

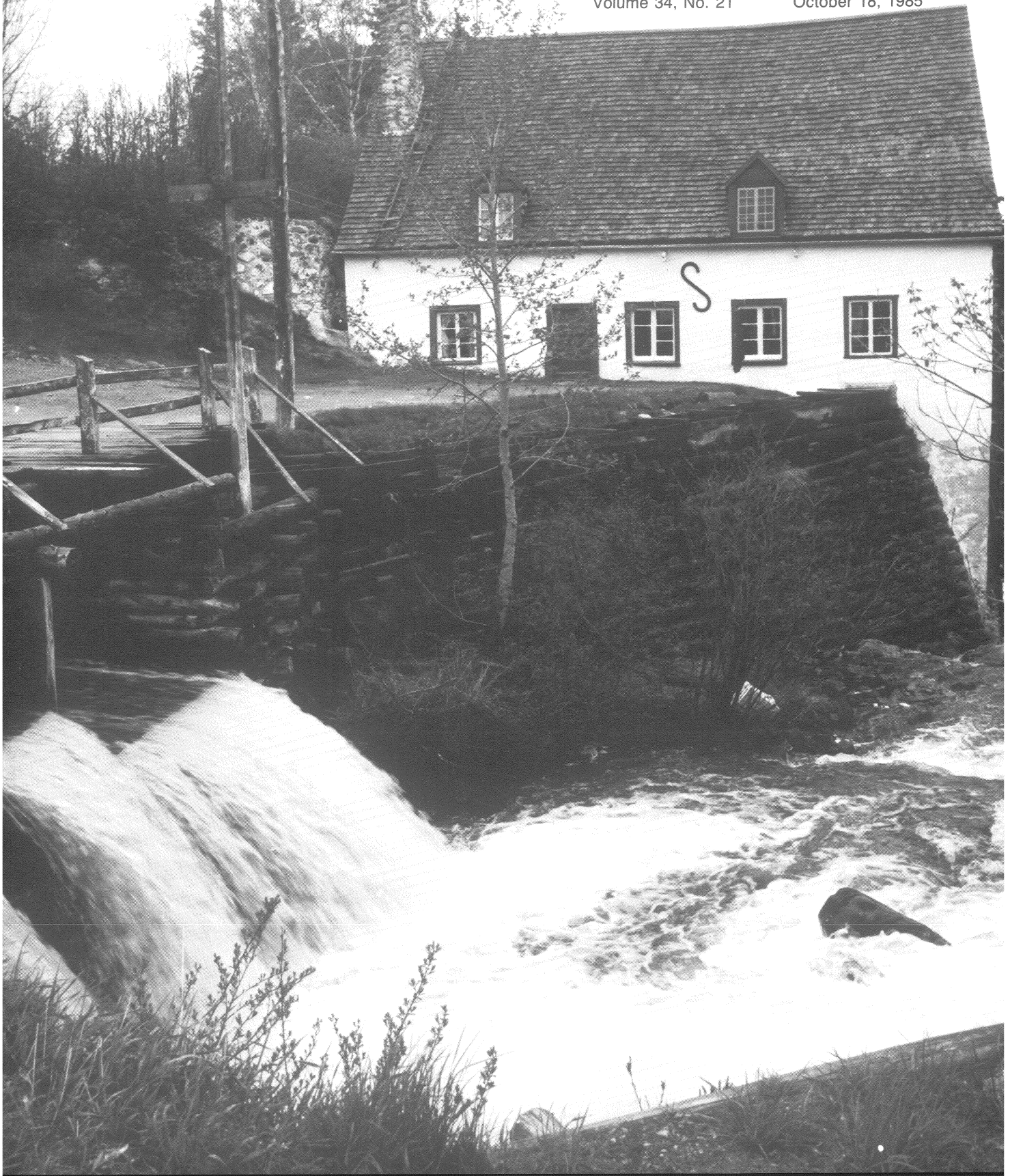


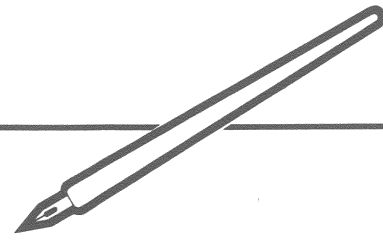
Clarion

THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Casualness and worship

A congregation comes together for worship on a Sunday morning. It is summer. The weather is warm. Those attending are dressed casually. Brothers of the church council enter, the organ is silenced, the minister walks to the pulpit. Casually he greets the people with a "Good morning, congregation." The congregation responds with a "Good morning, sir." There is singing and praying. The sermon follows, but is interrupted when a few latecomers arrive. In a nice and casual way they are welcomed.

Is there not something attractive in this casualness? Does it not bring the service "down to earth?" Does it not make people feel welcome and comfortable? Is it not true that through these little things they will feel "at home" in the church? And is that not exactly what we want? People should be comfortable and at home in the church, shouldn't they? Then they will come back.

Casualness

Our modern times bring along many changes. There is also a change in the manner in which people worship. Worship services are less solemn and rigid in form. They are becoming more open, more easy-going, more casual. In general, people are much more casual than they were a few decades ago. I think that this word "casual" defines quite well the new direction.

What is the meaning of casualness? My dictionary gives, among others, the following definitions: "happening by chance, not planned or expected;" "without plan or method: careless;" "indifferent;" "informal in manner." When a minister enters the auditorium and greets his congregation with a "Good morning," or when he speaks a word of welcome it gives the service a much more informal character.

Further, when men do not wear a suit and a tie, but instead a loosely fitting sweater, or women do not wear a dress but instead a pair of pants, in which they feel much more comfortable, going to church is made so much more pleasant for them. However, the question must be asked: is this direction toward casualness the right direction? In my opinion, it is not. I shall deal with the two points mentioned above as illustrations of casualness.

"Good morning, congregation"

As I said, it sounds so nice, so welcoming, so down to earth, when a minister greets the congregation with these friendly words. But what does this casualness mean? It means that the two acting parties are the minister and the congregation. The minister speaks and the congregation reacts. Hereby the minister asks attention for himself as a nice and friendly man and leader.

And when latecomers are welcomed during the service, or when members are invited to propose a favourite song, or speak a prayer, or ask the minister to pray for something or someone, all the emphasis is placed on the individual

members. The worship service becomes a human, social event of friendly and religious people.

What do we lose in this approach? We lose sight of the main aspect of the worship service, namely, that it is a meeting between the LORD and His people. They are the two parties, and definitely not the minister and his congregation. Therefore, attention should not be asked for the greeting minister. He has to go to the pulpit and pronounce, not his own salutation, but the salutation of the LORD. After he has said, as mouth of the congregation which greets her God, "Our help is in the Name of the LORD," continues, as mouth of God who salutes His people with His words of blessing, "Grace unto you and peace . . ."

In this same line the service continues. God speaks His Word in the Ten Words of the covenant, in the Scripture reading and in the sermon. The congregation responds with listening, praying and singing in obedient faith.

This Scriptural and Reformed principle must be maintained. It is of the greatest importance. When we bring casualness and inter-human salutations into the worship meeting between God and His covenant people, we break down that principle. The consequence is that all kinds of things are done in the "service," like sing-songs and discussions, choir performances and music, perhaps liturgical dancing, and other new inventions. However, the congregation is no longer a congregation that comes together to listen humbly to the Word and will of her God in order to live in faithful obedience to that Word. Religiosity takes the place of true religion.

No tie, no dress

Casualness in the manner in which we have our services often goes along with casualness in the way we dress for church. We start wearing clothes to church that are comfortable and informal. As men, we do away with the tie and suit and wear a casual sports shirt or a sweater instead. As women, we rather wear a pair of pants, even a pair of jeans, because they fit so nice and are so comfortable. And our argument is that all what feels good and is comfortable for us, is the important thing. Here man, and what he likes, is in the centre, instead of the holy God and His revealed will.

Casualness in the worship service and in our appearance at the service shows a certain attitude. It can show that we think that in our relationship with the LORD we can be casual, and that we do not have to be precise and punctual. It can show that we think that the manner in which we serve the LORD does not matter too much, that everybody can serve and worship Him in his or her own manner, in the way he or she thinks is acceptable and right. Everything becomes just "a thing between you and the Lord."

It should be clear to everyone that when we let casualness take over in our serving of the LORD, we are on the way to losing sight of God's holy majesty. The holiness of the LORD must mean for us a humble obedient attitude, and a being par-

particular and precise in that obedience. God's holiness must work in us a holy awe and respect, so that we appear before the LORD in worship neatly dressed and well behaved as befits and honours the LORD, and as it also honours God's children. When God's children appear before Him in a casual manner, it does not honour them either. Just as it is honourable in a child when he honours his father and mother, so it is honourable in a child of God when he honours his heavenly Father.

Conclusion: preserve the church

We are working on the preservation of the church where we remain precise and particular in our worship in every respect. Being precise and particular in the manner in which we dress for the meeting with the LORD, as well as in the man-

ner of worship, always asking what the LORD wants, how He prescribes it in His Word, will have this effect that we also remain precise and particular regarding the doctrine of the church. We struggle to maintain our Reformed doctrine as it is confessed in our Reformed standards, convinced that this is the doctrine of the Scriptures.

Let us keep and build up this attitude of being precise and particular in our service to the LORD, not seeking our own comfort, but the honour of the LORD and the preservation of the Church for which Christ accepted not only some discomfort, but for which He went through the hellish agony. If His Bride was of such great value for Christ, the preservation and further gathering of the church should be the first priority in the life of every Christian.

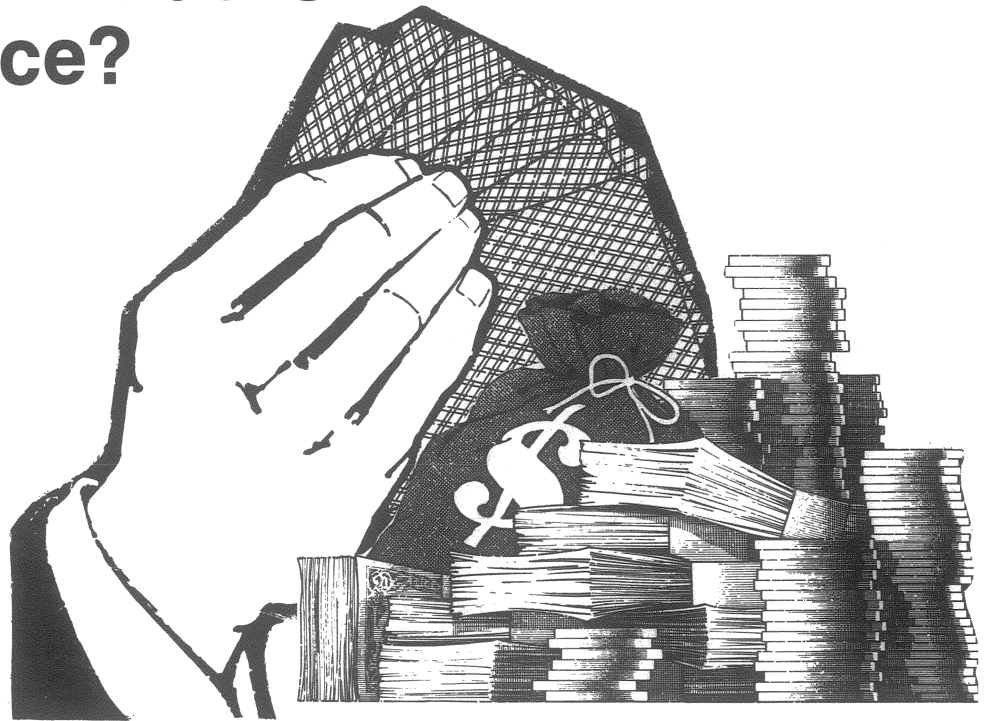
J. GEERTSEMA

Sweepstakes, lotteries, gambling; — what is the difference?

1. It is everywhere

Today everywhere we are confronted with lotteries in one way or another. In the grocery store as well as at the gas station they offer you tickets which can make you an instant cash winner. In almost every store or shopping mall you can buy lottery tickets or you can get them for free. When you subscribe to a magazine or when you order a book, you receive a ticket which can make you an instant winner. Lotteries and sweepstakes are used for sales promotion as well as to encourage people to make a donation to a charitable organization. Even the government uses lotteries to collect funds to subsidize sports events and other manifestations. Lotteries are used to attract people to, and amuse them, during a fair. Lottery tickets are also sold, simply to satisfy people who crave for gambling. Lots of money which should have been used in the household for the most elementary necessities is spent in buying lottery tickets, because people are captivated by the idea that once they will win the big "jackpot." It has caused an addiction in many cases.

Recently we received a request to write about these matters. Not everyone thinks and acts the same way in this respect. We are so bombarded by lotteries that it has become very difficult to steer clear of it. Most of us agree that gambling is wrong. The old translation of



the Form for the Lord's Supper says that gamblers should stay away from the table of the Lord. However, what is gambling? Some reason that taking part in a lottery is not wrong, as long as you get the tickets for free. Others see nothing wrong in having a sort of a lottery or sweepstake during a fund raising fair for our schools. And when do we call it a real lottery? Only when you buy a ticket with a number on it, or also when you, during a fair, "guess" the number of peas in a pot or the weight of a cake? In most of these

cases you do not get your ticket for free but you have to pay for it!

In this article we will try to deal with this matter in an orderly and principled way. We will investigate what the Bible says about it, what the attitude has been among Reformed people in the past and what our approach should be in the present situation.

We will not restrict ourselves to the most common form of sweepstake, lottery and gamble, but we will also pay attention to other forms of "gambling" such

as excessive participation in the stock exchange and dealing with “futures” and other “high risk” investments. Isn’t speculation via the stock exchange a more sophisticated way of gambling?

2. What is “the lot”?

In the Bible we read very often that the lot was cast. The key text in this respect is Proverbs 16:33 where it says: “The lot is cast into the lap, but the decision is wholly from the LORD.” In the New Testament we read in Luke 1:9 that, according to the custom, it fell to Zechariah by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. In Acts 1:26 we read about the election of an apostle. They cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias. We do not know exactly which procedure they followed, but it is clear that the lot was used to decide in a certain matter and that the decision came from the Lord. That is what Proverbs 16:33 says. The well-known Reformed professor in the ethics, Dr. W. Geesink, in his book *Gereformeerde Ethiek* (Reformed ethics), makes a distinction between three different types of cases in which the lot was used. The first is the *revelation*. The Lord gave special revelation unto His people via the Urim and the Tummim (Exodus 28:30). Another use of the lot was *consultation*. In difficult matters the Lord was asked to decide. When the people of Israel were defeated in the battle against the people of Ai, Joshua had to bring the whole congregation before the Lord and the Lord Himself pointed out who the transgressor was, who had caused the wrath of the Lord over the whole congregation. A third type of situation in which the lot was used is, according to Prof. Geesink, a case of *partition* or *division*. Here he refers to situations in which something had to be divided between persons, allotted, allocated or apportioned. That was the case when the people had to divide the promised land or when the services of the priests in the temple had to be allotted, as we can learn from Luke 1:9 concerning Zechariah.

In the Bible we also read about unbelievers who used the lot to come to a decision. A well-known example is Haman who cast the lot to find out what would be the best time to destroy the Jewish people (Esther 3:7). In Jonah 1:7 we read that the people who were with Jonah cast the lot, to know on whose account the evil had come upon them. And, to mention one more, in John 19:24 we read about the soldiers, who cast the lot over Jesus’ tunic, to see whose it would be. With their evil deeds they fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 22:18, “They divided my garments among them, and for my rai-

ment they cast the lot.” From all these examples it is clear that the lot has been used throughout the ages by believers as well as unbelievers. However, the question has to be answered whether we as Christians are allowed to use the lot and under which circumstances it is proper to do so.

3. A classic opinion

In the previous section we have made reference to what Prof. Geesink wrote about the lot. He makes a distinction between three different categories, which he calls *revelation*, *consultation*, and *partition* or *division*. He considers the first and the second to belong to the old dispensation, and therefore not to be used by Christians. The only way we are allowed to use the lot is to make a choice in cases of “division,” for instance with a heritage, or when a choice has to be made between persons, as in an election. Another case of making a choice is mentioned in Proverbs 18:18. When there is a dispute, in which it is very difficult to decide, the lot can be used. “The lot puts an end to disputes and decides between powerful contenders.” In our churches the lot is used by the election of office-bearers. In some congregations they have the rule that with a tie vote the oldest is considered to be chosen, in other places they use the lot to break a tie.

Prof. Geesink is of the opinion that the lot can rightly be used in such situations. However, the use of the lot should always be a well considered asking from the Lord to decide in a matter which seems too difficult for us to decide on. That is why he considers it a lack of respect for such a decision of the Lord, when we use the lot during a game to decide whose turn it is to play, and even more so when we ask the Lord to decide who will win the jackpot. He is very consistent in his application of this rule. He strongly opposes every form of lottery and playing of cards. He also condemns the use of dice in whatever game it might be. His reasoning is, that in such cases we are asking the Lord to decide on something we are doing just for fun. That is, according to him, a lack of respect for the decisions of the Lord and a profaning of His Name. The use of the lot is permitted, but it should always be done in the awareness that we call upon the Name of the Lord, and preferably it should be done with prayer, as is the case when we use the lot during an election of office-bearers to break a tie. Prof. Geesink goes even so far that he condemns every game in which an element of “luck” is involved or something happens “by accident.” He writes (vol. 1, page 342) “On the same grounds as card and dice games, also

domino and lotto games have to be condemned.” It means that in our present situation almost all board games would be unacceptable. Not only the games in which dice are used, but also a game like scrabble, because in the same way as with the old “domino game,” it is a matter of “luck” which letters you will get to play the game with. According to Prof. Geesink it is a lack of respect for the Lord to let Him decide how “lucky” you will be in the game. He even states that during such a game the one “hopes” or “prays” that the Lord may give him a chance to win the game. He considers it ethically unacceptable that we ask the Lord to decide on so-called “contingent” matters in such a way that we gain something at the cost of the friend, with whom we are playing a game.

So far the opinion of a very prominent professor in the ethics at the beginning of this century. His opinion was certainly no exception but rather a representation of the classic approach of the problem among Reformed people. Before we come to an evaluation of this point of view and a formulation of our own opinion, we will first have a closer look at some other aspects of this matter.

4. Different types of lotteries

All kinds of names are used, like sweepstake, lotto etc. and these terms are often used at random, in a confusing way, as if they were synonymous. What is the difference? We will try to list the most common words and define the meaning.

A *sweepstake* is a gaming transaction in which a number of people contribute a certain amount of money, their “stake,” with the understanding that the total amount becomes the property of one or some of them under certain, previously accepted, conditions. It was originally used during horse races, where people could set an amount of money on a horse, hoping that this horse would win, in which case they could collect the total amount or “sweep the stakes.” The most typical element is that the outcome is determined by an uncertain *event in the future*. It is a form of “betting.” Nowadays the name sweepstake is used for all kinds of lotteries, also when they are not determined by an event in the future and when no “stakes” are set.

A *lottery* is a game or method of fund raising in which tickets are sold and in which certain holders of a ticket are entitled to a prize. In a draw by chance the winners are determined. Here the main point is that tickets are sold and that the outcome does not depend on a more or less predictable fact but on a *draw by chance* or casting of the lot.

A *lotto* or *bingo* is a game in which certain numbers in a row or circle have to be covered or chosen. Here the outcome depends on the way the *player himself fills in his card or ticket*.

A *bet* is a pledge made on the result of some uncertain questions or events. The bettor hopes to receive a reward if his prediction comes true. Here the question who gets the money depends on the *correctness of the "prediction"* or expectation of the bettor.

A *roulette* is a game of chance in which the winner is determined by a moving ball, dropped in a numbered compartment of a *spinning disk*. Each player places his bet on one of the compartments.

A *gamble* is in general a venture in

which a great risk is taken solely for the purpose of gaining money. The most characteristic element is that not only the risk of losing money is accepted, but that *taking the risk is a aim in itself*.

Speculation is a special type of gambling. It is a financial investment which is hazardous but offers the possibility of large profits. It can be done by buying and selling risky shares at the stock exchange. It can also be done by dealing in so-called "futures." This is the technical term for buying or selling commodities or stocks on the basis of delivery in the future. A businessman can, for instance, sell a product on the basis of delivery after half a year. If he is convinced that the price of this product will decrease dramatically, he can sell the

product for a fixed price, even if he does not have it available as yet, because he hopes to be able to buy or grow it for a reasonable price before the delivery date is due. However, if in the meantime the prices go up, he can lose a lot of money because, in order to stick to his contract, he has to buy for a higher price than he has sold already. This is a very common form of "gambling" and some people who know the market can make a lot of money in this way, while others have lost everything by this form of speculation. In our evaluation we will also consider this form of gambling.

— *To be continued.*
W. POUWELSE

The Holy Spirit: spotlight on the exalted Christ₂

(This is the second part of a speech of Rev. C. Bouwman held at the Women's League Day Surrey in June 1985. In the first part Rev. Bouwman first spoke about the identity of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is not an "it," a power of God, but a divine Person. Then it was pointed out that the main task of the Holy Spirit is to focus the attention of people on Jesus Christ. The Pentecost sermon of Peter, Acts 2, shows that very clearly. There are also other tasks, subservient to the main one. That is where the speech continues with.

The Editor)

Scripture is very clear on the fact that the Holy Spirit has a number of other tasks. We read that it is the Spirit who renews the face of the earth every spring again (Psalm 104:30). Lord's Day 20 mentions specifically that it is the Holy Spirit who makes me by a true faith a partaker of Christ and His benefits. It is also He who comforts me and abides with me forever. But all these other tasks of the Spirit are to be understood in the light of this central task: He draws the attention of sinners to Jesus Christ. For why is it that the Holy Spirit renews the face of the ground? So that there might be life on earth, existence. Obviously, where there is no life, there can be none to praise

God. Why does He renew men's hearts, work faith? So that men might be able to give glory to Jesus Christ. Why is it that the Spirit abides with believers? Because if it were not for the continued presence of the Spirit, not a single believer would

remain a believer. And none would seek the things that are above. The mandate given to the Spirit of the exalted Christ is based on the fact that all of life is dependent upon God. Apart from the Spirit, there can be no praise for God. Hence all

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that the Spirit does is directed to that one goal: glory for the exalted King of kings, Christ the Saviour.

So it is, then, that the presence of a Spirit with such a task is really a source of humiliation for men. The Saviour has obtained a salvation that no person in any way deserves. He has told us, too, that this salvation is for all who look to the Lord Jesus Christ in faith. Yet there is not a single descendent of Adam that is able to observe what the Christ has done, to praise Him on account of it. Each is thoroughly dead in sin. And the dead see not. Christ may have obtained much for us but it does not profit us anything as long as God does not Himself apply it to us. Without Christ, there is no salvation. Without the Holy Spirit, the salvation that Christ may have acquired could not be made ours.⁵

Why is it that the disciples were assured that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all the truth (John 16:13)? That was because the fallen mind of man is such that no man can comprehend the depths and the heights of God. They were given this promise because on human strength alone there can be neither Bible nor Christians. Because of our absolute depravity the Holy Spirit has been mandated to cause men to see the Christ. To deny depravity is also to deny the necessity of the Holy Spirit. Conversely, to challenge this work of the Holy Spirit is to challenge the reality of our deadness.

The fact of Pentecost has faced Christians with a challenge: why was Pentecost necessary?⁶ And what is its real purpose? Yet these questions need not be that difficult. Human nature is such that no man would see Christ if it were not for the fact that a floodlight was placed on the Saviour. Even then, our eyes would be and remain blind until they were opened by the renewing work of the Spirit of Christ. The Spirit was poured out after Christ had finished His work on earth so that we might benefit from Christ's work; yes more, so that fallen men might glorify this exalted Lord. Pentecost, then, is just as important in the history of salvation as is the incarnation or the resurrection or the ascension.

Having said that, it is also clear why we may be thankful that the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person. No one less than God Himself can free man from the snare of sin, can open the eyes of the spiritually blind. If the Holy Spirit were not Himself God, we would have no salvation. But as it is, even though Christ has left earth for heaven, we are not orphaned. "Immanuel" remains a reality, even after the Ascension. God the Spirit is with us, even dwells in our hearts, so that we might be enabled to behold the Lamb of God who

takes away the sins of the world. His identity makes His work possible.

Implications of the Holy Spirit's identity and activity

One hears the injunction rather frequently in our day that we are to be "filled with the Spirit." The suggestion is even this, that if one has not received a special filling of the Spirit — also referred to as the baptism of the Spirit — one is still missing something. I put it to you that being a Christian is synonymous to having the Spirit. To say that one has Christ is to say that one has the Spirit of Christ. To maintain that one is a Christian is to insist that one is filled with the Spirit. According to the Scriptures, it is the vital characteristic of every Christian that he is filled with the Spirit of his Saviour. Consider the following material.

Peter concluded his sermon on Pentecost day with the injunction that all should repent, and be baptized. To that command, the apostle, on the authority of the outpoured Spirit, appended a promise: "and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38ff). It is instructive to note that Peter does not speak of probabilities. The Pentecost audience is not told that they "might" receive the Holy Spirit. Rather, the consequence of repentance is guaranteed to be the reception of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Spirit in a believer is presented as being a matter of course.

The apostle Paul outlines the far-reaching consequences of being "justified by faith." Among these consequences, he makes mention of "the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Romans 5:5). Paul, just as Peter, records the Spirit's presence in a believer as a reality. Again, in Romans 8 the apostle is very specific: "Any one who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him" (verse 9). And to "belong to Christ" can be nothing else than being a Christian. To the believers in Corinth, Paul writes: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?" (I Corinthians 6:19). In another letter to these Christians, Paul writes in connection with our God-given hope of a "heavenly dwelling" that "He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee" (II Corinthians 5:5). Nor does John speak differently. "By this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us" (I John 3:24, cf 4:13).⁷

It would seem that these statements of Scripture speak for themselves. Undeniably, to be a Christian is to have the Spirit. The two are inseparable. That would mean also that a child of God need not seek the "fullness of the Spirit." He has that fullness. Nor are Christians to be

divided into two distinct groups, those who do have the Spirit, and those who do not. Such a distinction is not taught in the Word of God.

Actually, the fact that the Spirit is pleased to dwell in the hearts of each and every Christian also flows logically out of what is the task of the Spirit. If it is His work to focus the attention of men to Jesus Christ, how shall men be Christians apart from the Spirit? This testimony of Scripture that each Christian invariably is possessed by the Holy Spirit is further evidence of the validity of the thesis that the Spirit's central work is to focus the attention of sinners to Jesus Christ.

But if all Christians have the Holy Spirit — or, to be more precise, if the Spirit has all Christians; as if we could ever possess the Almighty Spirit of God! — then this reality must necessarily become apparent. There are few, who will deny that certain consequences must flow out of the presence of the Spirit. But differences arise as soon as one inquires *how* the presence of the Spirit becomes apparent. For there are those who say that this presence must be manifested in such things as speaking in tongues or having the ability to heal or be healed. Or it is the desire to run around and do all kinds of things for Christ. Yet that is not at all what we learn from the Word of God. The apostle Paul tells us what the fruits of the Spirit's presence are: "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Galatians 5:22ff). It is not doing all kinds of Christian activities that indicates the Spirit's presence; it is rather that one does God's commands in a certain manner. It is, as the apostle expresses it in another place, that one is renewed after the image of the Creator (Colossians 3:10). And who is it that has demonstrated to us what it is like to be renewed after the image of the Creator? That is no one else than the Lord Jesus Christ. Being filled with the Spirit manifests itself by the fact that a Christian is an imitator of Christ; he has a Christ-like character in his personal, everyday life. So it is that Paul can pen these words: "And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into His likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit" (II Corinthians 3:18).

Again, given that the Holy Spirit focuses the attention of sinners to Jesus Christ, it logically follows that those in whom He dwells will also draw attention to the Saviour. They will do so by their entire life-style. They not only behold the glory of the Lord; they also reflect the glory of the Lord.⁸ To maintain that the Spirit directs attention to the exalted Christ implies that one has to relegate the

same function to those in whom He dwells. Christians, just like the Spirit, glorify the Saviour (cf John 16:14).

That means also that speaking in tongues and healing are not to be considered the telltale marks of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will cause someone to speak in tongues only if glossolalia is needed in a given situation to draw attention to Jesus Christ. It is the fruits of the Spirit that are the telltale marks of the Spirit's presence.

We are ourselves thankful that we are permitted to be children of God. But let us then also carry through to the consistent consequence. To be Christians means to have the Spirit. To be possessed by the Holy Spirit implies that one leads a Christ-like life; due to the work of the Spirit within us, Christians are reflectors of the Son of God. Living in sin and being controlled by the Holy Spirit are contradictions. That entire section of the Heidelberg Catechism which deals with conversion, good works and the ten commandments (Lord's Day 32-44) is to be seen in the light of the Spirit's presence within us. These are all included in the fruits of the Spirit.

Furthermore, because the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to behold the exalted Saviour we must respond in fitting ways to the picture we are permitted to see. Inasmuch as an art buff cannot contain his delight because of the beauty revealed by a spotlight on a particular painting, so also a Christian, by definition, cannot remain silent about what the Spirit has allowed him to see in Christ. It is a consequence of being filled by the Holy Spirit that one is compelled to speak — each in his own place — about that glorious Saviour seated on heaven's throne. Call it what you will — evangelizing, home mission, speaking of the Lord, living as the image of Christ — it is a natural result of being filled with the Spirit of Christ. Because the Holy Spirit — true God — draws our attention to that redemption obtained for us by true God, it is not possible for a Christian — a person filled with the Spirit of God — to be cold to the Lord God. Enthusiasm for God is part and parcel of being filled with the Spirit — unless God can somehow deny Himself.

I do not wish to state that we lack severely the required enthusiasm for the Lord. But the fact may be considered established that we all are and remain sinful, we all continue to have need for improvement. So we do well to examine ourselves continually for evidence that we show the fruits of the presence of the Spirit of God within us. After all, we are able to quench the Spirit of Christ (I Thessalonians 5:19).

From the evangelical Christian world of today, one hears reports of congrega-

tions with great enthusiasm for the Lord; so great, in fact, that there is a burst of evangelizing activity. One hears also of overflowing happiness, expressed in a genuine love for each other and others. One hears of this joy in Christ being expressed by dancing and handclapping, not unlike David did when the ark was brought up to Jerusalem (II Samuel 6:14).

For whatever reason, we greet these reports with a measure of scepticism and tend to write them off as uncontrolled excesses in emotionalism.

One cannot deny that there are examples of excesses. But I would warn that we do not condemn an entire movement because of the excesses of some. If there is indeed this joy in the Lord and enthusiasm for His service — and that reality cannot be denied — then we are to recognize that the Holy Spirit is working in the world around us. The ways in which others worship God may strike us as somewhat strange — and they may need correction — but we do well not to stare ourselves blind on the shortcomings of fellow Christians. We might instead consider learning from their enthusiasm for the Lord. For one cannot deny — thankfully — that the Holy Spirit is doing His work of spotlighting the exalted Lord also outside of our circles.

I should like to conclude with a note of warning and encouragement. One hears sounds to the effect that one ought to be able to *feel* the presence of the Spirit. Whether or not one feels His presence is then made a criterion of whether or not one has the Spirit.

We noted that it is part and parcel of being a Christian that the Spirit of Christ dwells within a person. So, no Christian need rely on emotion in order to be convinced that the Spirit is near.

That, however, does not do away with the fact that one can at times wonder whether or not he really is filled with the Holy Spirit. This questioning can in turn even lead to the thought that one might not be a child of God after all.

In that context, I wish to draw your attention to the Canons of Dort. Chapter III/IV, a part of our confession that deals quite extensively with the work of the Holy Spirit, concludes with these words: "For grace is conferred through admonitions,

and the more readily we do our duty, the more this favour of God, who works in us, usually manifests itself in its lustre and the more directly His works proceed" (Article 17). One might fail to sense the presence of the Holy Spirit, but that ought not to discourage anyone; the Spirit *is* present. To become the more fully aware of the Spirits' presence, one has the duty to use the means which the Spirit has been pleased to use to mediate His presence. Those means include the diligent reading and study of the Word of God, as well as using the preaching of the Word and the sacraments as thoroughly as possible. That promise is fixed for us: as children of God in whom the Lord has been pleased to work faith, we may be sure that we have received the Holy Spirit. Such was His promise when we were baptized. The fact that we are allowed to be able to see Jesus, and the glorious work of redemption which He accomplished for us, is proof of the fact that to us has been given the Spirit of Christ. This Spirit, from eternity God Almighty, dwells in our hearts, as a guarantee that one day we shall again dwell with God Himself.

Our day focuses much attention on the Holy Spirit. It is well for us to know what the Lord has revealed concerning the third Person of the Trinity. But we are not to stare ourselves blind on the Spirit. He was not given so that we might look to Him. He was given in order to direct us to the exalted Christ. We grieve the Holy Spirit when we want to look into the floodlight, and neglect the lighted building.

C. BOUWMAN

⁵ Cf Packer, *Knowing God*, p. 72ff.

⁶ Cf de Graaf, *het Ware Geloof*, p. 404.

⁷ Cf Stibbs and Packer, *The Spirit Within You*, p. 12ff.

⁸ The verb translated by "behold" in II Corinthians 3:18 also means "reflect." The RSV recognizes the second possibility in a footnote to this passage.

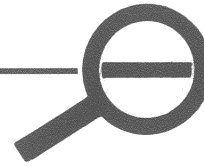
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OUR COVER

The old Laterrière Manor in the village of Les Eboulements, on route 362, 65 km northeast of Québec.

Photo courtesy:
Government of Québec



Rev. Hoorn deposed from his office

In February of this year, the consistory of the Church at Grootegast decided to depose its minister, Rev. Joh. Hoorn, from his office. *Christian Renewal* of May 6, 1985, printed the Dutch text of this decision. In translation, it reads:

The consistory of the Reformed Church at Grootegast, in its meeting of February 18, 1985, to its deep regret, feels the necessity to depose you from your office of minister of the Word with immediate effect.

The consistory came to this for you and for the congregation so deeply serious decision because you:

1.a. do not acknowledge that the consistory was right when it twice required from you a further declaration of your sentiments according to the 5th paragraph of the subscription form, and therefore refused to submit this declaration to it; and

b. do not acknowledge that, for that reason, you were rightly declared worthy of suspension and suspended, but apparently still are of the opinion that the consistory had the God-given calling to rescind your suspension, while the general Synod of Heemse 1984/1985 pronounced that you have not met the requirement of the consistory to submit a further declaration of your sentiments within the framework of the 5th paragraph of the subscription form and that on that ground you were rightly declared worthy of suspension and suspended;

2. you do not revoke your doctrine regarding Article 28 of the Belgic Confession, but on the contrary, maintain that doctrine and continue to defend and spread it, while the general Synod of Heemse 1984/1985 pronounced that in the sentiments of Rev. Hoorn, in an unacceptable manner, injustice is done to the broadness of Christ's work and God's mercy in the gathering of the church and that you therefore ought to revoke these sentiments publicly as in conflict with Scripture and confession.

The consistory submitted its judgment that you are worthy to be suspended to the classis Grootegast of January 24, 1985, in accordance with Article 79 C.O., as it informed you by sending you a copy of its letter to this classis; in its second session of February 15, 1985, this classis, with unanimous consenting advice of the deputies of the provincial Synod of Groningen, 1984, judged, like the consistory, that you were worthy to be suspended and ought to be suspended, about which

judgment the classis decided to inform you.

Are there believers outside the church?

Nederlands Dagblad of July 13, 1985, published an article about this matter, written by Rev. Dr. M.J. Arntzen. Parts of his article I take over in translation. We read:

... The burning question in this matter is whether there are sincere believers outside the (true) church, and whether the calling to join this (true) church is meant for those who are not (yet) a member of it or for those who are already members. Some think that Rev. Hoorn is of the opinion that those who are not members of the true church are outside salvation and cannot be saved either. This does not do justice to Rev. Hoorn. He certainly does not deny that there can be children of God outside the true church, but he constantly points out that we have to state the problems in a different way. We read in one of his brochures: "The Lord does not saddle us with problems of how it is possible that so many true believers do not become members of the church. That is a problem that we made up ourselves, with which in fact we place ourselves above others as if we should have distinguished ourselves from others and had ingrafted ourselves into the church." Now we have to admit that Rev. Hoorn in many instances writes in such a way that one gets very strongly the impression that there is no salvation but for members of the true church. Besides, we can say that this is not 'a problem that we made up ourselves.' It is the hard reality with which we are always again confronted. And not only we in our time are confronted with this question, also the reformers in the sixteenth century and the people of the Secession and the Doleantie in the nineteenth century were faced with it.

Rev. Hoorn wants to emphasize very much the unity of confessing in the articles 27-32 Belgic Confession and the unity in the entire confession. "Through the same faith through which a person is ingrafted into Christ and receives all His benefits, one is ingrafted into the Christian church and becomes a living member of it.

If I understand him correctly, Rev. Hoorn not only identifies the catholic church of Christ with the liberated Reformed Church-

es, but also comes to the conclusion that only members of these true churches can be true believers. The consequence of this reasoning is that those who are not members of these churches cannot be true believers either. According to Rev. Hoorn, those outside these churches do not have the true faith as this is confessed in the Three Forms of Unity, and as it is adopted and maintained in the Reformed Churches.

Over against this the Synod Heemse said, as quoted above, that "in the sentiments of Rev. Hoorn injustice is done, in an unacceptable manner, to the broadness of Christ's work and God's mercy in the gathering of the church." In the Acts of the Synod of Heemse, part I, page 128, sub II, 3 the synod describes Rev. Hoorn's view regarding the meaning of Article 28 Belgic Confession as follows: "He who does not belong to the gathering [of the true church, J.G.] is not a believer. (. . .) He who deserts is hopelessly lost. (. . .) He cannot excuse himself before God, he then finds the entire Word of God against himself. (. . .)"

The Synod Heemse decided to declare the views of Rev. Hoorn regarding the meaning of Article 28 to be in conflict with Scripture and confession, and refuted the above mentioned statements by saying (p. 129), "Such speaking does not breath the spirit of the Scriptures which show how God sometimes for centuries has been calling the apostate children to conversion . . . We find the same compassion in the Lord Jesus. He was rejected (Matthew 23:37) and even crucified. In spite of this, He continued to seek Jerusalem's children. (Luke 23:28, 34; Acts 1:8; 2-4) This has motivated not only the apostles (compare Romans 9:1-4 with Acts 28:17ff.), but also Calvin and de Brés, as well as Reformed people in the Act of Secession and Return, and in the Act of Liberation and Return to call those who stayed behind to the church. Thus the church in The Netherlands and abroad never has shut itself up on the thought that outside its boundaries no reformational work as result of God's grace could be found. On the contrary, in the Act of Secession and Return is spoken of the desire "to unite with every gathering which is based on God's Word," Cf. the union that took place in 1869 and especially in 1892. Always it has been acknowledged that the Lord, in His good pleasure, can work life, also ecclesiastical life that

has instituted itself in obedience, outside the boundaries of the church.

A matter of Article 28 Belgic Confession

But let us go back to the article of Dr. Arntzen. He continues with telling us about a fifth brochure of Rev. Hoorn in which he contends the pronouncements of the synod of Heemse. The discussion in this brochure deals specifically with Article 28 Belgic Confession Dr. Arntzen writes:

In this article it says that no one ought to remain by himself, but that all are called to join the (true) church. Directing questions on this point to Rev. Hoorn, the Synod of Heemse takes the stand that believers who do not (yet) belong to the church must join it. The synod has here certainly a long Reformed tradition on its side. Rev. Hoorn contends with this view. He maintains that this call is directed to those who are of the church, who are its members. (. . .)

Some passages of Scripture, brought forward by the synod and refuted as valid grounds by Rev. Hoorn, are mentioned by Dr. Arntzen. He then writes:

But the fact which the synod rightly defends is that the Lord can also call outside of Israel, which was the 'church' of those days. Also outside the borders of that O.T. church the Lord had those whom He knew. What else must we think of Naaman (II Kings 5:17,18)? In this light the pronouncement of Rev. Hoorn (. . .), "With His grace and peace, His salvation and redemption, the Lord dwells not outside the church but in her . . ." is too absolutistic.

As for the appeal to the history, the synod's stand is stronger than that of Rev. Hoorn. Synod points at the so-called Nicodemites, who were Reformed in their hearts, but remained in the Roman Catholic Church out of fear (Nicodemus was thought to have gone to Jesus in the night out of fear). Calvin called these people who were still *outside* the church to submit to the yoke of Christ

Very important is also that the synod asked Rev. Hoorn what, according to him, the relation is between the holy catholic Christian church, confessed in Article 27 Belgic Confession and the concretely visible (aanwijsbare) church gathering as this is confessed in its marks in Article 29 Belgic Confession. In his answer, Rev. Hoorn pointed at (one of his brochures) in which he stated that in the articles 27-32 constantly one and the same church is meant.

Rev. Arntzen, then, continues:

This, according to me, is the crucial point. Article 27 speaks somewhat differently about the church than Article 29. In the former, like in Answer 54 of the

Heidelberg Catechism the church is seen as the whole (not a total number, but the organic whole) of those who are chosen to eternal life. Article 29 deals more about the outwardly visible church, as it is manifest in its marks. These two do not cover each other completely.

This last paragraph caused a reaction. Rev. W.G. de Vries wrote two articles in *De Reformatie*, vol. 60, nrs. 44 and 45 (August 24 and 31, 1985) about the question "Are all believers member of the Church?" These articles will give us material for a next Press Review. The Synod of Cloverdale, 1985, of our Canadian Reformed Churches, said on this point that it is correct to state that all true believers are included in the church gathering work of Jesus Christ (*congregatio*), but that this does not mean that they are automatically also members of Christ's (true) church (*coetus*) (Acts, Article 166, C,3). But let us for now continue to listen to Dr. Arntzen.

In this connection the word of Augustine, that later on is quoted by Calvin, can be mentioned, namely that there are many sheep outside, and many wolves inside. It is remarkable how Rev. Hoorn explains these words. He refers to Calvin and says that these sheep are 'outside sheep' after the *concealed predestination of God*. (italics from Rev. Hoorn). Rev. Hoorn says that this means that they ['the outside sheep'] are not truly sheep whom we can recognize and address as sheep. We like to ask Rev. Hoorn whether those outside the Reformed Churches, who belong to the so-called Reformed family (gezindte) and who fight for a maintaining of the Reformed confession, or also a Baptist minister like Spurgeon who could open the Scriptures in such a wonderful way (even though we keep our objections) are not recognizable for us as sheep of the flock.

It strikes that so many are boldly criticized by Rev. Hoorn when he deals with the question whether there are believers outside the church Pronouncements of J. Douma, K. Schilder, Joh. Francke on this question are quoted. All these authors are weighed by Rev. Hoorn and then found to be too light.

Rev. Arntzen concludes on this point:

If one thinks that he has to go against a whole tradition, he has to show in a much clearer way than Rev. Hoorn does, that he has the confession and first of all the Scriptures on his side

The Dutch sister churches were right in rejecting the views and teachings of Rev. Hoorn.

Conclusion

The "case" of Rev. Hoorn has caused a renewed debate about the church as Scripture speaks about it and as we con-

fess it. This is a positive aspect. Not only the decision of the Synod of Heemse, but also the advisory report provides interesting study material. I have the impression that for Rev. Hoorn there is in The Netherlands only one true church, and that is the federation of the (liberated) Reformed Churches.

Let us be aware of the fact that our confession does not and cannot point at a specific denomination as being the true church of Jesus Christ. Our confession speaks about the church according to the Scriptures and maintains the norms of God's Word for the church by stating what the marks of the true church of the Lord are. Where a church shows those marks, it can and must be called a true church of Christ. Let us pray and work to remain such a true church of Christ. And let us seek the unity with all those who have the same faith.

J. GEERTSEMA

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OPSPORING ADRESSEN:

BREMER, A., geboren op 21 november 1917, gehuwd met E.M. POSTMA, naar Canada vertrokken op 16 mei 1950.

TEN BROEKE, Klaas E., geboren op 19 februari 1930, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Zeeweg 83, Overveen, naar Canada vertrokken op 10 augustus 1954.

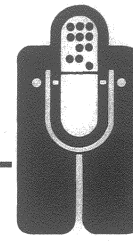
VAN DEN ENDE, Johanna Hendrika (of Hendrina), geboren op 8 oktober 1924 te Den Haag, naar Canada vertrokken op 13 mei 1953.

FEIJS-THORSCHMIDT, J. alsmede haar dochter M.H. FEIJS, geboren 19 september 1929 te De Bilt, naar Canada vertrokken op 10 september 1953.

GEBOERS, J.T.L., geboren op 5 januari 1913, gehuwd met J.A.M. VAN WETTEN, naar Canada vertrokken op 2 juli 1953.

GOORTS, W.J., geboren op 7 augustus 1918, gehuwd met H.C. MUNSTERS, naar Canada vertrokken op 13 juni 1950.

GORTHUIS, H.J., geboren op 29 augustus 1920, laatstbekende adres in Nederland: Heemskerckstraat 4, Zaandam, naar Canada vertrokken op 16 juni 1953.



Surprise!

Yes, you did not expect to see another news medley for awhile, did you? neither did I, but as we received a few bulletins in the meantime, and as there is plenty of time available right now, we thought it might be better to inform you about a few things which happened, also in connection with a question which we received some time ago. Remember the question about the now superfluous copies of the old *Book of Praise*? One of our sisters asked whether we knew a good purpose for which they could be used. We have found such a good purpose, but, let me mention this right away as well: the books should be in good shape, otherwise it would not be worthwhile to send them.

In our Australian sister Churches there is some activity going on with respect to Papua New Guinea. The Rev. Bruning of Armadale is in this region at present. This is the reason why yours truly has been asked to serve the Church at Armadale for some five months.

I could tell you quite a bit about this work, for the Rev. Bruning gives regular reports to the Church people in the periodical *Una Sancta*, but this is not the intention of our medley. Let me say that his work is mainly among the refugees from Irian Jaya, and that the reception which he received among these people is good and favourable. The situation in that country is not as peaceful as we might think. Robbery, attacks, and so on, are the order of the day. A curfew has been imposed by the authorities, and this seems to be of some help, as the situation appears to become more stabilized. Rev. Bruning's work is, however, hampered by these things. This may also become apparent from the following little part from one of his reports. He purchased a small "Toyota utility, cheap in petrol . . . can carry a few passengers for guidance and as body guards . . ."

Well, then, the Rev. Bruning could use old *Books of Praise* for his work among the Papuans. I do not know where they should be sent, but it might be wisest, in order to prevent double postage, to send them to: The Rev. K. Bruning, P.O. Box 4069, Boroko, Papua New Guinea. Let me stress once more that they should be in good shape, since the climate there is different from ours, and it would not be worth the effort and the cost to send books that are about to fall apart.

Now that we are speaking about Australia anyway, let me also tell you that the Rev. G. VanRongen has started a news medley in *Una Sancta*. He calls it "Bulletin Browsing." From his browsing we learn a few things concerning the Australian Churches. One thing becomes clear: the people, and especially the young people, are not any different from what they are here. One of the Church-bulletins contained the complaint that young people produce an excessive noise with the help of their cars after the gatherings of societies and catechism classes. Also in other respects there is great similarity.

The newly instituted Church at Byford reported that "with thankfulness the consistory noted that the Congregation as a whole are behind the proposal to come to the building of our Church." What is meant, of course, is that they are going to erect a Church building.

The Consistory of the Church at Kelmscott discussed the question of use of non-alcoholic wine with the celebration of the Lord's Supper, whereas the Church at Launceston, Tasmania, is working into the direction of a second Congregation. The same gratifying development which we also see in our own midst.

Another similar phenomenon is that we now read the same messages of general importance three times: in the bulletins of Armadale, Byford and Kelmscott, three Churches which are only a little farther from each other than the three Burlington Churches. It is with thankfulness that we may mention that these three Churches are seriously considering the publication of just one bulletin for all three Churches. That will be a big improvement, as everyone who receives the *Church News* of the Fraser Valley can testify. Especially when Churches have grown from one Church, there are bonds between the members, and all members love to be kept informed about what happens in the other Churches: they still feel like one big family. All this apart from the savings in time, effort and cost, since duplication is prevented and much less paper is wasted.

Rev. VanRongen mentions a decision by the Kelmscott Consistory regarding the singing of the Psalms. I will first give the relevant passage.

"Kelmscott's Consistory decided to adhere to the music as printed in the new *Book of Praise*, and referred to an item entered in the local bulletin by the organists. We are afraid, however, that in spite of all the efforts undertaken to draw the congregational members' attention to the new (rather: original, according to experts) setting of the Genevan tunes, church singing will be in confusion because the printing of the musical lines is incorrect. Our most recent experience originates from a service in Armadale, in which the organist, correctly, played the tune of Psalm 52 in three musical lines, but the congregation followed the way in which the six verses have been printed, namely in six lines. This seems to be a point for improvement in a second edition of the new *Book of Praise*. I hope these lines will be read by the proper 'authorities' in Canada!"

I cannot judge the correctness of the musical opinion expressed above, but pass it on, so that these proper "authorities" can take note of it. What I do know is that there is a great variety among opinions concerning the correct musical notation and way of playing and singing. Everyone who attends different Churches in the course of a year will have experienced this. Then I do not even speak about the various publications dealing with this topic.

There is another point to which I wish to draw the attention. I wonder greatly whether a decision to "adhere to the music as printed in the new *Book of Praise*" is really an ecclesiastical matter. For the time being I leave it at the question as such and will go no further than expressing grave doubts.

Herewith we take leave of Australia and return to Canada.

Did I express doubt concerning the correctness of a consistory decision in the above, I am positive that it is wrong what I read in a Canadian bulletin. Two consecutive sentences in a Consistory report read as follows. "Acts of Regional Synod are discussed and adopted. Acts of General Synod Cloverdale — adopted are articles 100-147."

Sorry, brethren, the Acts of the Regional Synod were adopted at that Regional Synod, and the Acts of Cloverdale were adopted at that Synod, as you may learn from the printed Acts.

A Consistory does not have to "adopt" them again or to consider whether they are acceptable to them. It sounds impressive, but is completely wrong.

Building activities are going on in our midst as well.

The Ottawa Church made an offer on a property for the erection of a Church building and a manse, but the offer was

rejected, and the property sold in the meantime. They keep looking for suitable locations.

In Orangeville the Committee of Administration came up with proposals concerning an addition to the Church building. There they have the same situation which we had in Fergus quite a few years ago: the Congregation became too large for the auditorium and we had lack of meeting facilities. This situation was remedied in Fergus many years ago. Now Orangeville is going to do the same.

The Church at Lynden, Wash., appointed a building committee consisting of three brothers.

In the Okanagan, the brothers and sisters are "looking for a new location in Vernon for our worship services. Several places have been viewed and we are awaiting word from a couple of places which would be suitable."

As almost all of the members in the Okanagan Valley live in or around Vernon, it stands to reason that they are looking in that neighbourhood, for now almost all members have to drive for more than half an hour to Winfield. We'll see what comes out of it.

Above we mentioned Fergus already.

Growth of the Congregation and growing up of children brings its own problems along. Especially during the celebration of the Lord's Supper the auditorium was crowded, as parents brought their children to the nursery as much as possible. A solution was found in the division of the Congregation into two parts and having two morning services on Sundays when the Lord's Supper is celebrated. Although it is not an ideal solution, it appears that it did work out quite well.

The Consistory also decided that "we will try to have one meeting a month with the deacons where general matters will be handled and at least one without where pastoral matters will be dealt with." Sterkte!

Although the press release of that classis South may be published well before you see this news medley, I do wish to pass on what Rev. Stam writes in the bulletin of Fergus.

"Classis also decided to receive into the federation of churches the American Reformed Church of Blue Bell, Pa., and we may gratefully note this milestone event! The discussion on this matter took some time, because the Blue Bell church had seceded from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church with which our Churches have a temporary contact relationship, and the question was how this admission would affect that relationship. Classis appointed a committee to draft a submission on this matter to the General Synod, so you will be probably be hearing more about this in the future. Meanwhile, another church, the Tri-County Reformed Church at Maryland has also requested

admission to our federation. I suspect that this matter will be resolved at a future date."

What I am wondering about is: Is it correct that a Classis appoints a committee to draft a submission to General Synod? Should this matter not come from a local Church? Let us watch out and not go into the direction of classes and regional synods coming with proposals to general synods. The material and proposals have to come from the *Churches*.

In spite of the rather limited number of bulletins received here at our present temporary address, we have been able to give you something to chew on. Keep munching.

Much to our regret we were forced to discontinue the practice of extending congratulations to couples who celebrated their fortieth or forty-plus wedding anniversary. Mailing problems, or irregular receipt of bulletins rendered it rather difficult to keep it up.

During the last few months there was some celebration in the circle of ministers and their families, and you will not take it ill of me that I make an exception here. Surely, this, too, comes like "mustard after the meal," as the Dutch saying goes, for it will be October when you read these lines, and I will be out of sight and reach, the Lord willing. Yet I wish to mention with gratitude that Rev. and Mrs. D. DeJong celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary and twenty-five years in the ministry; Rev. and Mrs. J. Mulder celebrated their thirty years in the ministry and the marriage state; and Rev. and Mrs. Werkman celebrated their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary. In the congregations where these brothers and sisters serve, each in their own capacity, these events were celebrated in a proper manner as the bulletins tell us. May our belated congratulations be added to those which they have already received and may they all be assured of our prayers for the continued grace and mercy of the Lord upon them, their work and families, and their pathway into the future.

This, really, is the last medley before we take off for "down under." Visa, tickets, and all other things necessary are in our possession. Be assured that we shall think of you all even though we are twelve hours ahead of Ontario and fifteen hours ahead of British Columbia. Thoughts, fortunately, are not bound by place or time-zones. And prayers come all together in one place and are heard at the same time, irrespective of place or time, language or country.

We commend you all into the faithful care of our heavenly Father.

Shalom!

VO

With common consent

This speech was delivered by Rev. W.W.J. Van Oene at the thirteenth convocation of the Theological College, Hamilton, Ontario, Friday September 27, 1985.

It cannot be denied that until the appearing of our complete *Book of Praise* the knowledge of our Church Order was rather limited among us. It was in 1978 that the Deputies of our Dutch sister churches wrote in their report to their General Synod of 1978, "One thing has become

clear in the course of our work . . . : the eminent significance of the knowledge of the Church Order for the peace, the edification, and the continuation of Reformed Church life. It would, therefore, be very useful if the Church Order were accessible to office-bearers as well as to

common church members."¹

Thankful that, at least as far as the Canadian Reformed Churches are concerned, this availability of the Church Order has become a fact, we must nevertheless express doubt about the knowledge of it. How many church

members have read it, studied it, and discussed it?

An impediment for the last-mentioned action may be found in the fact that, generally speaking, various commentaries on the Church Order lean in a direction which cannot be ours, and that those which could be recommended are not available in the English language. May this impediment, too, be removed in due time.

It will not be a surprise to you that the topic for this address has been taken from the field of Church Polity. This was one field which had been entrusted to me by the churches during the years I was privileged to be a lecturer at our Theological College, and it appeared to be a fitting official conclusion of this mandate to pay special attention to it in what may be called a farewell address.

Whoever reads up on various works dealing with the Church Order soon comes to the conclusion that there appears to be a great variety of opinions and even much confusion on many points.

One of the main points about which opinions differ greatly and about which we notice quite some confusion are the position, rights, jurisdiction and restrictions given to the broader or major assemblies and the stand which consistories are to take with respect to the decisions of these major assemblies. What must a consistory do when a major assembly has made a decision? Does a consistory have the right to ignore such a decision or is it obligated to follow it up? Does such a decision become binding upon a consistory as soon as it has been made or only after a consistory has examined it and found it to be acceptable? And irrespective of the question whether it is binding right away or becomes binding only after a consistory has approved of it: what is the ground on which it becomes binding upon a consistory? Is this an assumed or real authority of the major assembly or is it the decision by the consistory itself so that one consistory may accept it, while another consistory may reject it? What is, in other words, the nature of the church federation?

These questions cannot be answered unless we have a good understanding of what our Church Order is: its character, its place, its authority.

It is for this reason that your attention is asked for an address on the topic: **WITH COMMON CONSENT — SOME REMARKS ON THE NATURE AND AUTHORITY OF OUR CHURCH ORDER.**

Everyone who hears this title has undoubtedly recognized the words “with common consent” as having been taken from Article 76 of our Church Order, the first sentence of which reads, “These ar-

ticles, which regard the lawful order of the church, have been adopted with common accord,” or consent. And since they have been adopted with common accord or consent, they can be changed only with common accord or consent, says the same article.

There is, to my knowledge, no controversy concerning the point that the articles can be changed only by a general synod. The differences arise in answers to the question what the value of these articles, of this Church Order, is.

For clarity’s sake we shall have to describe some of the opinions which have been expressed. In doing so, we must bear in mind that one can “prove” almost any point with quotations, for there is hardly any thought or idea, however strange, that cannot be found in one form or another in writings from earlier days. In this respect we must remember and quote with agreement one sentence from a book which contains much with which we have to disagree: “It is easy to prove that similar ideas were sustained in the past; but it is difficult to prove that similar ideas were correctly sustained in the past.”²

Our Church Order has been adopted with common accord.

Dr. F.L. Rutgers describes the situation as it was at the first General Synod of the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands, the one held at Emden in 1571.

“The Synod of Emden was not convened before all churches of the Dutch nation which could be consulted in any way, not only those in Germany, but also those in England; not only those in the dispersion, but also the churches under the cross in the fatherland had all without exception declared themselves in agreement with this matter, and had declared that they were prepared to cooperate.”³

Matters did not go all that smoothly, Rutgers tells us. There was also opposition which had to be overcome, opposition of brothers who said, “These are nothing but human institutions.”³

Still, the Church Order was adopted with common accord. This does not mean that there were no differences of opinion, but the Church Order was not imposed upon any church and there was no lording it over one another. “Nothing was imposed upon anyone, but all voluntarily adopted the Church Order which had been fixed by the majority. Therefore it could ultimately be said that the Church Order and the articles have been fixed and adopted with common accord.”⁴

Why did the brothers seek each other and why did they agree to cooperate? Why did they seek the bond with each other and form a federation of churches? Did they do so because “organizing is in a man’s blood?” Is it cor-

rect to state that “It is also necessary if one wishes to uphold something. The Roman Empire needed a strict organization to stay alive . . . Organizing is reaching for power, influence, efficiency . . . Also behind ecclesiastical organization there has always been a striving for power.” Or was there, perhaps, a care for the safety and continued existence of the churches “proceeding from doubt whether Christ and His Word offered sufficient guarantees for the safety of His church?” Or, worse, does “in fact, accepting the Church Order as binding amount to an effort on our part to chain Christ and the Holy Spirit to human institutions?”⁵

We would rather side with those who state that “the unity of these churches consisted first of all, yea actually solely, in the common confession. The church federation rested on that confession.”⁶

Was it not the intention of the brothers who came together there in Emden in 1571 at that first synod of the liberated churches, to be confirmed in the unity of faith? And was it not for that very same reason that, having expressed their condemnation of the Romish hierarchy and hierarchical system by declaring that no church shall lord it over any other church, not any office-bearer over other office-bearers — was it not for that very reason of being confirmed in the unity of faith that they decided to subscribe to the Confession of Faith in the Netherlands churches and to do the same with the confession of the French churches, requesting the French churches to do likewise?⁷ A truly Reformed church federation does not find its unity in the organization but in the unity of faith; their bond is not a bond of convenience, born from a desire to stand stronger by combining forces and thus to be a power to be reckoned with. Nor did they seek one another because need and distress drove them towards each other.

We, therefore, also have to disagree with the statement that “History teaches that the organized church federation was born from the need of the churches, at least as far as the sixteenth century is concerned. The troubles in the various congregations were many.”⁸

And if the desire for closer contact and mutual assistance was inspired by need, it was the need and the desire to stand strong over against the evil one, the prince of darkness. Over against the evil one, however, no strength of organization will ever avail anything, only the unity of faith and the humble submission to the Word of God. Subscription to the confessions, therefore, was an immediate condition which has been maintained ever since that first General Synod of Emden 1571.⁹

Acknowledging the unity of faith and the bond in Christ, the Reformed Churches sought each other to express this unity of faith in a closer cooperation and mutual assistance. They entered into a church federation. Perhaps we should say rather, "They *continued* the federation of churches, of those which had broken free from the Romish yoke, and now had to build up their concept of such a federation from scratch."

In the days of the Reformation the question of the church federation was a question of prime importance.¹⁰ Rutgers writes, "Whether one deplores it or acclaims it, whether one wishes to promote it or to oppose it, the issue is the question what the nature of the church federation of the Reformed Churches is."

This very same question, Kamphuis writes, was the issue in the battle against the Regulation of 1816. We add: It was the same matter that was the issue in the days of the Liberation of 1944 and following years. Yes, we maintain that also today the answer to the question what the nature of the truly Reformed federation of churches is, is decisive not only for the Church Polity but also for the churches' behaviour towards one another and for their freedom and well-being, their whole position also towards the outside world.

The truly Reformed church federation and the truly Reformed Church Polity are unique in this world. To our knowledge, one would look in vain for a similar phenomenon.

What kind of a federation did the Reformed Churches in The Netherlands establish or continue? What was — and is — its nature?

It is not our intention at the present moment to trace its origin or to investigate in how far they followed the concept of John Calvin or the example of the French churches. We simply start from the federation as they had it after having cast off the Romish yoke and ask, "What was its nature?" We already mentioned their condemnation of a hierarchical order in the first article of what later was to be called the Church Order. How did they then organize their living together within one federation?

Some are of the opinion that a Reformed church federation is to be constantly on the lookout that it avoid all hierarchy on the one side, while it is to stay away from independentism on the other side. Could we, for example, express agreement with the following statement which forms the concluding paragraph of a study on the "Authority of the Major Assemblies?" "In this manner we have tried in this brief study to show to the Reformed Churches the *aurora via media*, i.e. the golden middle road, between Independentism and the Romish

hierarchy. May they, then, also be on guard that neither by underestimating the church federation on the one hand, nor by overestimating it on the other hand, they forfeit the blessing of the authority of the major assemblies."¹¹

This study began with the following paragraph. "The question what the 'authority' of the major assemblies is, is of lasting importance for the healthy development of our ecclesiastical life. The grave danger which threatens our Reformed ecclesiastical life throughout all times is, in church-political respect, found in independentistic licentiousness on the one hand, and in hierarchical bonds on the other hand; for the stream of our ecclesiastical life steadily moves on between these two cliffs. Whoever tries to evade the one is in danger of hitting the other."

While maintaining our great respect for the knowledge of the author, we must, at the same time, express total disagreement with his statements. Is Reformed Church Polity indeed like walking on a tightrope, with the chasm of hierarchy on the one side and the abyss of independentism on the other side? Is a truly Reformed church federation like sailing through turbulent waters, trying with utmost skill to avoid the Scylla of hierarchy as well as the Charbdis of independentism while constantly running the risk of coming too close to the one while trying to avoid the other?

We do not hesitate to call such a statement pure nonsense. A false dilemma is created. We might even ask whether the one who sees this dilemma has a correct understanding of what truly Reformed Church Polity is. With their church federation our forefathers did *not* choose a path which avoided extremes and guarded against excesses. They organized their federation as they believed it to be most fully in accordance with the Word of their God.

It cannot be denied that they made mistakes, both in the formulation of their Church Order and in their application of its provisions or their yielding to the wishes of the civil authorities. But our question and the point is not where they went wrong or whether they always held on to and acted in accordance with their concept. Our question is whether in their federation they tried to avoid extremes or followed their own, specific pattern which is not a golden middle road, but a completely different course.

In answer to this question we are to maintain the specific, unique character of the Reformed church federation and of Reformed Church Polity. And of one who introduces or falls into the trap of hierarchy we are *not* to say that he went too far to the one side in his efforts to avoid in-

dependentism, but that he has left the Reformed path. The same is to be said of anyone who promotes independentistic ideas: in his aversion to hierarchy and his efforts to avoid it, he is not just leaning a little too far to the other side, but he has left the Reformed path.

It would lead us too far from our immediate topic if we pursued this point further and made it more concrete by pointing out where these desertions can be found also with some with whom we were one at one time.

With the organization of their federation and their Church Polity our forefathers acted in accordance with what they — and we — confessed in Article 32 of the Belgic Confession: "We believe that, although it is useful and good for those who govern the church to establish a certain order to maintain the body of the church, they must at all times watch that they do not deviate from what Christ, our only Master, has commanded."

Let there be no misunderstanding.

Article 32 of our Belgic Confession does *not* refer to the provisions for the church federation. What we confess here in Article 32 Belgic Confession applies to the local church, for there we find "those who govern the church," and nowhere else.

Yet we may say that our forefathers endeavoured to put into practice federally as well that which they confessed to be the code for their conduct locally.

When meeting with the purpose of helping and assisting each other in their struggle to remain faithful to the Lord and His Word, the churches also agreed upon the conditions on which they were going to live together and to maintain this bond.

No one forced them to do so and no one imposed anything on them. "The nature of the federation is, juridically speaking, contractual."¹² The persons who established the federation and adopted the provisions for living together within it — later called the Church Order — had been delegated by the churches, "i.e. the Netherlands churches under the cross and those that are dispersed in Germany and East Friesland, and in these persons those churches themselves were therefore gathered together there."¹³ Besides, "At least in the first period it was customary that the Church Order, after having been fixed, was again adopted in the minor assemblies. Seemingly this was superfluous and even strange. Yet, when considered well, it was very effective, in order that the common consent should become the more evident. The already adopted order was then ratified, so to speak, precisely by those who had been the principals of the Synod."¹⁴

The voluntary character of the church federation and of the adoption of

the Church Order is acknowledged by all who understand what Reformed Church Polity is all about. Only when one continues in the non-Reformed hierarchical line can one come to the following statement. "However, the church federation does not rest on the basis of voluntary combination for mutual edification and preservation. It rests first of all on divine command. The mutual agreement of the churches to the formation of the church federation is not an arbitrary act. It does not depend on the churches whether they will form the federation or not. This agreement is urging on the part of God, obedient submission to His will."¹⁵ This "conclusion" is to refute the voluntary nature of the church federation and, consequently, is to serve as an argument for the alleged authority of broader assemblies.

The author's judgment about Rutgers and Dr. H. Bouwman of Kampen is not very favourable either. Speaking about Rutgers and Bouwman, van der Linde writes, "Thence that in this respect with Rutgers as well as with H. Bouwman traces of conflicting thoughts are found time and again. On the one hand they maintain the institution of major assemblies as ordained by Christ and that they are clothed with authority. On the other hand, the voluntary basis on which the church federation is supposed to rest, is so emphasized that major assemblies are necessary for mere reason of usefulness, and that depends then on the extent to which the local churches transfer authority to them."¹⁶

The major assemblies are then said to have their own authority, given to them by Christ. This can then be called a "delegated authority"¹⁷ or it may even be claimed that "the major assemblies have their own original authority which has been given to them by Christ."¹⁸

Such a stand leads necessarily to a limping with two different opinions and to showing the dexterity of a tightrope walker without coming to a clear and positive stand. It is and remains a balancing act.

Proof of such a balancing act is given by van der Linde himself when he writes, "As governing bodies, instituted upon divine command and composed of delegated office-bearers, they have an original authority. And this authority, in matters which belong to the major assemblies, is greater than that of the individual consistories.

"The major assemblies, however, are not seated on thrones hierarchically above the consistories. They have a serving and helping authority which is not permitted to push aside the authority of the consistories. The consistory and the major assemblies each have their own field of church government. The one may not

intrude upon the field of the other. That major assemblies intervene in matters of the local consistory is only because either the consistory itself, in its impotence, asks for it or a minority of the consistory or a member requests such intervention via an appeal, or when a consistory is unfaithful to its calling and unwilling to fulfil it. With such intervention by the major assemblies — which could lead to the deposition of a consistory or of some consistory members by the major assembly involved — one cannot speak of a church or churches lording it over another church. The issue also in this case is the recognition of the kingship of Christ in each church by the consistories. And by virtue of the unity of the church in Christ the consistories have to take heed to one another, so that each member of the body be governed according to the will of the King. Also the major assemblies have such a share of the church government unto edification and preservation of the church until the return of Christ."¹⁹

Here a semblance of Reformed Church Polity is preserved, but it is no more than a semblance: a hollow shell; or worse: a shell with corrupt material hidden in its dark interior; a whitewashed sepulchre.

The idea of alleged transfer of authority by consistories to major assemblies renders it impossible to abide by the basic rules of Reformed Church Polity. And although one who cherishes this idea may still call his concept Reformed, Reformed it certainly is not.

We pass over the wrong notion that a consistory grants authority to a major assembly every time credentials are written. When credentials are written, a consistory authorizes its own delegates to speak and decide on its behalf at the classis to be held. *IF* there was an occasion when a major assembly received authority from the consistories — but it did not — it was when the church federation was formed and when the churches, indeed, of their own volition, solely on the basis of the unity of faith, sought each other for mutual support and consultation.

According to some, the churches did give up some of their autonomy when they formed a federation. Writes Dr. jur. Hermann Esler von Hoffmann, "At the founding of the Dutch national church until now fully autonomous congregations of the newly to be instituted organization . . . submitted themselves to the ecclesiastical power. Only this submitting gave to the authorities that ruled the total church the right to exercise an authority over the individual congregations . . . This submission worked permanently: it was not in the freedom of the individual congregation to obey the one synod but not to submit itself to the next one."²⁰

One more quotation which shows that the writer did not grasp the character of the church federation and the nature of the seeking of communion by the various Reformed Churches. It is incredible how someone can write the following of the recently Liberated churches:

"In the first period of the Dutch church only the congregation was able to realize the idea of the rightly organized church. Its own character was not changed after the introduction of the synodical organization. It was still the cultic community of Reformed Christians governed by the consistory. But it *alone* was now no longer able to present the idea of the true church. Many of the consistory's powers-to-govern were now transferred to the higher organs, powers which were exercised by synods that stood above the separate congregations."²¹

— To be continued

¹ Quoted by G. VanRongen, *The Church Order of Dordrecht as revised by the Synod Kelmscott 1983 of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia and Commented on by*, 1984, unpublished manuscript, p. 6.

² K. Doornbos, *Kerk-zijn en in-de-Kerk-zijn*, Buijten en Schipperheijn, Amsterdam 1962, p. 146.

³ Dr. F.L. Rutgers, *De Geldigheid van de oude kerkenordening der Nederlandsche Gereformeerde Kerken, met aantekeningen en actenstukken*, Uitgeverij Ton Bolland, voorheen H.A van Bottenburg N.V., Amsterdam 1971, p. 15.

⁴ Dr. F.L. Rutgers, *Verklaring van de Kerkenordening van de Nationale Synode van Dordrecht van 1618-1619. College Voordrachten van Prof. Dr. F.L. Rutgers over Gereformeerd Kerkrecht, bewerkt en uitgegeven door Dr. J. de Jong*, Deel IV. Gedrukt bij Drukkerij Libertas, Rotterdam, 1918, p. 180.

⁵ M.R. van den Berg, *De Gekerkerde Kerk*, Buijten en Schipperheijn, Amsterdam 1969, pp. 27, 45, 69.

⁶ Jhr. Mr. A.F. de Savornin Lohman en Dr. F.L. Rutgers, *De Rechtsbevoegdheid onzer plaatselijke kerken*, second printing, Amsterdam, J.A. Wormser, 1887, p. 25.

⁷ Acts Synod of Emden, Article 2.

⁸ I. de Wolff, *De plaats van het kerkverband in Schrift en History*, Uitgeverij J. Boersma, Enschede, n.d.; pp. 27, 28.

⁹ Article 26 Church Order.

¹⁰ See J. Kamphuis in the Preface to Dr. F.L. Rutgers, *De Geldigheid . . .*, XVI, XV.

¹¹ Joh. Jansen, *De bevoegdheid der meerdere vergaderingen*, J.H. Kok, Kampen, n.d. but most likely 1924, see p. 64.

¹² De Sav. Lohman en Rutgers, op. cit., p. 178.

¹³ Rutgers, *De Geldigheid . . .* p. 17.

¹⁴ Op. cit., p. 24.

¹⁵ Dr. G.P.L. van der Linde, *Die grondbeginsels van die Presbiteriale Kerkregeringstelsel*, Pro Rege-Pers Beperk, Potchefstroom, 1965, p. 137.

¹⁶ Op. cit., p. 129

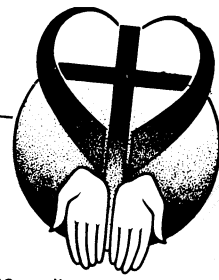
¹⁷ E.g. the Church Order of the Christian Reformed Church, Article 27.

¹⁸ Van der Linde, op. cit., p. 193.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ Dr. jur. Hermann Esler von Hoffmann, *Das Kirchenverfassungsrecht der niederländischen Reformierten bis zum Beginne der Dordrechter Nationalsynode von 1618/19* Leipzig, Verlag von C.L. Hirschfeld, 1902, p. 159.

²¹ Op. cit., p. 161.



CRWRF



pany very much. As women all over the world do! They share funny and sad stories, encourage each other and receive a sense of pride from their work and income. Peter never sits still either! There are sample books with designs to be made for the stores and the villages, contacts to be made, supplies to be given out, new products to be sewn . . . In between these activities he has tried making lamps with local carpenters and lampshades with the women's embroidery. Now he'll see if the Shantals can improve their basket weaving and try also to frame some of the larger stitched pieces. No time to be bored! It is the hot-wet season. We don't mind it too much because rain means a few hours of cool before things steam up again. Our home is well shaded by trees and it sure helps!

Dear Family & friends; Bogra 22-8-85

Margaretha is 3½ months old. She can roll over, speak and play tricks! She is a lovely, happy baby. Lying in the crib her legs and arms are in perpetual motion and her eyes dance with delight.

Greetings! Whenever a piece of embroidery passes through my hands these days I can picture a young woman in the village bending over her handwork. She sits on a bamboo mat in the doorway of her father's mud hut. Beside her, hanging from a nail are the colourful rayon threads she uses for the embroidery. The woman's sari is a worn green. Her face is young and thin. She plies her needle swiftly through the three layers of muslin. The lines are straight and beautiful. The young woman is not distracted by the children who run over her porch nor by the gossiping chatter of neighbours. Only when her 2-year-old boy lets out a howl does she pause for a moment to give him the breast and then she continues to sew.

Geraldine junior's favourite question is "now going to Canada, today?" Yes the time is only months now. For Peter that means hurrying to get everything done. I am looking forward to joining family and friends and stepping out of purdah!

When the village women noticed that I took an interest in this girl they were ready to provide the information; "She's the best sewer!" "Her husband deserted her." "Her father is a poor farmer." "This child she was pregnant with when her husband left." "We are not sad he left. He beat her. But who will feed them now?"

We appreciate your letters very much. For a few minutes our thoughts fly over the miles to your homes and your lives. We are encouraged by your support and have received the blessings of your prayers.

The stories of desertion, divorce, illness and misfortune among village women would make one lose hope unless you look upon the beautiful traditional handwork these same women can produce. And that is what we are trying to encourage.

Our prayers are with you as well as a new season of school, societies, meetings and-so-on begins. Remember the women of our groups as we try not only to extend our help but share the words of hope that motivate us.

In His care,
Geraldine, Peter,
Geraldine, & Margaretha
Ysselstein



Gifts for the work of CRWRF may be directed to:

CRWRF
PO Box 793
Burlington, ON L7R 3Y3

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

Peter has initiated three sewing groups in the Khonjhopur area with a sewing centre for supplies, tailoring at the mission of the churches of God. The majority of the women are Christian Shantals but there are Hindus and Muslims involved as well. They learn the work quickly from a teacher and the finished embroidery piece is sewn into a finished product: dress, cosmetic bag, overnight case, child's purse, coin purse. When the women receive their piece rate they are encouraged to invest in their own savings committee. The next step is to learn to sign their name and learn simple mathematics for all the transactions = Functional Literacy. Some women may be able to stay all day and sew, while others can only sew between the household and agricultural tasks.

The women, when they meet together, enjoy the com-



Hello Busy Beavers,

What a nice pile of letters I had from you!
 It was just great!
 It's always good to hear how you are doing.
 And I want to thank you for all the quizzes and pictures
 and poems you sent in to share with the other Busy Beavers.
 It's great to keep busy yourself and to share fun things
 to do with others!
 So let's hear from you!

Remember, I have a new address now.

*Aunt Betty
 c/o Clarion*

Premier Printing Ltd.

1249 Plessis Road, Winnipeg, MB R2C 3L9

November will soon be here!

Let's all join in wishing the Busy Beavers celebrating a
 November birthday a very happy day and many happy returns!
 May the Lord bless and keep you in the coming year. Here's
 hoping you have a great time celebrating with your family and
 friends!

NOVEMBER

Jennifer Stam	2	Wesley Werkman	13
Michelle Medemblik	5	Kerri-Anne Wierenga	14
Tammi Pieterman	6	John Linde	15
Alex Meerstra	11	Sheryl Linde	15
Julia Jonker	12	Peter John Sikkema	15
Ken Stam	12	Shawn Veenendaal	16
Aimee Jagt	13	Karen Vandergaag	21
Michael Schouten	13		



Decoration by Busy Beaver *Vanessa DeJong*

From the Mailbox

Welcome to the Busy Beaver Club *Wesley Werkman*. We are happy to have you join us. I see you are a real Busy Beaver joining in our Contest. Keep up the good work, Wesley!

I'm glad you had a good time camping in spite of the weather, *Sheila Wierenga*. Yes, I had a lovely summer, too, thank you. How did your pressed leaves turn out, Sheila?

Sounds to me as if you had a very nice holiday *Pearl Vandeburg!* Can you think which was the best part? Bye for now. Write again soon.

How did you enjoy your holidays, *Carol Witteveen*? Where did you go? Write and tell us how you like High School, will you, Carol?

What a good swimmer you are *Erica Moesker!* Swimming is great, right? Did you have a good time at your uncle's wedding? Bye for now, Erica. Thanks for the word search.

What did you like best at "Saint Mary among the Hurons" *Geraldine Schenkel*? That's a good thing to think about when you have a "boring" job to do, right? I do hope you get a pen pal soon, Geraldine!

Hello *Alice Van Woudenberg* and *Jennifer Siebenga*. It was nice to hear from you again. Thanks very much for the pretty pictures! Bye for now.

How did you enjoy your holidays, *Betty Bergsma*? And where did you go? Did you make a nice card for your sister's birthday? Thanks very much for the picture, Betty.

I like the names you gave your bunnies *Terri-Lynn Schulenberg*. How are they doing? Sounds to me as if you had a very good summer, Terri-Lynn. Bye for now. Write again soon.

What was the best part of camping, for you, *Teresa Oosterhoff*? Sounds to me as if you had a very busy summer, too! Did you swim at all, Teresa?

BUSY BEAVERS we need a pen pal for:

Geraldine Schenkel (Age 11)

RR 2

Hamilton, ON L8N 2Z7

RIDDLES FOR YOU

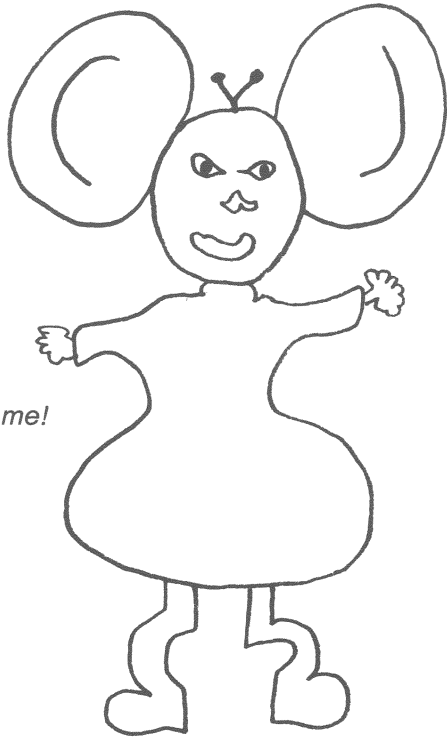
from Busy Beaver *Debbie Jagt*

1. Why is a coat like a baby?
2. Why is the Supreme Court like the Arctic?
3. There are 10 of us in automobile but only 3 in car? What are we?
4. There were 99 people in a boat. It turned over. How many are left?
5. Why is a hat like Saturday and Sunday?

Answers:

1. One you wear, the other you were. 2. One is justice, the other is just ice. 3. letters 4. 66 (99 turned over) 5. It is the weak end.

Skimpy



Colour me!

By Busy Beaver Geraldine Schenkel

How about using Geraldine's picture to make a funny birthday card?

Quiz Time!

NUMBERS (Use your Bible)

Do you know the right numbers to fill the blanks?

1. "So God blessed the _____ day and hallowed it"
2. "But on the _____ day of the week, at early dawn, they went to the tomb"

3. "Now it happened in the month of Chislev, in the _____ year, as I was in Susa the capital" Clue: this man was a cupbearer.
4. "And the Lord called Samuel again the _____ time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said "Here I am"
5. "In the _____ year of Noah's life, in the _____ month, on the _____ day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of heaven were opened."
6. "Now from the _____ hour there was darkness over all the land until the _____ hour."
7. "The _____ book of Moses, called Deuteronomy."
8. "And he said, "Do it a _____ time"; and they did it a _____ time. And he said, "Do it a _____ time," and they did it a _____ time. And the water ran round about the altar, and filled the trench also with water.
9. But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the _____ day since this happened.
10. ". . . men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they are not hurt; and the appearance of the _____ is like a son of the gods."

(Answers next time)

WORD SEARCH

by Busy Beaver Chad Pieterman

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

Look for:

- grey
- green
- queen
- lazy
- quick
- red
- back
- reptile
- watch

Bye for now, Busy Beavers.
 Hope to "see" you all next time!

Love,
 Aunt Betty

With thankfulness to the Lord who has created all things, we announce the birth of our second child, a son

NATHAN HENDRIK ADRIAN

Born August 29, 1985
 A brother for *Dina*.

Henry and Joanne Kok
 (nee Dieleman)

50 Ruddington Avenue, Apt 205
 Willowdale, ON M2K 2J8

Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

Psalm 103:2

With great joy we received out of God's fatherly Hand

JANTIENE HENDRIËTTE

P.K. Meijer
 A.J. Meijer - Hoekzema
 Janette is a sister of *Jan Pieter* and *Kees*.

August 22, 1985
 Maragogi, AL, Brazil 57955

We thank our heavenly Father who heard our prayers and, at His own time, entrusted into our care one of His covenant children. We have named our beautiful daughter:

CANDICE CORNELIA

Born: September 5, 1985
 Her happy parents:
 Case and Helen VandenHaak
 (nee Lodder)

PO Box 1333, 1310 Pelham St. S.
 Fonthill, ON LOS 1E0

With thankfulness to the LORD, the Creator and Giver of life; we announce the birth of our son:

BRYAN GREGORY

Born: September 12, 1985

James and Cathy Feenstra
(nee Jelsma)

1321 Brant Street, #6
Burlington, ON L7P 1X7

With thanks to the Giver and Sustainer of life, we announce the birth of our third child:

COLIN ANDREW

Born: July 7, 1985

A brother for: *Reuben and Warren*
Clarence and Yvonne Winkelaar
(nee Driegen)

39376 Wellsline Road, RR 2
Abbotsford, BC V2S 4N2

We thank our heavenly Father for blessing us with another covenant child.

Psalm 139

BENJAMIN LEO GELDERMAN

Born: August 29, 1985

Brother for: *Valerie, Michelle,*
Aileen, Jan

Hank and Jacoba Gelderman
(nee Post)

831 Centre Road, General Delivery
Waterdown, ON L0R 2H0

Thankful to the Lord, Giver of life, we are pleased to announce the birth of our first child, a son:

BRADLEY JOHN

Born: July 16, 1985

His proud parents are:

Martin and Leona Bredenhof
(nee Dam)

3877-184th Street, Surrey, BC

With thankfulness to our heavenly Father, we wish to announce our engagement:

JANE BOSSCHER

and

HENRY VOS

September 5, 1985

295 Pine Cove Road
Burlington, ON L7N 1W1

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Mr. and Mrs. Rosehart are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter:

SHARON ARLENE

to

MR. MARVIN JOSEPH VAN SPRONSEN

on Saturday November the second, The Lord willing, at 2:30 p.m. in the Aldershot Presbyterian Church at Burlington, ON

On September 26, 1985, the Lord willing, we will celebrate with our parents:

LUUT and AAFKE HAAN (nee Bos)

their 40th Wedding Anniversary. May the Lord keep them in His care in the coming years as He has in the past. With much love and our best wishes from your children and grandchildren.

Exeter, ON: Hank and Ruth Haan

Annette, Leslie, Ryan, Jerry

Strathroy, ON: Don and Helen Haan

Shelley, Micheal

Sarnia, ON: Dick and Tina Bouterse

Richard, Sandra

Strathroy, ON: Ralph and Ineke Haan

Monique, Bryan

Watford, ON: Don and Irene VanGorkum

Deanna, Kimberly, Rebecca

Goderich, ON: Willie and Dorothy Haan

Michele, Matthew

London, ON: Henry and Yvonne Beldman

Danielle, Joshua, Amy

Strathroy, ON: Jack and Nellie Haan

Amanda, Jeffery

Thamesville, ON: Louis and Carolyn Haan

Stacey

Home address: RR 5, Strathroy, ON N7G 3H6

Mr. and Mrs. Henk Hofsink of Coaldale, Alberta, are pleased to announce the marriage of their daughter,

REGINA ALEIDA

to

JOHN EDWARD

son of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Gansekoele of Fergus, Ontario.

The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on Friday, October 11, 1985 at 7:00 p.m. in the Canadian Reformed Church at Coaldale, Alberta.

Rev. J.D. Wielenga officiating.

Future address:

#5 - 260 Grand Place Drive, Fergus, ON

Christian lady in late twenties would like to meet sincere Christian gentleman in late twenties to mid-thirties. I am a member of a Canadian Reformed Church, live in rural Alberta, divorced, lonely, and have young children in need of a father.

All replies will be answered and held confidential. Send photo if possible. If interested please reply to:

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1249 Plessis Road
Winnipeg, MB R2C 3L9

He will not let your foot be moved, He who keeps you will not slumber.

Psalm 121:3

1960 — November 5 — 1985

With great thankfulness to our heavenly Father we wish to announce the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

WILLIAM and ELIZABETH OOSTDYK (nee Lindhout)

Their thankful children and grandchild:

Burlington, ON: Mark and Mary DeBoer
Michael
Allan and Janet Schutten
Joanne
Linda
Michelle

537 Scarlett Crescent, Burlington, ON L7L 5M5

1950 — September 5 — 1985

So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom.

Psalm 90:12

With thankfulness to our heavenly Father, we, their children and grandchildren, hope to remember, D.V., on September 5, 1985, the 35th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

DERK DEBOER

and

CHRISTINA JANTINA DEBOER (nee Karssies)

Surrey, BC: Peter and Rita deBoer
Derrick, Belinda, Bradley,
Christopher, and Peter
Margaret and Jim Dykstra
Harold, Jennifer, David, Randy,
Kenny, and Ricky
Harry and Marion deBoer
David, Lisa, Karen, Kevin,
and Sheryll

Langley, BC: Karl and Maureen deBoer
Scott and Michael
Martha and Harry deGelder
Danny, Brian, and Cindy

Hamilton, ON: Liz and Douwe Agema
Christina

Abbotsford, BC: Al and June deBoer
Steven

Surrey, BC: Charles and Sonja deBoer

Abbotsford, BC: Debbie deBoer

2786 Fairlane Street, Abbotsford, BC V2S 3B6

Houston, BC
1960

October 27

Burlington, ON
1985

House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

Proverbs 19:14

With great joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we hope to celebrate the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents:

JOHN and GRACE HOFSSINK (nee Tenbrinke)

May the Lord grant them many more wonderful years together.

Their thankful children:

Chatham, ON: George
Burlington, ON: John
Jean
Rob
Hetty
Brian

1239 De Quincy Crescent, Burlington, ON L7P 1E2

1960 — October 15 — 1985

With great joy and thankfulness we hope to celebrate, the Lord willing, the 25th Wedding Anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents:

ADRIAN DIELEMAN

and

JOHANNA DIELEMAN (nee van Baardewijk)

May the Lord continue to bless them.

Their thankful children and grandchildren:

Joanne and Henry Kok
Dina and Nathan
Deny
Adrian
Pete and Valerie
Paul
Albert
Jack
Sam

307 Connaught Avenue, Willowdale ON

The Lord called home, on Sunday August 25, 1985 our beloved husband, father and grandfather:

KOERT (JIM) SIEDERS

at the age of 68 years.

Psalm 23

Beloved husband of:

Burlington, ON: Roelie Sieders (nee Broekma)

His children:

Saulte St. Marie, ON: Johanna and Steward English
Burlington, ON: Henry and Grace Sieders
Jake and Rita Sieders
Kurt and Darlene Sieders
Lynda and Dave Hartman

20 grandchildren

217 Maranatha Home

3260 New Street, Burlington, ON L7N 3L4

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 Vega, Alberta T0G 2H0

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