the ideas of communism are not new. The work of Marx and Lenin and the Russian Revolution of 1917 all attest to that. However, what is new today and what makes the theology of liberation a phenomenon to take note of, is that Marxist ideas have now infiltrated the so-called Christian theology. Or, to put it differently — the theology of liberation marks in a sense the marriage of "Christian" thought and Marxist ideology. Perhaps that is putting the development too simply, but, this formulation does point out a key emphasis in much modern thinking and actions by the so-called church of today in both the Protestant and the Roman Catholic sectors (the former for example in the developments in the World Council of Churches and the latter as seen in the Latin American scene).

Since the "church" is involved, the cry for liberation as it is heard and promoted in different ways today (especially politically, although it is not restricted to that), is not a hollow cry, but gives expression to a growing influence and power which is full of revolutionary implications. Revolutionary, for it seeks to overthrow the true gospel of Jesus Christ. Revolutionary, for it may mean the overthrowing of established governments and authorities.

An attempt will be made to give a brief overview of some developments in the World Council of Churches (WCC) in this light. Also the liberation theology as it finds expression in Latin America will be considered. Finally the question will be considered as to what our response should be.

THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Uppsala

The WCC has influenced and been part of the development of the theology of liberation. Developments in the WCC were such that the Uppsala Assembly (1968) was faced with the question: "Is salvation to be understood in the traditional sense (as the churches have always believed) or is salvation to be seen as salvation in an economic, political, and social way?" The world body decided for the latter. As the decisions of the assembly revealed, the gospel of Jesus Christ had become the secular gospel of making a better world. Since the Uppsala conference, as one writer put it, "one scans WCC publications in vain for an expression of concern that men know Jesus Christ, be baptized as He has commanded, and be added to the Lord in the Church of Christ."

Bangkok

The famous meeting at Bangkok (1972/73) took the next logical step. In this meeting of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism, the work of true mission was either completely ignored or negated. Instead of seeking to confront others with the glad tidings of Jesus Christ, as the Saviour Himself commanded so that men may repent of their sins and believe in Him and be saved, the concerns of this meeting were how to have "dialogue with men of living faiths" and how salvation is to be achieved "through political confrontation." Furthermore, the desire was expressed that the Western world should stop sending missionaries. Indeed, if salvation is interpreted in a horizontal and this-worldly manner then you can expect that the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism will produce and approve all sorts of statements which one can hardly recognize as coming from a meeting on mission and evangelism. The Commission, for example, approved the following statement:

Salvation is the peace of the people in Viet Nam, independence in Angola, justice and reconciliation in Northern Ireland, and release from the captivity of

power in the North-Atlantic Community

Conspicuously missing was any condemnation of Communist oppression and exploitation. Indeed, Maoism was presented several times as an acceptable alternative to Christianity. When the subject was China, the stress was not on how the gospel could be re-introduced into China, but on what the cultural revolution in China meant for our understanding of salvation today. A poster on a bulletin board the next day read, "Salvation = God save China from conversion."

The Bangkok meeting clearly showed how strong the leftist influence was in the WCC. This helps us to understand how the WCC can see that the task of the church is to always protest military activity or suppression when the Western world "benefits" but not to say a word if possible when Communists stand to gain. (Contrast the clamour around Viet Nam and the silence around Angola.) It also helps us to understand WCC support of terrorism against, for example, South Africa and its sending of aid to North Viet Nam.

Nairobi

At the Nairobi Conference (1975), the same tendencies continued. Chile (a rightist government) was castigated in connection with human rights, but nothing was said of Russia. A weak compromise statement spoke only of "alleged" denial of religious liberty in the USSR. As for Angola, Russia was not mentioned as interfering, but South Africa was. In view of such pronouncements, it is not strange that a strong anti-West and anti-capitalist current is becoming more and more evident. At the conference an American professor professed to be ashamed of the United States while the President of Jamaica accused capitalism of being responsible for just about every ill imaginable. Marxism was, however, praised.

It is "in" nowadays to deny and undermine anything Western, for the Western world is regarded as the oppressor and the Marxist countries are considered the liberators. The Third World (those developing countries

which are neither western nor integrated into a communist bloc) must therefore be won for Marxism and the Western world must also be a mission field for Marxism. This too is to be part of the task of the WCC in her work of showing the true "salvation" that truly liberates and sets men free. It is therefore not surprising that in one of the Nairobi documents, China is considered the only truly Christian country in the world today.

It scarcely needs to be added that all this has quite some implications for the faithful church of the Lord — also in the Western world!

While the WCC actively promoted a completely horizontal salvation, a theology of liberation was also being developed and written in Latin America.

LATIN AMERICA

Latin America forms an ideal setting for the development of a theology of liberation. No other religions colour the atmosphere. Latin America is, in name at least, "Christian" (Roman Catholic). There is a wide and obvious gap between the small privileged class which rules and the underprivileged masses which wallow in poverty, are largely illiterate, and do not possess land or other property. Their prospect seems hopeless since there is little opportunity to climb the social ladder. These factors, plus the very real presence of hunger and hardships, make the people quite open to ideas that present hope for a better tomorrow.

Time for Action

Gustavo Gutierrez, a Peruvian priest, has written a book entitled *A Theology of Liberation* (1971 — English translation 1973) which is probably the most influential book for the liberation theology in Latin America. While making much use of Vatican II documents, this Roman Catholic priest analyzes the entire situation through Marxist eyes. As his book makes clear, he agrees with Sartre's statement: "Marxism, as the formal framework of all contemporary thought, cannot be superseded." Capitalism is therefore denounced and the struggle is seen as a class struggle, and revolution is inevitable. The church has done enough thinking. It is now time for action! That action must work for liberty, for the key concept of Christianity is liberty. This liberty especially means liberation from economic, social, and political oppression.

As Gutierrez's book makes clear,

the mission of the church in spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ is not needed, for salvation is universal. Everyone is saved and everyone is a temple of God. The church must, therefore, no longer stress the spreading of the gospel in that sense, but must set an example in liberating men from the ills of the present age. The church must make the people see their oppression so that they may seek and find their own liberation. To do this task, the church should get involved concretely. "The Church should politicize by evangelizing," writes Gutierrez. Because the gospel is the message of total love, it has an inescapable political dimension. The Lord Jesus must therefore be seen as a political figure who was killed by Pilate as a Zealot leader, for He also sought the political liberation of the Jewish people. The Exodus from Egypt was also a political event and the cry "Let my people go!" is the liberation cry for all the ages. In this vein, Gutierrez and other theologians in this movement write.

Old Terms — New Meanings

By giving salvation strong political overtones, the theology of liberation has effectively filled scriptural terms with new meaning so that concepts such as "sin" have meaning only in terms of this world. "Sin" is anything that resists or undercuts the process of liberation or helps the oppression of anyone (especially capitalist western culture, governments, etc.). "Salvation" now means building the new society, with revolution if need be. Yes, for matters must be taken into our own hands, for, in order for the liberation to be authentic and complete, it has to be undertaken by the oppressed peoples themselves. The poor are God's chosen people. They are the ones whom the Lord would seek out. Class struggle is therefore an undeniable fact. It is the starting point for liberation.

However, as mentioned earlier, the church must point out the oppression so that the oppressed may seek their liberation. The poor (this gospel is especially for them) must know and be made aware of the fact that they are in conflict with other classes. There must, therefore, be a conversion. "To be converted is to commit oneself to the process of the liberation of the poor and the oppressed, to commit oneself lucidly, realistically and concretely," writes Gutierrez. Class consciousness must be aroused. They

must be aware of their status. For this reason much work is being done to arouse this consciousness among minority groups and among the blacks in America. Also the meddling in Indian affairs in the U.S. and Canada by ministers and priests often falls into this pattern. There must be liberation. The oppression must be pointed out and, according to Marxism, there is to be no peaceful co-existence of oppressor and oppressed.

Subversion and Violence

Therefore, subversion is good. It doesn't matter if the raising of the consciousness among different groups (leading to their conversion to liberation ideas) results in the government's being disobeyed. After all was Moses not a rebel in rallying Israel to go out of Egypt?

Since undermining society and government is justified, violence is necessary, for man must make himself free from the ills of this world. It makes little difference whether a government be constitutionally legal or not.

One can only imagine what the potential influence of this message of liberation is as it is being proclaimed by more and more priests to the Latin American masses. Here is a practical gospel and a political gospel to which the underprivileged and poor must be converted and for which they have to be prepared to take up arms.

Secularization

It is clear that this "gospel" is totally human and horizontal (this-worldly, with no vertical dimension to the God of heaven and earth) in its salvation (liberation) from sin (capitalism, poverty, inequality, etc.) and so leaves God out of the picture. Indeed, under the guise of theology, secularization is introduced. A world without God is to be the product. The theology of liberation realizes this, but in a world without God, man will be truly free and everything will be under his dominion. We are dealing with a devilish doctrine here. "You shall know them by their fruits."

This theology of liberation has a world-wide influence. Everywhere there is a growing consciousness of dissatisfaction and a desire for something better (even if one is not sure what that "better" must be). However, it is considered good to be conscious of your oppression, for then you have

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press review

OUR "OWN" SCHOOLS AND EXCLUSIVISM

In an article in THE CITY GUIDE, the Church Bulletin of the Canadian Reformed Church at Edmonton, the issue of April 24, 1976, the Rev. D. De Jong writes about "God's Covenant-Claims (3)." He starts with quoting from the Form for the baptism of infants, that "in all covenants there are contained two parts," and that "therefore we are by God, through baptism, admonished of and obliged unto new obedience, namely that we cleave to this one God . . . that we forsake the world . . ." He continues to say that "it is no wonder therefore that the parents are also asked to answer the well-known third question about the education of their children in the affirmative!" After this we read:

It is sad to notice when this Covenant-claim of God — namely of this new obedience, meaning a.o. that we forsake the world, — is not taken seriously. And it is certainly the duty of a Minister of the Word, when he notices that the members of the church are publicly influenced into that direction, to resist and refute such influences. He has promised to do so when he signed the Subscription-Form according to Article 53 Church Order.

In connection with this resisting of influences of the world the article continues:

In *Clarion* of April 17, 1976, under "School Crossing," it says: "We are short of teachers! And unless we will find some really soon, some children may be forced back to the public school." These words have apparently been triggered by an advertisement of a Canadian Reformed School Society which appeared several times in *Clarion* already (and which I also read in *Nederlands Dagblad*): "If we cannot obtain the needed staff, the Board sees no other alternative but to send Grades 8 and 9 to the public school."

I did not see this advertisement in a paper or magazine outside "our own circles." This is in accordance with the continuing tendency in "School Crossing" as well as in *Clarion* as a whole, that it is considered the will of the Lord that Canadian Reformed children must be taught by Canadian Reformed teachers in "our own" Canadian Reformed Schools, exclusively, and that other ways of Christian-school-education (e.g. as being pro-

vided and used in Edmonton) are not mentioned at all in *Clarion*, or warned against.

Although this concerns School Crossing" and its writer, I want to say something also, because that advertisement came from Carman's School Board, and, as minister of the church at Carman, I am also an advisor of the Board. But before saying something I first quote the article of the Rev. De Jong further. He continues:

Now let us stop and think for a moment.

God, in His Covenant-claims on us and our children, admonishes us of and obliges us unto new obedience, after He first has given us so many rich promises.

Now some come to the conclusion: "LORD, when in spite of *Your promises* we can not find teachers who meet *our standards*, then some of our children may be forced back to the public school; we see no other alternative. *You* said through their Baptism: forsake the world; but *we* see no other alternative but to send them for their education back to the world.

Is this taking God's Covenant-claims seriously?

Is there really no other alternative?

Are there, in several places where such a situation may exist, no Christian Schools which first should be considered? Or, if not, are there no Christian teachers outside "our own circles," who should be approached first (e.g. by advertising in papers and magazines read by them), instead of "settling" for an alternative which ought to be the very last thing to think of, yes, *which should not be thought of as an "alternative" at all?*

The fact that this can be written and done in "our circles" as if it is a matter of course, shows how far we in "our circles" have *deviated* from the Reformed stand, like this e.g. was clear from the words of Dr. F.L. Rutgers, quoted in my previous article.

I can answer here that the Board of the School Society in Carman has no other alternative, indeed. In the first place, because there is no other Christian school here. And if there would be, the parents would not have the means to support two schools. In the second place, we do not have another alternative, because we are bound by the Statutes of the School Society, which state in Article 6:

"Teachers may only be those who are confessing members of the Canadian Reformed Church and live according to the Word of God and the Confession" (The Three Forms of Unity). This rules out placing an "advertisement in a paper or magazine outside 'our own circles.'"

Now brother DeJong will probably say that this article is wrong, since it is exclusive; and even more: It is unreformed. And, what is the worst: that we have put "*our standards*" in it, which are not the standards of the LORD. We can conclude this from what the Rev. DeJong writes. When we, with our standards, are confining, and thus in conflict with, the promises of the LORD, then we are also in conflict with His standards. For the LORD demands what He promises, and He promises to give us what He demands from us.

Now suggesting that contrast between our standards and the promises, and thus the standards, of the LORD, means quite something. It means that we, in Carman, (and I suppose in other congregations as well) are disobedient to the Word of God, since we bind above the Scriptures. And if that were true, if we were going against the Word of God, we could not expect the blessings of the LORD anymore for our own parental Canadian Reformed schools. For how can we sincerely pray for the LORD's blessings on our endeavours here, if we act in conflict with His promises and standards?

However, is this suggested contrast true? Or is it a false contrast? In my opinion it is a false contrast, which does not exist before the Word of the LORD. For the third question of the Form for the baptism of infants, about the promise of the parents to instruct their children in the aforesaid doctrine and to cause them to be instructed therein to the utmost of their power, is closely connected with the second question: "Do you (parents) acknowledge the doctrine which is contained in the Old and the New Testament, and in the articles of the Christian faith, and which is taught here in this Christian church, to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation?" I may refer here also to the first question of the Form for the public profession of faith. There the very same thing is asked with the addition: "and do you promise by the grace of God steadfastly to continue in this profession in life and death?" Now I think that we all agree that with this doctrine the Re-

formed doctrine is meant as we have it in our Reformed Standards, and that the Reformed doctrine is the true doctrine of the Scriptures.

When the church requires of its members to abide by and continue in the true doctrine as confessed by her, she is in full agreement with the Scriptures. The apostle Paul writes to the Thessalonians: "So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught by us," II Thessalonians 2:15. We can compare this with II Thessalonians 3:6: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is living in idleness and *not in accord with* the tradition that you received from us." This is in accord with what Paul writes in his last known letter, the second epistle to Timothy: "You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also," II Timothy 2:1, 2).

Now this concerns the church, the congregation, in the first place, the Reformation being based on Words of Scripture like these. But it, then, also concerns the instruction of the children of the church, as we see it expressed in God's Word, in Deuteronomy 6:7 and Psalm 78:4-8, for instance; as well as in the questions to the parents in the Form of the Baptism of Infants. To be faithful to that promise Canadian Reformed parents want to teach their children in the homes and want them to be taught in the church and in the school in the "aforesaid doctrine," by teachers who adhere to and believe that very same doctrine and will teach accordingly. Let us not forget that the *teaching* of the children of the Covenant is at stake here.

And it was therefore that "Carman" placed that advertisement as an urgent appeal to the teachers to come over and help, so that also the grades 8 and 9 can receive a school education in agreement with the "aforesaid doctrine". And I can not see how this can be in conflict with the promises (and standards) of the LORD, or would "*deviate*" from the Reformed stand.

The Rev. DeJong refers to the Reformed stand of Prof. Dr. F.L. Rutgers. In previous articles twice a quotation is given from *Kerkelijke Adviezen*, written by Prof. Rutgers. The second deals with a question whether a father who is not a member of the Re-

formed Church is allowed to hold his child at its baptism. The first deals with a question whether parents can answer the questions of the Baptism Form, when they send their older children to a public school. In connection with the last question Prof. Rutgers makes the remark that, if parents would be of the opinion that the general education at a public school could be used, and that therefore a Christian school would be less necessary, this "would of course be a completely wrong opinion, which even would be very inconsistent for a believer and in conflict with his Christian confession." Well, "Carman" and all those who work hard for their Reformed parental schools, the "own schools," are in agreement with what Prof. Rutgers says. They see a Christian, a Reformed school as a necessity.

Is "Carman" here exclusive? In a way, yes. But because of the wanted unity between church and home and school. Do we, then, refuse to acknowledge that there are Christians, and Reformed believers, outside our "own circles"? No, we do not. But again, we want that unity, the close connection, between the three: church, home, and school. And if we are then exclusive in school matters, we are the same in church matters. We did not join the Christian Reformed Church, or the Protestant Reformed Church 25 years ago. We established the Canadian Reformed Churches. But we did this on certain grounds: to be faithful to the Word of God and our Reformed Standards, the Confessions. Do we not have "our own" Theological College for the very same reason? With "teachers" who must be members of one of the Canadian Reformed churches?

The Rev. DeJong continues his article with giving another example of what he sees as wrong exclusivism, namely as it appeared in the criticism on the fact that the evangelization paper, THE GOOD WORD, printed contributions from Reformed professors from outside "our own circles." I do not go into that matter. I only would say to the reader: Read again the arguments which the Rev. Cl. Stam brought up in his "Letter to the Editor" in CLARION of March 6, 1976. But I would like to say something about what the Rev. DeJong concludes this part of his article with. He writes:

The LORD does not depend on *The Good Word* and its supporters for His coming Kingdom.

But neither does the LORD depend on churches which call themselves "the faithful church of our Lord Jesus Christ" (doesn't that sound horrible!?), where much talk about faithfulness is not the same as faithfulness.

I ask: Does that really sound so horrible, when one is convinced and says to belong to the faithful church of the Lord? Must we not belong to such a church?

The Rev. DeJong further refers to a previous Press Review from my hand which appeared in CLARION of March 20, 1976. We quote:

In this connection it is good that we realize how outsiders see us. For that is not unimportant.

Clarion of March 20, 1976, passes on what an author in *Calvinist Contact* wrote about the Canadian Reformed Churches: "Here is a group of churches more active in own circles, which seeks few points of contact with the other churches." Also: "It is regrettable that they make it appear that there are no other Christian schools in Canada, or that they completely ignore them."

Instead of trying to understand the "outsider," and to learn from him, the writer in *Clarion* reacts: "However, it is not true that the Canadian Reformed people make it appear that there are no other Christian schools or simply ignore them. Many parents have sent their children to 'those other Christian schools' in the past. There even still is cooperation in 'those other Christian schools' in some places."

Is this correct? Yes, e.g. as far as Edmonton is concerned. But why did the writer in *Clarion* not add that he himself advises against it, and that it is the accepted thing to frown upon the situation in Edmonton, and that a Canadian Reformed Synod officially declared (*unanimously*) the desirability of Canadian Reformed Schools? Further: How can the author in *Calvinist Contact* get a different impression than the one of which he wrote, seeing that news about Christian Schools (which are not Canadian Reformed) where Canadian Reformed parents care for and make use of, is systematically kept out of *Clarion's* pages, or such cooperation is judged as wrong?

The sad thing is, that our so-called Canadian Reformed principles even lead to dishonestly toward the "outsiders."

Was I really so dishonest? I tried to show to the "outsider" that there is a strong connection between church and school, and that, when things go "wrong in the church, things go wrong in other fields, too." I showed from THE OUTLOOK that things are going wrong in the Christian Reformed Church. I showed this also from the very article of the "outsider," from

which I quoted. And I wrote: "We have to seek the unity between church, family, and school in the instruction of our children — to the utmost of our power. When these two things are stressed: the unity, and the fact that in the Christian Reformed Church and also in the "other Christian schools" things are going the wrong way, and that therefore the desirability is expressed of the own Canadian Reformed schools, then that is not the same as making it "appear that there are no other Christian schools or simply ignore them." That is what I meant.

And as for the fact that "a Canadian Reformed General Synod officially declared (*unanimously*) the desirability of Canadian Reformed Schools," in a "STATEMENT of the Consistory with respect to: REFORMED- or CHRISTIAN-EDUCATION" the consistory of Edmonton's Canadian Reformed Church refers to a letter to the, at that time called minister, Rev. D. De Jong. In this letter the called minister is informed about the stand of the Consistory of Edmonton, as follows:

The Consistory has decided to point out to the parents at the home visits their calling, also in agreement with their baptismal-promise, to take care that their children receive Christian Education. *If possible at a Canadian Reformed School*; if this is not possible, at a general Christian School . . . , but anyway off the public school.

Do not the words "If possible at a Canadian Reformed School" (the italics are mine) express the same desirability of which the synod of Toronto of the Canadian Reformed Churches spoke in a unanimous declaration? Further, the Consistory said in the same STATEMENT, which was issued in January 1971, that while "a number of children in the congregation receive Christian school-education at the existing Christian day-schools, which schools are based on the Word of God and the Reformed Confessions, while from the teachers is required agreement with this foundation,"

Yet the Consistory may not hide its concern about the fact, that also this school-education is endangered by un-Reformed influences, which fact gives those parents who send their children to these schools the great responsibility to be alert with respect to these dangers.

And when we are aware of what is going on in the Christian Reformed Church, are, then, these dangers of cooperation in school-matters not less great today? Is there not the danger that the children, in practice, do not

see those dangers and conclude that membership of the Christian Reformed Church, as it is today, is just as good as membership of a Canadian Reformed Church? And is there not the danger of mixed marriages?

In a next article, added to one of the following issues of the CITY GUIDE, the Rev. DeJong writes about a remark made by the Rev. Werkman in "School Crossing" and says that

in the mind of the author (and it agrees with the impression as a whole which you receive from regularly reading *Clarion*) a *fourth* mark of the true church, by which the Canadian Reformed Churches can be known, is this: the promotion of "our own Canadian Reformed Schools".

Yes, let us be honest. That's the issue! And, sad to say, that's the issue, not only in the mind of the author, and behind the editorial policy of *Clarion*: that's the issue in our churches as a whole.

Just see Acts General Synod Toronto 1974 Article 89: "General Synod unanimously agrees . . . on the 'desirability of Canadian Reformed Schools.' "

Mind you, it does not read: "Reformed- or Christian-Education," but: "Canadian Reformed Schools"!

This is *not yet* officially the 4th mark of the Canadian Reformed Churches by which they want to be known as the true church. But it is coming closer and closer to that.

Canadian Reformed Church-members, get awake!

The Rev. DeJong is of the opinion that the freedom of the parents to decide themselves what in their situation is the best or most desirable way to provide Reformed- or Christian-Education for their children is under attack.

And he concludes:

But the Scripture says: "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery," (Galatians 5:1).

The Rev. DeJong fights against what he calls exclusivism in the Canadian Reformed Churches. He gave a few examples. And I shall not deny that sometimes one can notice a kind of an exclusivism which is wrong, namely as if the American and Canadian Reformed Churches are the very only church-gathering-work of Christ on the North American continent.

However, much of what the Rev. DeJong calls wrong exclusivism is a standing apart for the sake of obedience to the Word of God, and is faithfulness to God's Word, to the true doctrine of the Scriptures as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity, to the promise given at the baptism of the children, and to those children

themselves. So, in his fight against what he sees as the evil of exclusivism, our brother — as I see it — fights against that faithfulness, so that in his articles we find nothing brought forward against the grounds and arguments given for a standing apart also in the matter of school-education; once again: the unity between church, home, and school; and the danger of cooperation with people from a "circle" where there is deviation from the Reformed stand on the Scriptures and the Confession.

Therefore, in the first place, the writer is not scoring the bull's eye, but is, in fact, beside the point with his remark about the "fourth mark" of the church. There is no such thing in our pointing at the desirability of the Canadian Reformed schools. This can be seen when one simply listens to the arguments that are brought forward.

And our brother also misses the point with his remark about freedom, referring to Galatians 5:1. When we try to be faithful as said above, and urge others to go the same way, is that, then, submitting others to a yoke of slavery? Not at all.

Therefore, in the second place, I think that not many will listen to the call in these articles to "get awake." They are awake already in the matters dealt with above. They still know, after twenty-five years, why they stand apart as churches and therefore also in the school-education of the children.

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“CHI MI AMA, MI SEGUA”

No, I've not started writing "in tongues," or whatever. It is simple Italian, so simple that every culturally-elevated Canadian should be able to decipher it. *Chi mi ama, mi segua*: "whoever loves me, follow me." It is sometimes used in the Dutch also, "Wie mij liefheeft, volg mij." I understand elders sometimes say that to ministers before they enter the church-hall.

But perhaps I should CAPITALIZE: whoever loves Me, follow Me. Because in this case it is intended, no doubt, as a quote out of the mouth of our Lord. Compare e.g. John 21, where the Lord asks Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" And in the course of that same conversation, the Lord says, "Follow Me." So, whoever loves Me, follow Me.

Why the Italian? Well, I'm certainly not trying to demand attention for our multi-racial culture, but I came upon this phrase not too long ago in that particular language. Apparently there is an Italian firm which manufactures pants, or if you wish, jeans, and has developed an interesting advertising campaign for both Europe and the American continent.

The jeans are called "Jesus Jeans." And that already burns me up. The Name of our Lord is for many not only a common swear-word, but also a means for business, a shop-word. "Jesus" is a much desired article these times. We've had Jesus-boots, Jesus-rock, Jesus-films, Jesus-freaks, and now we also have Jesus-jeans. Now I regret the misuse of the Lord's Name in any of the above-mentioned cases, but in this last instance the connection is really beyond me. After all, those Jesus-boots were also sold as Palestine-sandals, and the rock music and films at least dwelt on "religious" matters, but there is absolutely no reason at all to tie these jeans in with the Lord Jesus. No reason whatsoever! Here a name is just being pasted on an article to achieve a shock-effect and create an explosion of publicity. If it's a name, all right. But if it's THE Name, which God has "highly exalted above every name" (Philippians 2:9), I get upset and angry. This is public blasphemy, in any language.

The company in Italy also printed posters showing a lady's behind, squeezed (or shall I say squashed) into these jeans. And on the tightly-

Circumspection...

outstretched calico which covers the lady's bottom, you read the words, "Chi mi ama, mi segua." Whoever loves me, follow me.

Quite an eyecatcher, eh? With humorous undertones, I presume. But please don't laugh too loud. Such a picture identifies those deeply religious words — reportedly of our Saviour — with an activity of a totally different nature. Or to put it bluntly, mix "Jesus" with sex, and you've come up with a sure-fire winning combination these days.

That's why this advertisement is well-timed. Because at present a film is being made by the Swedish director Joern Donner of a script written by another scandalous Scandinavian, Jens Joergen Thorsen of Denmark, on the "sex-life of Jesus." This script — I quote from a local newspaper — "casts Jesus in various heterosexual and homosexual activities." Italian or Danish, this blasphemy is INTERNATIONAL. Lord, defend Thy Name.

Why do I write this? I'm convinced these "unfruitful works of darkness" must be "exposed" (Ephesians 5:11). I'm also certain all this is a clear ESCALATION in Satan's never-ending campaign to run down the absolute holiness of our Lord and Saviour. Jesus is being made quite common, one of us and like us, no longer sin EXCEPTED, but sin INCLUDED. The only One Who was and is like unto us, and yet at the same time totally different, is systematically being robbed of those essential characteristics which render Him so different.

So a film is made of His "sex-life." With the seemingly pious excuse that Jesus — being fully human, you see — must have known a sex-life and that a real, physical person must be depicted, if one is to "treat" Him in a historically just way. Along the same line He can also freely be associated with seductive advertising and His words can be juggled on a woman's tightly draped behind.

Notice that motivation: He was FULLY human. Yes, indeed, our Lord is fully human. But that is not the same as ONLY human. And the fact that the Lord Jesus is so completely our brother and has fully taken upon

Himself our flesh, does not prove or imply in the least that He also participated in all human activities. The Bible speaks of no sexual activity on the part of our Lord — certainly not any homosexual activity, which the Bible calls "a shameless act" (Romans 1:27). In no way is He associated with these things, not because sexuality would be something inferior, but simply because that did not belong to the office of the Saviour. With Him there was not even covetousness, because He fulfilled the law completely on our behalf, also in this respect.

By the way, I see this mentality — which appears in this advertising and film-making — as one of the clear fruits of modern theology; let's say, a miscarriage of modern devotion. Theologians have exhausted themselves to prove that Christ was fully human and in the process forgot that He is also the Son of God. Christ has been "confined" to earthly things and cast into all sorts of roles. If radical theologians portray Him as an ancient Che Guevera, will the movie-director and the manufacturer also not "claim" Him for their enterprises? Satan's campaign has been very effective. If our Lord can be reduced to an ONLY human person, even associated with sinful eroticism, then He is made ridiculous in His divine claim as Saviour of the world.

Yet the word remains in truth: Whoever loves ME, follow Me. Love, not some erotic emotion, but a daily service according to His own commandments. That means: no Jesus-boots, no Jesus-jeans, no Jesus-films, or Jesus-rock. I dare say, stay away from these things; indeed, "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them."

It is a matter of love towards the Lord to revere and serve Him according to His word. And preserve the holiness of His Name. In the coming time it will become increasingly clear who truly loves the Lord and does "follow" Him.

It's a command. And it separates the corn from the chaff. *Chi Mi ama, Mi segua*.

Cid

mission news

Dear brothers and sisters,

After a couple of weeks without any rain, we are now getting the rain of one week in one day, it seems. The thunder is echoing against the mountains in the north, which gives a really special sound-effect. Add to that a bit of rattling zinc once in a while and you have an idea what a rainy day is all about here.

Looking back to April, we first of all should like to mention the birth of our daughter. We named her Emily Anne and she was born Sunday morning, April 11th. With only Dr. Ken Dresser and his wife Sylvia (still recuperating from hepatitis) to help, we were very thankful and happy that all went well. All together we stayed three weeks in Senggo, and on Friday, April 16th, the three of us were flown back by M.A.F.-plane to Kawagit.

In Kawagit preparations had to be made for the annual Z.G.K. (Mission Reformed Churches) conference, which Kawagit was hosting this year. This conference was held from April 22nd to 28th. The purpose of these conferences is to report about the work of the past year, talk over plans for the coming year and to discuss any problems. Present were: For Boma — Rev. and Mrs. C.C. Haak; Miss Greet Euwema; Mr. Dirk Griffioen. For Kawagit — Rev. and Mrs. D.J. Zandbergen; Miss Mien van Egmond; Mr. and Mrs. Ben van der Lugt. For Kouh — Miss Elly Nieboer; Mr. Kees de Wolf. For Tiau — Rev. and Mrs. J. Kruidhof. For Manggelum — Mr. and Mrs. Bram Vegter. The ladies Griffioen and de Wolf were in Kouh taking care of their children and the Kruidhof kids during the Conference. For Miss Mien van Egmond it was the last Z.G.K. conference. She will leave for Holland, D.V., May 10th.

It was very worthwhile to hear the reports, plans, etc. from the various places. Concerning Manggelum: The building of the house under the supervision of Kees de Wolf has progressed so far that we're thinking of moving to Manggelum, D.V., in the end of May or beginning of June. Our actual work can then start with studying the tribal language (Wambon), and the construction of an airstrip. The Sunday in the week of the conference was a very special one. Three children were baptized in Kawagit: Leah, daughter of elder Ambrosius of Butiptiri; Ayup (Job), son of the principal of the school in Butiptiri — Guru Pakage; and Emily. The Butip children were born in Kawagit because the nurses were here for the conference. The conference ended on Tuesday, April 27th, and the following day everyone was flown home again.

That same day Kees de Wolf and I left for Manggelum. This time we brought the

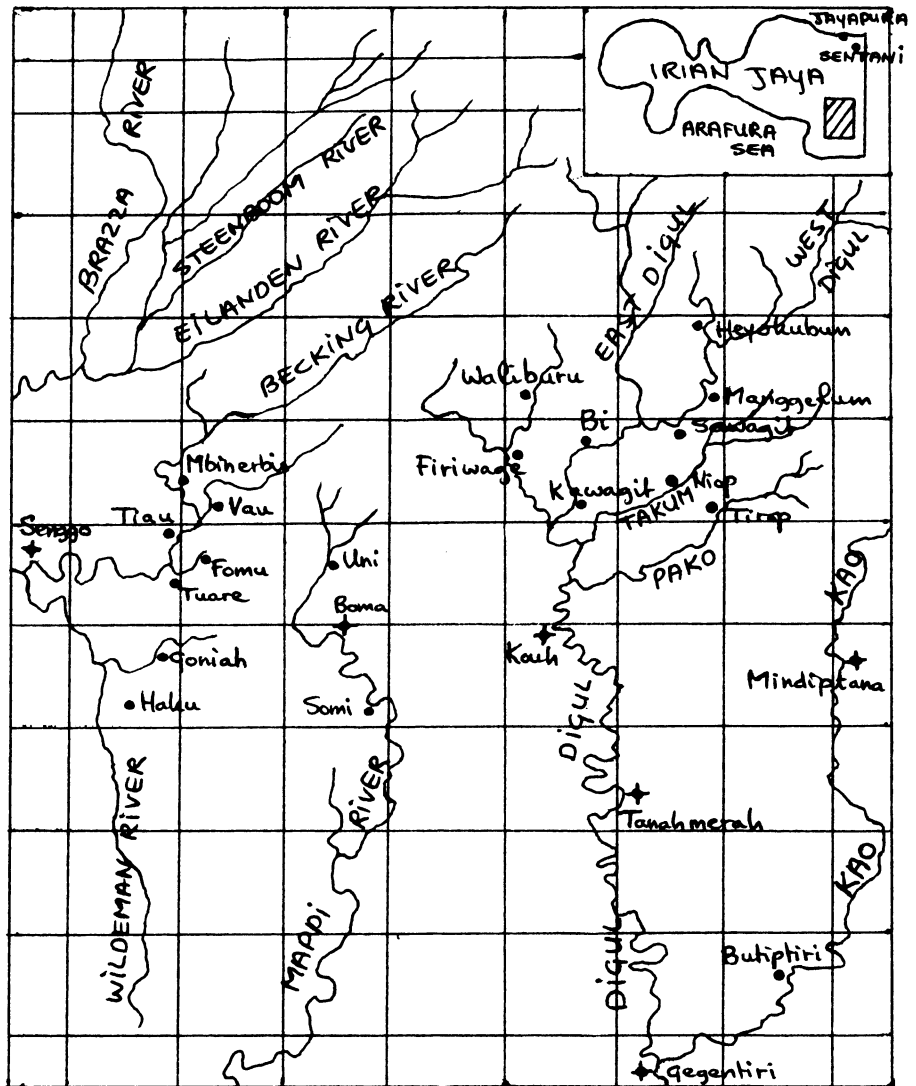
two-way radio along. Every mission station has a radio and it is used to contact the M.A.F. pilots, Jayapura (for cables or other messages), or other mission stations in Irian Jaya. That day Kawagit talked with Manggelum by radio for the first time. So an important day for Manggelum, you could say. The next day we set up the antenna, so that from now on we have permanent contact with anyone who goes to Manggelum and stands by on the radio.

A new carpenter (Bapak Yom) had

been at work on our house in the meantime and had done an excellent job. With the sawing/planning machine of Kees de Wolf he had made beautiful planks for the floors. Kees and I worked on the doors, windows, and screens, so that the place is starting to become liveable. The second week of May we hope to be back in Manggelum to put in a week's work.

We (Joanne and I) are very anxious to move to Manggelum, where we can settle in our own home and really get to work. The three of us are in excellent health, which is important when you have to be on a post by yourselves. Pray to our LORD for strength and wisdom when we start His work in Manggelum.

With kind greetings, in His service,
Bram and Joanne Vegter.



MISSIONFIELD ON IRIAN JAYA

“Catechism Preaching” (3)

IMPORTANCE OF CATECHISM PREACHING

We should all agree on the tremendous importance of such Catechism preaching as described in the previous article.

As fruits of faithfulness on the part of the preacher in this respect may be mentioned, first, that the congregation may become well-informed about the “complete doctrine of salvation.” Thus they will be able to discover the errors of heresies before it is too late. They will even become able to “speak with the enemy in the gate,” a very important part of “evangelism.”

An illustration from my experience may illustrate this.

Two young ladies, who had attended our church services for some time already (it was in Holland), applied for membership. Both were communicant members of some Evangelical Group. They wholeheartedly believed, and confessed with joy that Jesus was their Saviour. Then we started to ask some simple questions. One of them had used the words “faith,” “Church,” and more like them. I asked, “What is faith?” The answer was, “Faith is . . . uh yes, faith is something like . . . , yah, how do you say that again . . . , it is . . . oh well, you know what I mean” The same hesitation or rather incapability of giving a definition of such central biblical terms showed when I asked, “What is the Church . . . ?” etc. Then she interrupted herself, and said, “Look, that is now exactly the reason why I want to join the Reformed Church. I have heard enough Catechism sermons by now to know that in your Church, people really learn to put into words what they believe and I want to learn that too! I want to become a Reformed believer!”

Both were admitted. Some years later one of them was president of the women’s society.

That is one of the results of Catechism preaching, if it is done well, and if the congregation listens well.

Everyone will, at some time, have met believers from other churches, who love the Lord, but — when it came to discussing the divine truth — were unable to exactly put into words what the LORD teaches us in His Word on any issue.

Only by maintaining Article 68 Church Order faithfully, we have a message for the world, an answer to ethical, political, and other problems. With Dr. B.D. KUIPER we say that the only method of winning others for the Church of Christ is the Reformed truth.

* * *

INVALID ACCUSATION

In the first article we mentioned some objections against Catechism preaching. One of them, “It is not 100% Biblical preaching.”

This accusation, as well as the one that says that we “brainwash” our children in the catechism class, is invalid.

What else is the Catechism but a sign-post to the Scriptures? Every word is taken from them. For every expression there are reference texts. The Catechism says, all the time, “Don’t believe me, go to the Bible!”

This “going to the Bible” should take place in the Catechism classroom all the time. The Bible open, and used!

The same in the P.M. sermon. Children as well as adults have to learn to find their way in the green pastures of the Scriptures. The teaching and preaching of the Catechism is the best way to reach that goal. Not isolated texts but the Scriptures in their unity must be known by every mature Christian.

Thus, partly repeating and/or summarizing, let’s conclude with some remarks on:

THE CHARACTER OF CATECHISM PREACHING

1. It is, and must remain, one hundred per cent ministry of the Word. For that reason a minister need not read one or two texts together with the Lord’s Day. He is going to weave many more texts into his sermon. Of course his “public reading of the Scriptures” should be chosen well: a combination of Bible passages which are relevant to the doctrine to be preached. But he is *not* allowed to preach on one such passage, or even on one text. Remember, he has to preach the “sum of Christian doctrine,” be it “briefly.”

2. Catechism preaching is only possible because of the unity of the Bible, which is its own interpreter. Then it will become a bulwark against

biblicism, fundamentalism, sectarianism, and any other “ism” which pulls the Bible apart and is left with only fragments. “Iedere ketter heeft zijn letter” (every heretic has his text).

3. The difference between the A.M. sermon and the P.M. sermon is *not*: in the morning God’s Word, in the afternoon the Church’s confession. But, as has been said before, in the morning preaching one “text” in its fulness (a “text” is not “a verse” of course; it may be a whole chapter). In the afternoon a sermon, not just on some texts, but on the whole Bible regarding one specific doctrine, the sum of which is “comprehended” by the Church in its Creeds.

4. The Bible is not an encyclopedia of many loose sayings, but fundamentally it is “one text,” as the Catechism has it in Lord’s Day 6 Question and Answer 19, The holy Gospel which God himself has first revealed in paradise, then through patriarchs, prophets, ceremonies, etc., and finally fulfilled by his own Son. Dr. H. BAVINCK did not hesitate to say that the Bible is a “*system*,” taking this word in its real meaning: *su-stema*, i.e. every part “stands together with the other parts.” As Calvin said, the New Testament is hidden in the Old Testament, and the Old Testament opens wide in the New Testament.

This biblical “system” has to receive its due in the preaching, especially in the Catechism preaching.

5. Every minister, in his study preparing his sermons, discovers that the Catechism, with all its beauty, is only “a pail filled from the ocean.”

The “fulness” is not in the Catechism, it is in the Bible. Every Catechism sermon must try to draw as many pails from that ocean as possible. And the longer he has been preaching, the more the preacher discovers that the ocean is still full, and that he will never empty it.

6. That’s why we are happy with the addition to Article 68, made in 1905: “as much as possible.” Apart from the fact that there are special Sundays on which Catechism preaching may be interrupted (like Easter, Pentecost, etc.), which would already render it impossible to complete the Catechism annually, a minister should have the full freedom to either take only one question and answer at one time, or prepare a whole series on just one Lord’s Day, according to the need

(continued on page 223)

news medley

Much to our regret we have to disappoint the Rehoboth Church in Burlington. Our readers may recall that two issues ago I said that it might have been a first and an unicorn when in that Church five babies were baptized on one Sunday of whom four were two sets of twins. Meanwhile I have received word that it was neither a first nor an unicorn. In the Church at Coaldale, when the Rev. G. Ph. Pieffers was still there, the same thing happened one Sunday. The birth of one baby and of two sets of twins caused the minister to write a little piece in the bulletin with the title "It's raining babies!" I hereby gladly give this additional information. Even though no record has been established, the blessing remains the same and so does the gratitude of the parents.

Since we are one big Family anyway, I also wish to mention something which is not so pleasant. You may recall that approximately a year ago, we published the picture of a young brother from Edmonton who had disappeared. The help of the membership was requested in locating him. No one could think of a reason why he should have run away from home. Now, one year later, the uncertainty has come to an end: his body was found not too far from the place where he lived, and he was buried on June 4th. That's what the Edmonton bulletin tells us. On the one hand, there is great sadness with the parents; of course they would love to know what happened to their son and what the cause of his death was. On the other hand, the uncertainty has come to an end and there is at least the assuredness that he is not living in sin somewhere in this wide world. As we extend our congratulations to those who have received special privileges from our God, so I now wish to extend our heartfelt condolences to the parents in their sorrow, and we wish them that they may experience the support and comfort of the God of the covenant in every respect. His mercy is sure and His steadfast love endures. We know that from His Word and we also experience it all the time.

Is it not something wonderful that we may learn about one another's joys and sorrows via our magazine? When I was writing the above lines, I was thinking, "Will there be any other periodical which covers a whole Church federation and in which we read so many particulars about individual members and families as we do in our **Clarion**? I hope that we may be able to do this for a long time to come and that, when I am no longer able to do it, someone else will take over. We need this, and it keeps the members informed about what is going on in an informal way. You will take the few critical remarks I make once in a while for granted, I presume, since they are made in order to build up and not to break down.

I'll mention one more item from the Edmonton bulletin. The organ pipes have finally arrived. Those, as you will recall, were trumpet-pipes, to be added to the Edmonton organ. The Committee expressed its gratitude for the offers of help, and I gladly pass these words of thanks on to those who have inquired about the possibility to be of any assistance in this respect. Perhaps the new addition will be ready for use shortly. I also pass on an invitation to organ-

ists. If any organist is passing through Edmonton this summer and wishes to give the Edmonton organists a break, he (or she) is most welcome to "take" a service or two.

In Neerlandia the choir of Barrhead and Neerlandia had an Easter Concert on April 21, and, judging by the program, they have made quite some progress in the relatively brief period of their existence.

The Barrhead bulletin contains a strange piece of information.

"The Consistory asked this classis (March 1976, vO) to appoint a counsellor for the Church of Barrhead. The main reason for this being: the termination of the agreement re ministerial aid, by Neerlandia and other matters. Classis made the following decision:

'The Church at Barrhead will be advised that they themselves can ask for a counsellor, since they are not asking for a counsellor as is made mention of in art. 5 of the Church Order.'

(Art. 5 C.O. speaks only of a counsellor for the purpose of calling a minister.)"

Apart from the fact that the formulation of that classical decision is very sloppy and unclear (whom, for instance, are they to ask for a counsellor?) there is the question, "Since when can a classis appoint a counsellor only in cases a Church requests such appointment with a view to the calling of a minister? Has it not been always customary within the Churches to appoint a minister as a counsellor of a specific Church whenever such a Church requested that? I cannot recall that a Classis ever said to a Church that was too small to call a minister and that did not come for financial support to that end either, "Sorry, but we are allowed only to appoint a counsellor if you ask for one according to article 5 C.O.!" I must admit that I haven't been around as long as some, and I certainly do not know all aspects of truly Reformed Church Polity. I just go by what I know and have experienced. Doing just that, I find it a strange refusal which, I hope, will not be considered as a precedent!

May I take you along to British Columbia?

The C. Van Spronsen family has arrived in the Valley and are now enjoying a well-deserved holiday if everything went according to plan. They intend to visit the Churches that cooperate with New Westminster in the work of mission, then after some months to return to their field of labour. Meanwhile, the search for a successor goes on, thus far without the desired result.

The Fraser Valley Women's League Day is scheduled for June 24th, to be held in the Abbotsford Church building. In the morning session the Rev. M. VanderWel will speak, and one of the members will have an introduction in the afternoon.

That is the general news concerning the Valley. Now the more local news.

In Langley office-bearers have been elected and as tentative date for their ordination June 20th has been set. Then there will be five Churches in the Fraser Valley.

New Westminster set as date for the official opening of their new Church building, Friday, June 25th. They have been using it for a few weeks already, but an official dedication and evening of thanksgiving is well in place.

On our way back home we stop in Carman. In Carman's bulletin we are told that the trip which the Rev. J. Geertsema made to the old country did not remain without result; in all likelihood a teacher will come to take up the task to guide Carman's school through the coming year(s). It appears that the Rev. J. Geertsema delivered a little speech at the Teachers' College in Groningen and also one

at a similar institution in Amersfoort. It seems that his little lecture brought Canada closer to the minds (and hearts?) of those studying there. In how far our schools will benefit from that may become evident in the future.

It appears that the situation in The Netherlands is the opposite of our situation here: we have a shortage of teachers; there it seems that there are not enough vacancies for the ones who will complete their studies. It will take quite a few years, I presume, until the situation here has been reversed.

In the previous medley I mentioned something about decisions to be made by the Rehoboth Church in Burlington regarding liturgy and some changes that had been suggested. The latest bulletin tells me that the Consistory had its doubts about the wisdom of changing the procedure at baptism and that therefore it was decided not to change the custom followed thus far. Now I do not have to be afraid that I shall not be allowed to return to the pulpit right after the baptism: there remains the so necessary freedom to do so. Thanks.

Our journey ends in Chatham.

The Rev. M.C. Werkman (who is going to leave Chatham for Lincoln) writes about reading services. He discusses the question whether automatically an elder will have to read a sermon and whether this cannot be done by someone else. Is it so that someone who becomes an elder thereby automatically has to conduct reading services when the necessity is there? Or is it so that we have to seek the best for the Congregation and that we could ask a few who have the ability to read a sermon in such a manner that the Congregation is really edified by it? That is an interesting point, and one which has received ample attention in the years that passed by. Practically every Church is faced with that question.

In the course of the discussion the famous "handshake" also asks for some attention. An answer to its meaning is not given; it will be hard to give that, too, for thus far I have not read anything but guesses about its origin. No definite answer has ever been given, as far as I know. Most people who try to explain it and give reasons for it explain it as **they** see it, what **they** see in it **right now**.

But what I am interested in is not how Mr. A. sees it, or how Mr. L. interprets it. What I am interested in knowing is: What did it mean originally, how did it come into existence? To that question I have received no answer from anyone. Thus I submit to it where it is the custom, but do not understand the meaning.

In Chatham's bulletin we do not find an answer either, only: "But personally I like to see it as a symbolic act by which it is made clear to the whole congregation that the consistory gives the minister the permission and authority to preach the Word of God." It **might** be interpreted in that manner if only "strangers" were involved, ministers from other places, or students or candidates who have received the right "to speak an edifying word"; that can never be the meaning when the local minister conducts the service. He does not receive the permission and the authority to preach the Word of God, as elders do not receive the permission and authority to go on family visit or deacons the permission and authority to go and assist the needy and to provide them with the means necessary for their daily life. All those things are inherent to their office!

Since our medley should not become a collection of brief articles on various subjects, I hasten to conclude it. For there are no more things that should be mentioned from the bulletins which I received. And making up some news, that is something of which no one can justly accuse me.

Yours truly vO

P.S. Gross injustice has been done to the ladies in Abbotsford and surroundings. In the News Medley of May 29 it was mentioned that these ladies made a profit of \$107.65 from their stand in Cotton Wood Corner Mall. It should have read **\$1,076.65!** Although I always read the news medley very attentively (I find it quite entertaining and educational and informative) it had not caught my eye that the amount printed was not the same as the amount which, no doubt, was written in the copy. Be it far from me to degrade or slight any effort made by our ever diligent sisters. And I know that they graciously will accept this correction as if never any mistake had been made in this respect.

Now I dare to face them this summer.

vO

CATECHISM PREACHING –cont'd

of the time and of the congregation.

7. Aversion, against Catechism preaching, as was voiced in Rijsbergen (older readers know what I hint at), and as is sometimes also heard among our own number, must be considered suspect. That aversion cannot base itself on any part of the Catechism, or on Catechism preaching as such, but usually betrays that one does no longer agree with what the Church Order calls "the Reformed Religion." "None shall be admitted to the Lord's Supper except those who . . . have made a profession of the Reformed Religion" (Article 61 Church Order). Both words get a capital "R." What else is "Reformed Religion" but that Religion which, in the age of the Reformation, has Returned to the Scriptures!

8. In his Pastoral Letters to Timothy and Titus, Paul uses the words "sound doctrine," "sound words" no less than eight times. We find this expression nowhere else in his letters. That is significant. Timothy and Titus were called upon to maintain the pure doctrine. "O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you. Avoid the godless chatter and contradictions of what is falsely called 'knowledge'!" (I Timothy 6:20). And again, "Guard the truth that has been entrusted to you by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us" (II Timothy 1:14).

The only way is the way Article 68 Church Order shows: regular preaching of the sum of Christian doctrine, the sound doctrine. It should be a joy for every minister of the Word to fully maintain this article.

If that is done, we may expect that "the pastor and teacher will equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the cunning of men, by their craftiness in deceitful lies. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ" (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Catechism preaching?

Let's keep it!

Let's love it!

Let's improve it!

G. VANDOOREN

school X crossing

LANGUAGE PROBLEMS?

Most of our older members all had their language problems in the past. However, it seems that there can also be language problems with our school-going children. Not that they all speak different languages or dialects, but it is the kind of language that is sometimes a problem. In one of the School Bulletins I received, the chairman strongly warned the parents about the use of sometimes rough language by the children. That becomes evident in school and while they are on the school bus. The question is: Is this a problem with the children or with the parents? If the children hear a certain kind of language at home, then we should not be sur-

The Theology of Liberation — Cont'd

been converted to seeing the necessity of your liberation. With the growing influence of this theology, we also hear more and more people speaking of religion without any reference to God. Everything must be seen in terms of man's immediate needs here and now.

When we consider that the theology of liberation is in sense a marriage of Marxism and "Christianity" then it is not too surprising that the destruction of any idea of the true God is not only accepted as a by-product of this theology, but within the circle of this theology is even actively sought. Any possibility of having a covenantal and personal relationship with the living God is denied, for in this theology man is becoming a god to himself. Therefore the horizontal relationships here on earth is all that matters.

(Part Two in next issue) C. VAN DAM

* An introduction (in slightly revised form) given at a congregational meeting, January 27, 1976.

FOR THE READER'S INFORMATION

This issue of "Clarion" was mailed from Winnipeg Central Post Office on June 18, 1976.

prised that these very same children will also use that language outside the home. This can be a hardship for the teachers who try very hard to educate the children in the fear of the Lord. But that requires a close cooperation between the home and the school. We do not want the teachers to break down what we build up at home by our instruction. That is one of the reasons why we do not send our children to the public or even the mixed christian schools. We believe, don't we, that the education in the school is to be an extension of the education at home. But that must be true also the other way around. What the teachers teach our children in school for several hours must not be broken down again at home. It is the parents' duty to see to that. Let us then watch our own language all the time. Let us set a good example ourselves as parents. Sometimes you would almost get the impression that the teachers in school are convenient babysitters, whose job is then taken over at home by the television. If that is the case we need a lot of reformation in our families!

LITTLE SAINTS?

Are our children little saints? By no means, if you mean that they are better or nicer than other children. They were conceived and born in sin, and that shows up all the time. One of the principals writes in a School Bulletin: "you would be shocked to see the cases we sometimes have, cases where instead of love, outright hatred comes to the surface. Those are, however, excesses and rare. More regular, too regular, are others: name calling, boycott, contempt, humiliation." Well, that is quite a mouthful! Does anyone still want to call these children "little saints"? But they are! Indeed! They are saints, for they have been sanctified by the blood and Spirit of Jesus Christ. The Lord has set them apart in this world as His children. That is also why we have promised to bring them up as the Lord's covenant children. That is the Lord's claim on the little (and bigger) ones.

DO WE COMMUNICATE?

I read: "I sometimes wonder how much serious and fruitful communication there is in the homes between

parents and the older children. You are probably all aware of the small or great dislike your son or daughter has toward school, but how much do you try to help? Do you ever sit down with him or her to try to make clear that it is a privilege to go to school? That it is a blessing that they can come to our school in spite of all things we cannot offer? That being given the opportunity and the ability to learn is a blessing? Do talk with them; it will help them. Do not just let them grumble, complain, etc., turning your back on the problem when you get tired of it. I sincerely hope that the impression we sometimes have in school is the wrong one. That you, instead of turning a deaf ear to the problem, that you do talk."

Let everyone take these words to heart. It is also a blessing that we have principals who point this out to us. And, besides communicating with the children at home, do we in our prayers, with the children present, *regularly* pray for our staff members and Boards? That is also very necessary.

ATTRACTIVE ALBERTA

Sometimes it is said that the Fraser Valley in British Columbia is the most beautiful part of our large country. I suppose it all depends on who says this and from what point of view. But the fact is that Alberta is still in some ways very attractive, judging by a report in Yarrow's bulletin that two families with school-going children moved to Coaldale earlier this year. Well, B.C.'s loss is Alberta's gain!

Yarrow's school has some problems too. Some mothers seem to be very generous with their children's clothes. They seem to pile up in the school, while nobody claims them. For at least two years the staff has been saving sweaters, slippers, etc. Some they finally burned. Perhaps they were worn or moth eaten? But the rest can always be donated to some charity if nobody claims them.

Another problem is hockey sticks. They have set up a system of transporting the "sick and wounded." It almost sounds like war! Although the school does not want to stop all hockey activities in and around the school, it seems necessary that the fathers check their boys' equipment for safety before they use it. Hockey sticks can do a lot of things apparently. On the agenda of Yarrow's board meeting I found the following item: "New Busi-

ness: There are a lot of hockey sticks traveling on the school buses."

But there are also more cheerful things to report. The Ladies' Auxiliary has been busy again. This time they made \$300.00 with a refreshment stand. Hope Bakery donated all the buns and doughnuts. Other things are planned already for the future.

WILLIAM OF ORANGE.

Here the ladies have also been busy and their money is being used to pay the library bills and some miscellaneous expenses. If the finance committee keeps going the way they were, the Board hopes to be able to pay off a bank loan of \$19,000 before the new school term in September. Our oldest Reformed school in Canada recently completed its first five years of their publication, *The Orange Courier*. They are now planning to give their paper a new "dress," as many other school bulletins have received in the recent past. A meeting was planned in May with a panel discussion on the topic "Discipline" as it relates to school and home. That teachers are becoming rare is also evident from the fact that Surrey's school board appointed a new teacher, but when they phoned him, found out that Smithers had beaten them to it! With the present shortage of Reformed teachers, how can you avoid this competition? Some children of the Free Reformed Church will also be allowed to attend our school, after the board visited the parents. By April, five teachers had signed up for the course to be given by Prof. Selles during the coming summer. Even though the Board thought this number disappointing, they decided to go ahead with it. The Board will underwrite the cost of \$500. The *Orange Courier* gives also some book reviews for the benefit of the parents. A helpful hint for other bulletins? A hint for parents to participate in the work of checking and reading the books in our school libraries? The 'Orange Aid' has planned a trip to Vancouver Island for some grades. A "Bycicle day" in Stanley Park was also planned. In the latest *Courier* we read about some comments made by students to whom a policeman in the park was showing his radar gun. He demonstrated it on a passing car, which was exceeding the speed limit. Did the policeman give the driver a ticket? No. Wonder why? Because a little grade oner said: "That man's our minister!"

BUSY PRINCIPALS

Up till this spring Carman's principal was the editor-typer of the *Beacon* besides being teacher and principal. He now is still the editor but the actual preparation of the paper will be done by others. We should be careful with our principals that they do not get overloaded. The secretary apologizes in his report for sending the minister out of the country and expressed the hope that he would return with a teacher in each arm. Apparently Rev. Geertsema has been partly successful; he obtained at least one teacher from The Netherlands.

Carman had its drinking water tested. It was found safe for drinking, but it has a high sulphate content which "to the uninitiated is almost certain to act as a very good laxative." What other problems can we get?

Carman's school will receive a grant from the Government. They can buy any school supplies up to the value of \$780.00. At least a little justice is done to our taxpayers in Manitoba.

The school is visited by a member of the Board every month. The principal has problems making the children sing any louder than they do. At least his eardrums will not be shattered.

The ladies have been active and donated \$500.00 for the school library. This money was collected by a rummage sale and by bottle refunds. One of the teachers will try his art work on a new sign for the school. Would be nice to receive a picture for *Clarion*.

NEW MEMBERS

The latest School Bulletin of Edmonton informs us that the membership has jumped from 29 to 52, even though some members moved or resigned. This is an encouraging development, for which we should be very thankful. May the Lord bless them in their work. May an increased membership also mean increased activity and enthusiasm. Surely, our work is not in vain when it is done in the Lord. The building committee is still looking for a suitable building if one can be obtained, and at the same time is applying for a development permit and then a building permit for the land they have. Total income from January to the end of April was a little over \$7,900.00

MORE BOTTLES

The children and adults of Neerlandia made a profit on bottles in the amount of \$66.01. Yes, let's not forget that last penny! That is what you have

to start with. After all, every dollar starts with a penny. So does every million dollars. We can be sure of one thing: that many millionaires are not half as happy as Reformed people who save even pennies for the education of their children! Another two new members are welcomed. In the first four months of 1976 a little over \$7,000.00 came in. Their vision is: \$25,000.00 for this year. That is double of last year's income. They have 25 members, including some from Barrhead's congregation. The Board is happy to announce that they found a teacher willing to come to Neerlandia this summer to help them with all that is involved in setting up a school.

BUILDING AND RE-BUILDING

In London, Ontario, you will see a lot of activity this summer. I have been informed that the old building on their land had a double wall of bricks which they can use for their new school building and still have some left over. A lot of free labor is offered and there is a lot of sound enthusiasm within the whole congregation. With people of various trades, they can do a lot of work themselves. They are now busy looking into the purchasing of desks, transportation costs, floor covering etc. The latest cost estimate for the building is \$40,000.00. Already a name was suggested for the school: "Covenant Christian School." But the Board is still open for more suggestions. Since there is a definite difference between the mixed christian schools, which are known to the public and our schools, I would suggest a name with the word "Reformed" in it. The name "Christian" should be sufficient, but we all know how this wonderful name has a very broad meaning in our days. Why not be a little more specific and to the point? Let's think about that.

By the time you read this, school will almost be over for most students. We hope and pray that the Lord may give the teachers all the rest which they need in order to take up their wonderful and important task in September again. Let us not forget our prayers for this work during the summer holidays. May the Lord also bless the teachers' courses given in B.C. and in Hamilton this summer. Mr. Van Esch of Groningen, The Netherlands will speak on the interesting topic "Didactics" and Prof. Ohmann on "Contents of the Old Testament."

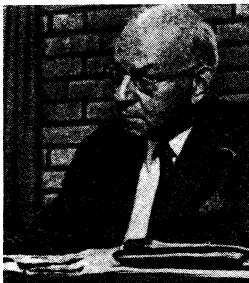
M. WERKMAN



News items are published with a view to their importance for the Reformed Churches. Selection of an item does not necessarily imply agreement with its contents.

NATIONAL EVANGELISM

Spakenburg, The Netherlands. At the annual evangelism-congress of the Reformed Churches (Liberated), held May 28 and 29, a plan was introduced to present a Bible course to the general public via a national advertising campaign. This effort is to be seen as a support for the work of the local committees. After being chairman of the National League of Evangelism committees for more than twenty years, the Rev. D. Vreugdenhil — now minister-emeritus — announced his retirement from the board. The Congress gratefully remembered his long-term contribution.



Rev. D. Vreugdenhil

"long term contributor . . ."

WOMEN IN OFFICE (I)

New York, USA. The Classes of the Reformed Church of America (RCA) have narrowly defeated a proposal to ordain women as ministers. The Book of the Church Order requires at least a two-thirds vote to pass such an amendment. Of the forty-five classes, twenty-nine voted "yes" and sixteen "no," only one short of the thirty votes necessary for passage. The *Church Herald* (April 30) comments, ". . . the church will struggle through another year of stress on this issue. The strain will increase, both because women are graduating from our seminaries this year and because the vote was so close."

WOMEN IN OFFICE (II)

Ulm, West Germany. Bishop Georg Moser of Rotterburg made the

following statement, when addressing the West German Roman Catholic Women's League, "The primacy of the man in the Roman Catholic Church has not been instituted by God." The bishop did not see any theological hindrances for women to be ordained to priesthood, but added that due to traditional barriers, he did not foresee any immediate changes in this respect.

REFORMED ECUMENICAL SYNOD

Capetown, South Africa. The Synod of the N.G. Churches (Nederduits Gereformeerde Kerken) of South Africa has announced that many churches have already promised to participate in the eighth international Reformed Ecumenical Synod (RES), which will be convened this coming August in Capetown. Of the Churches that have pledged support, fourteen come from Africa, seven are European, five come from North America, and seven from Polynesia, while only two are from Asia.

PCR LOSES CONTRIBUTOR?

Lunteren, The Netherlands. The Synod of the Reformed Churches (Synodical) in The Netherlands has decided to stop its active financial support of the much criticized Program to Combat Racism (PCR), initiated by the W.C.C., although the Fund shall remain in existence. These funds were being used a.o. to provide guerilla groups in southern Africa with medical supplies, etc. Meanwhile a group of Church members, under the leadership of the Rev. R.J. van Veen, has started gathering these funds on their own under the motto "Paid Answer."

ECCLESIASTICAL FASCISM

Budapest, Hungary. In a speech smuggled out of the communist zone, the well-known Hungarian Reformed minister Rev. Jozsef Elias has attacked the "episcopal structure" of the Hungarian Reformed Church. According to Rev. Elias, the problems which are present in the Hungarian Reformed

Church are not so much due to outside pressures, but to the church structure itself. Rev. Elias considers the Hungarian Reformed Church quite inconsistent. He writes, "The inconsistency lies in the fact that we present ourselves as being Reformed, have the second Swiss Confession (Confessio Helvetica Posterior, C.I.S.) and the Heidelberg Catechism as our confession of faith, furthermore we uphold the Institutes of Calvin, but at the same time we have an episcopalian form of government. This practice has always been damaging to our church, but today this system becomes unbearable." Rev. Elias contends that the churches are hierarchically suppressed by this episcopalian form of government, calling it: ecclesiastical fascism!

COMMENT

A Matter of Time?

There are always certain general theological issues which reflect the "spirit of the times" and are indications of the trend of contemporary thought. These issues usually affect all denominations in some way or another.

One of these issues today is the



VACATIONERS

A good place to stop for the weekend on your travels to and from east or west is Winnipeg.

Right on No. 1 Highway, halfway between Vancouver and Southern Ontario.

Modern camping facilities at Birds Hill Park on No. 59 Highway directly off No. 1. (swimming, horseback riding, etc.)

SUNDAY SERVICES:
9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
215 Rougeau Avenue
Mission Gardens, Transcona

A cordial invitation is extended by the brothers and sisters of Winnipeg to one and all.

Please phone 222-6000
or
222-0714





"Guerrilla: supported by W.C.C."

position of women in the church. Especially since the emancipation-movement came into full swing, the position, the rights and the duties of women in the church have formed beloved topics or even "hot potatoes."

In both the Gereformeerde Kerk (Liberated) in The Netherlands and the Canadian Reformed Churches, e.g., the matter again surfaced concerning women's voting rights. The difficulty of the matter became clear at various synods, and no definite decision has as yet been taken. Toronto 1974 could only decide, "After study of the materials, Synod has become convinced, that they are not sufficient to lead to a responsible, clear decision, which takes all Biblical (as well as Church-political) aspects into account . . ." (Acts article 84).

There is a difference, of course, between women's voting for office and their serving in office themselves! And serving in office seems to be the issue in most other churches. Even the Roman Catholic Church harbours emancipation-conscious leaders in this respect. Bishop Moser's remarks are indicative of a growing trend, and perhaps it will be only a matter of time that Rome — though usually quite tradition-bound — will somehow cuddle up to the desires of the era. Rome has always known how to motivate and activate women within its hierarchical structure.

The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands (Synodical) already have had women in office for a number of years, following quite soon the practice of the Dutch Reformed Church (Hervormde Kerk). The decision of the Reformed Church of America (RCA), not to ordain women as office-bearers, seems positive, but when one realizes that the great majority (29-16) is in favour, it's also only a matter of time.

The matter will come up again.

The same matter also troubles the Christian Reformed Church. The last Synod tackled the problem and decided to "declare that the practice excluding women from ecclesiastical offices recognized in the Church Order be maintained, unless compelling Biblical grounds are advanced for changing that practice." The vote on this was eighty-four in favour and sixty-two against. But of these sixty-two "No"-voters, thirty-two requested that their vote be registered in the minutes. Talk about conviction and polarization! The majority of the delegates was apparently not ready to admit women into office, but a high percentage is already prepared to go all the way. The vote is indicative of a trend seen elsewhere. Is it also a matter of time?

Why is it a matter of time? Because underlying all the discussions is a new interpretation of the Scriptures which has crept into present-day thinking. There are clear Bible-passages on the matter of women in office, but the general thought is that these passages are time-bound and no longer effective today. Prof. Kuitert e.g. keeps writing things like, "Today we could not possibly treat our women as the Lord once commanded Israel." For modern theologians it is not possible to appeal directly to Scripture in these things, because what counted then, is no longer in force today.

Well, if the Bible is treated as a fruit of a male-centered culture — now outlived — and Paul's words are regarded as proof of his "personal aversion" towards women, then indeed it's only a matter of time before women have access to the offices in the Churches. For the challenge of the emancipation-movement can only be met from out of the Word of God.

C.I.S.

Church News

Called by the "Cornerstone" Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton, Ontario the:

REV. W. HUIZINGA

of the churches at London and Watford, Ontario.

* * * * *

Church services

Cloverdale, Langley, B.C.

On June 20, 1976 office-bearers will, D.V., be installed in the Church at

LANGLEY, B.C.

As of that date the times of the services in the Cloverdale as well as the Langley Church are: 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

The Cloverdale Church has its worship services in the building: 17473 - 60 Ave., Surrey, B.C., the Langley Church in the Seventh Day Adventist's church building, corner 55A Ave. and Brydon Cresc., Langley, B.C.

Visitors welcome!

OUR COVER

Booth's Rock, overlooking part of Rock Lake, one of the countless lakes in Algonquin Provincial Park in Ontario.

The park is the oldest provincial park in the province and one of the largest in Canada (almost 3,000 square miles).

It is a land of lakes, rivers and forests. It is the land of the loon, with its yodeling-like call echoing over the lakes, the moose and black bear. Here is where the beaver builds its dams and where one may hear the wild music of the wolf, howling in the distance.

It is one of those many places where we see and feel the greatness of the Lord our God in His Creation as we read it in Psalm 104.

(Photo and description courtesy of Wilbur Sipkema, 2313 Barclay Road, Burlington, Ontario L7R 2B7).

“Voluntary Childlessness” by W. Meijer

Br. W. Meijer is a well-known Dutch author (a.o. *Weegt en Waakt, about sexual education in the family*) and a regular contributor to *De Poortwake, magazine of the League of Reformed Young Women's Societies, from which this article was taken.*

A report of the (Dutch) Intersvarsity Demographical Institute (IDI) has recently shown that the world-situation, pollution, the threat of war, etc., are mostly given as the main motive of couples who do not want children. Then follows as the next main motive: not “loving” children. Other given reasons are: career opportunities, the economical situation, emancipation, etc.

The “pill” and abortion aid these couples, who do not want children, in their endeavours, while sterilization increases by the day.

The average income of the people who cooperated with this research project, however, was quite sufficient to maintain a family with children. But many prefer a car, expensive foreign trips, and all kinds of luxuries above having children. Therefore I say: voluntary childlessness. It is one of the symptoms of contemporary apostasy.

Is this provoking evil also creeping into the communion of the church? The report of IDI does say that “only few of the people involved in the investigation said they belonged to a church.” But still the symptoms of having few children are also appearing in our midst. Large families are becoming quite conspicuous among us.

I hope that these signs of unfaithfulness will not penetrate the liberated

Reformed churches. For the Lord's wrath would come over this. The Bible speaks so different a language about having many children. Psalm 127 says, “Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth,” and, “Lo, sons are a heritage of the Lord, the fruit of the womb a REWARD.” And Psalm 128, “Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house, your children will be like olive shoots around your table.” The covenant-promise connected with this is, “You will see your children's children, peace be over Israel!” Children are the “seed of the covenant.” The Church is built out of children. I think of the minister who once prayed, “Lord, give much work at the baptism-font!”

“You did not so learn Christ!” (Ephesians 4:17-24). This certainly pertains to our decisions in forming a family.

(translation C.I.S.)

Books

Os Guinness, *Dust of Death* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1973), 419 pp., \$4.95 (paperback).

At a certain meeting some one made the remark that there are not too many good Christian books on this continent. And I agree that if you want something in the field of labour or politics, etc., it is not so easy to find a “good” book. An exception is the book by OS GUINNESS entitled *Dust of Death*.

Os Guinness is an Englishman born in China during the war with Japan, and was educated at the University of London, England. He has travelled widely in the East and lectured to student groups in Europe, the United States and Canada. His major work was with Francis Schaeffer at L'Abri Fellowship in Switzerland.

To give you an idea what material he covers, I will mention the ten chapters into which he has divided his book and some of the subjects with which he deals:

1. The Striptease of Humanism.
 - a. The Rise of Optimistic Humanism
 - b. The Surfacing of Pessimism
 - c. Alienation
 - d. Mystification
 - e. The Twilight of Western Thought.
2. Utopia or Oblivion
 - a. Planetary, Global, and Biological Engineering
 - b. The Optimists
 - c. The Pessimists
 - d. The Failure of Nerve.
3. The Great Refusal
 - a. Beginning with the Beat
 - b. The European Scene
 - c. The Provos

- c. The Hippies
- e. The New Left
- f. The Failure of the New Left.
4. One-Dimensional Man
 - a. The Critique of Technocracy
 - b. The System
 - c. The Critical Voice of the Sixties: Marcuse
 - d. The Weakness of the New Left.
5. Violence — Crisis of Catharsis.
 - a. Violence in Political Theory
 - b. Violence in Evolutionary
 - c. Violence in Cultural Theory
 - d. Violence as Catharsis
 - e. Violence as Crisis
 - f. Christianity and Violence: Traditional Views
 - g. Christianity and Violence: A Radical Understanding
 - h. Non-Violence and Christian Realism
 - i. Forgiveness Our Only Resort.
6. The East, No Exit
 - a. East meets West in San Francisco
 - b. The East and Post-Christian West
 - c. The Silence of God
 - d. Monism: An Eastern Presupposition
 - e. Monism and Reality
 - f. Monism and Personality
 - g. Monism and Morality
 - h. A Christian Alternative.
7. The Counterfeit Infinity
 - a. The History of Marijuana
 - b. Mescaline
 - c. L.S.D.
 - d. Objections to Psychedelics
 - e. Death and Evolution
 - f. Utopian Dreams
 - g. The Psychedelics and God
 - h. Psychedelics and the East.
8. Encircling Eyes
 - a. Back to the Occult — Why?

- b. Superstition
- c. Spiritism
- d. Satanism
- e. The Christian and the Occult.
9. The Ultimate Trip?
 - a. The Image of the Church
 - b. The Jesus Revolution
 - c. Can Christianity Be Verified?
 - d. Christianity and Falsification
 - e. General Revelation: The World and Man.
 - f. Special Revelation: Christ and the Bible.
10. The Third Race
 - a. What to Do?
 - b. The Third Race
 - c. Constructive Christian Radicalism
 - d. The necessity of Christian Radicalism
 - e. Christian Compassion
 - f. True Understanding
 - g. Outrage
 - h. Identification
 - i. Is It Possible?

As you see he writes about everything that is going on in our present chaotic world. And although you certainly can make some critical remarks occasionally, he has only one way back out of this chaos. I quote:

That is also why only this uniquely “impossible” faith — with an Incarnation that is earthly and historical, with a Salvation that is at Crosspurposes with human nature, with a Resurrection that blasts apart the finality of death — is able to provide an alternative to the sifting, settling dust of death and through a new birth open the way to new life.

The book can be read by those who are seventeen years of age and over. Our older immigrants may have to use a dictionary once in a while. A.J. YTSMA

our little magazine

Dear Busy Beavers,

How do you feel now that school is out? Happy? Free as a bird? Looking forward to your family vacation? Planning lots of fun?

It's great to have weeks and weeks of holidays to look forward to, right? And I hope you all have lots and lots of fun!

But with so many people on holidays it is more important than ever to be careful. It won't be a happy holiday for you or your family if one of you gets hurt! SAFETY is important no matter WHERE you go.

You know the saying: Better safe than sorry!

How is Your Safety Sense?

(Safety is really just common sense, isn't it?)

- When you reach for something high up, use a _____ or a firm _____.
- Poisons, cleaning fluids, and medicines should be clearly _____ and kept out of children's _____.
- Pots and pans should have their handles turned _____ when on the stove.
- Never touch an electrical appliance or switch when part of your body is in _____.
- Doors should be _____ from discarded or stored refrigerators.
- During fire drills remain _____ and _____, and move quickly and quietly to the _____.
- Never rush into the _____ to chase a ball or for any other reason.
- When in the car, wear _____ if possible.
- When swimming use the _____.
- Wear a life jacket if you go in a _____.
- Stay away from farm machinery, especially if it is _____.

- | | | |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| a. street | b. labeled, reach | c. buddy system |
| d. ladder, chair | e. running | f. removed |
| g. inward | h. calm, orderly, | i. boat |
| j. seatbelts | exits | |
| | k. water | |

Now look at the end of "Our Little Magazine" and see how good your safety sense is!

Time for Birthday Wishes! We all wish the Busy Beavers celebrating July birthdays a very happy day. At home or on holidays, we hope it's your happiest yet! And may the Lord continue to guide and keep you in the year ahead.

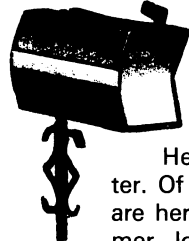
Jeanette Hoeksema	July 1	Jo-Anna Flach	July 16
Eric Jans	2	Sharon Leffers	16
Robert Feenstra	3	Patricia Van Raalte	18
Jerold Van Assen	4	Michael Wildeboer	20
Ingrid Feenstra	6	Alison Helder	21
Marion Van Grootheest	7	Rick Leffers	23
Sharon Van Grootheest	7	Judith Barendregt	26
Helen Linde	8	Tony Van Delft	26

Jimmy Stienstra	9	Corrie De Boer	29
Wilma Van Woudenberg	9	Margaret Vanden Haak	29
James Slaa	11		

A Good-bye to All My Friends

Now that the School year's almost past
I have to say good-bye,
To all my best beloved friends
I guess you do know why.
We've played together all year round,
Together as good friends.
But now we have to say good-bye
Because this old year ends.

by Busy Beaver *Jenny Bosscher.*



From the Mailbox

Hello *Joanne Doekes*. Thank you for your letter. Of course you're happy the summer holidays are here! Do you have lots of plans for this summer, Joanne?

Thank you for your letter *Catherine Smouter*. It was nice to hear from you again. And how are you going to spend all the holidays, Catherine?

QUIZ TIME

Busy Beaver *Cynthia Dam* has some scrambled words and two Who am I? puzzles for you. Thank you for sharing, Cynthia!

- a t n S a _____
- t M w t a e h _____
- c s d l i s p e i _____
- v n h e e a _____
- m k o n g i d _____

Who Am I?

- I was asked where bread could be bought;
I said we would need two hundred pennyworth;
I helped to give out the food to the crowd.
Who am I? _____
- I am a disciple of Jesus;
I found the boy with the loaves and fishes;
I helped to give the food to the crowd.
Who am I? _____

Five Loaves and Two Fishes

```

_ _ _ _ _ M _ _ _ _ _
_ _ _ U _ _
_ _ _ L _ _ _ _ _
_ _ _ T _ _ _ _ _
_ _ _ I _ _ _ _ _
_ _ _ T _ _
_ _ _ U _ _ _ _ _
_ _ _ D _ _
_ _ _ E _ _

```

The Lord Jesus fed the five thousand with the lunch given by a little boy. Answer the following questions and fill out the above puzzle.

M. What was taken up after they ate? (Matthew 14:20)

- U. Why did the disciples say the people should go into the villages? (Matthew 14:15)
- L. The lad had five what? (John 6:9)
- T. How many baskets full of food were left over? (Matthew 14:20)
- I. The lad had two what? (John 6:9)
- T. There were twelve what of food left? (Matthew 14:20)
- U. The disciples said the people should go into the villages to buy what? (Matthew 14:15)
- D. Whose lunch was used to feed the five thousand? (John 6:9)

- E. How many loaves did the boy have? (Matthew 14:17)
(Answers next time!)

Let's have the answers to the Safety quiz.

- | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. - d | 4. - k | 7. - a | 10. - i |
| 2. - b | 5. - f | 8. - j | 11. - 3 |
| 3. - g | 6. - h | 9. - c | |

How did YOU do?

Have a safe, happy holiday!

Yours,
Aunt Betty.

Psalm 127

John and Elisabeth de Vries (nee Selles) thank the Lord who has entrusted in our care our first child:

DANIELLE TINA

born on May 26, 1976.
88 Culver Cresc., London, Ont.

VACATIONING MINISTERS

The Church at Winnipeg, Man., welcomes you to administer the Word of God in Winnipeg, if you can (re-)arrange your vacation or travel plans to include a Lord's Day spent in Southern Manitoba during the month of July.

Please contact the clerk:

Mr. D. Teitsma
Phone (204) 222-5005

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Van Spronsen and children wish to thank all of our relatives and friends across Canada who have sent us cards and wished us the best in future years.

Mr. and Mrs. J. VanderHorst and Mr. and Mrs. K. Aikema, are pleased to announce the marriage of their children:

MARGARET
and
PETER

The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on July 24, 1976, at 3:00 p.m., Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Dynes Road, Burlington, Ontario.

Rev. G. Van Dooren officiating.

Future address:

329 Delaware Ave., Burlington, Ontario L7R 3B3.

Mr. and Mrs. Hendrik Denbok

and

Mr. and Mrs. James Meerveld

announce the joy they have in the marriage of their children:

RUTH JANE
and
JOHN

as they were united for life in Christ on Friday, June 25, 1976 at 7:00 o'clock, Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church, Burlington, Ontario.

Rev. G. Van Dooren officiating.

3086 St. Claire Ave., Burlington, Ontario.

1951 - 1976

With thankfulness to the Lord, we hope to celebrate, D.V., on Sunday, June 27, 1976, the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

WIECHER HOEKSEMA
and

ANNECHIEN HOEKSEMA (nee Wilting)

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Ferwick, Ont.: Andy and Margaret Mans
Angela, Michael

Waterloo, Ont.: Warren and Mary Ann Hoeksema

Wellandport, Ont.: Bob and Diane Spoelstra

Calgary, Alta.: Hans Hoeksema

St. Ann's, Ont.: Bill
Annette
Karen
Arnold
Irene
Marion

R.R. 1, St. Ann's, Ontario.

Mr. and Mrs. Arend Smeding and Mr. and Mrs. Hendrik W. Bisschop are pleased to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children:

ALICE
and
WALTER

This celebration will take place, D.V., on Saturday, July the tenth, nineteen hundred and seventy-six, at two o'clock in the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church of Burlington.

Rev. G. Van Dooren officiating.

I John 4:16b.

Future address:

14259-88th Ave., Surrey, British Columbia.

With thankfulness to the Lord
we announce the birth of:

GERARD ANTHONY

Born May 24, 1976.

A brother for: *Adeline* and
Yolanda.

Gary and Jane Arink.

10278-129 Street,
Surrey, B.C. V3T 3G9.

With thankfulness to the Lord,
the Creator of life, we wish to
announce the birth of our first
child, a son:

PAUL FREDERICK

Born on April 28, 1976.

Bill and Joanne Vander Heide.

33303 Westbury Avenue,
Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 1C4.

Thankful to the Lord Who made
everything well, we have been
entrusted with another child, a
daughter:

LEONA RENEE

June 2, 1976.

A sister for: *Nicole*.

Casey and Betty DeHaas
(nee Van Egmond)

Box 1306, Leduc, Alta. T0C 1V0.

With thankfulness to God Who
does everything so gloriously,
beautifully and majestically do
we announce the birth of our
first child:

JENNIFER CHRISTINE

Born May 18, 1976.

John and Betty Siebenga

613 Bayshore Blvd.,
Burlington, Ontario.

With thankfulness to the LORD,
the Creator of Life, we are hap-
py to announce the birth of our
first child, a son:

WILLIAM MICHAEL
(Michael)

on May 23, 1976.

Bert and Annie Nederveen
(nee Bouwman)

2096 Parkway Drive,
Burlington, Ontario L7P 1S4.

The Ancient Text of the New Testament



JAKOB VAN BRUGGEN (1936)
is professor of New Testament exegesis
at the Reformed Theological College in
Kampen, The Netherlands. He studied
theology in Kampen and Utrecht. In 1973,
he obtained his doctor's degree under
Prof. Dr. W.C. van Unnik (Utrecht). His
thesis was entitled: "*Fourteen Years
Later*": *The Meeting at Jerusalem of Gal-
atians 2 and New Testament Chronology*
(in Dutch, with a summary in English).
Professor Van Bruggen published studies
on Romans, on the future of Bible trans-
lating, and on 1 Corinthians 11:2-16
("Women's Liberation and the Bible"). A
contribution about the chronology of
Herod according to Josephus will appear
from his hand in a series of essays by
Dutch New Testament scholars. In his
scholarly works, Professor Van Bruggen
defends the trustworthiness of the Bible
as the Word of God.

In his *The Ancient Text of the New Testament*, Professor Van Bruggen deals with the confusion surrounding the text of the New Testament. Since 1881 (Revised Version), most new translations follow another type of Greek text than was followed in the older Bible translations (e.g. King James Version). However, this does not mean that there is unanimity regarding the correct text. On the contrary. In the newer translations, many changes occur because the science of New Testament textual criticism continually arrives at different conclusions. The *Greek New Testament* of the United Bible Societies (1966) in many points was established by a majority vote. Is the majority vote of a few modern scholars worth *more* than the majority vote of the old manuscripts? Does the division of opinions that exists today not indicate that there is reason enough to return to the ancient ecclesiastical text? Van Bruggen challenges the arguments raised against this ancient text by Hort and others after him. Briefly he surveys the field of textual criticism from Hort to Aland and Metzger. In footnotes, he refers to much literature on the topic. His conclusion is that the arguments against the text found in most manuscripts, nowadays are even less convincing than in the past. For exegesis, as well as for Bible translating, it is of significance which manuscripts are used. Whoever wants to make his own judgment about this matter will find a scientific and succinct survey of the arguments in this book of Van Bruggen.

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The Lord willing, we hope to celebrate on July 2, 1976, the 40th Wedding Anniversary of our parents and grandparents:

MR. and MRS. ADRIAAN GOOSSEN

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Herman and Barbara VanderVeen
Geurt and Cathryn VandeKemp
Kees and Mary Goossen
Adrian and Ineke Goossen
Henry and Debbi Goossen
and 13 grandchildren.

470 Victoria Ave., Chatham, Ontario N7L 3B5.

After one year of uncertainty, we know that the Lord has taken up our son and brother:

ADOLF HERMAN WILDEMAN

at the age of 16.

Lord's Day 1.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Wildeman and family.

Box 252, Legal, Alberta T0G 1L0.

On Monday, May 31, 1976, the LORD has taken up to His glory our beloved son and brother:

HENRY JOHN

at the age of almost 14 years.

"But they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6)

John VanBodegom

Hannah VanBodegom (nee VanLeeuwen)

Bertha, Don, Emeline,

Francis

7 Parson St., Orangeville, Ontario L9W 1M6.

In His infinite Wisdom the Lord took unto Himself in His Glory, our beloved grandson, nephew and cousin:

HENRY VANBODEGOM

at the age of 13.

Revelation 21:4-5

Fergus, Ont.: Opa and Oma D. Vanleeuwen

St. Ann's, Ont.: Jake and Mary Vanleeuwen

Fergus, Ont.: Keith and Audrey Lodder

Surrey, B.C.: Cor and Emma Flokstra

Fergus, Ont.: Keith and Ann Vanleeuwen

Arthur, Ont.: Dan and Janet Vanleeuwen

Glen Williams, Ont.: Gary and Teresa Vis

Fergus, Ont.: Bob and Diane Vanleeuwen

Albert and Sonja Vanleeuwen

John and Ena Post

Simona Vanleeuwen

and 31 cousins.

Fergus, Ontario

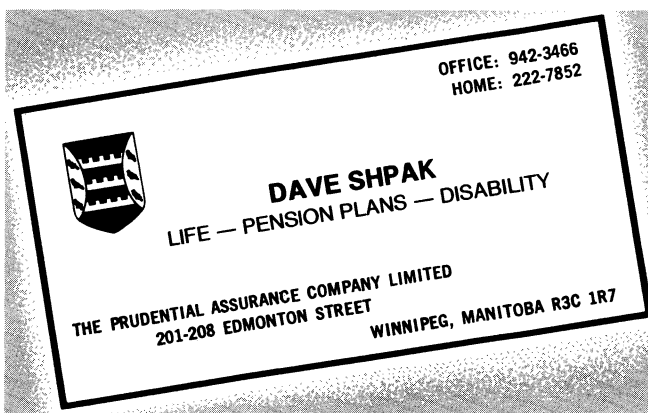
May 31, 1976

On May 31, 1976, our heavenly Father, in His infinite wisdom and boundless mercy, called Home our Grade 8 pupil and school-mate:

HENRY VANBODEGOM

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be anymore pain: for the former things are passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

Sadly missed by staff and pupils of the Dufferin Area Christian School, Laurel, Ontario (Orangeville area).



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