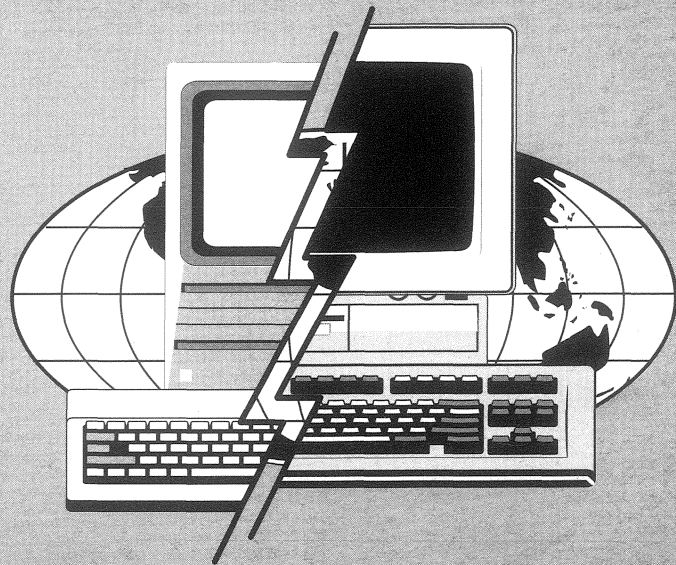


# Clarion

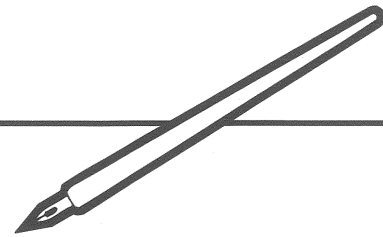
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE  
VOLUME 44, NO. 19 SEPTEMBER 22, 1995



*The Reformed world  
goes online*

Numbers

10:1-10



## Once More: Confessional Membership

During the last number of months we could read in *Clarion* the thoughts of writers and readers about the term "confessional membership." Important remarks have been made. Weighty questions have been asked. We should know what we mean with the terms we use. Allow me to also make a few remarks in this discussion.

The *Reader's Forum* contribution of Sarah Vandergugten (vol. 44, no.14; 330-331) has done us the service of showing the danger in the term "confessional membership." At the end of her contribution she shows how this term can easily be used in an Anabaptistic manner to mean that a person becomes a member of the church by way of confessing Christ as personal Saviour. Said briefly, the term "confessional membership," used in this Anabaptistic sense, means "membership through confessing." Sr. Vandergugten is fully correct in rejecting this meaning.

She is also correct in asking the questions: "What does the term actually mean? Is it an accurate term?" Her answer to the second question is clearly that the term is not accurate! The reason for this negative answer is, in fact, her answer to the first question regarding the actual meaning of the term. She sees the meaning in the light of the Anabaptist context and background. Her reasoning regarding the meaning of the term is set up in the following way: ". . . I have been a member of the church since I was born. . . ." Sr. Vandergugten writes that being a member of the covenant and the church since birth, as we confess in Q.A. 74 of the Heidelberg Catechism, is a full membership, not a "second class" membership. Again, I agree completely. This membership with all God's promises in Christ from birth is sealed by the sacrament of baptism.

Sr. Vandergugten goes on to speak about her years as an adolescent, before and when she made public profession of faith. She writes that, at that time, she did not really know the *Canons of Dort* and that she does not remember whether she had studied this third Form of Unity before her public profession of faith. In spite of all this, she "answered with heartfelt honesty to the question, Do you believe the doctrine of the Word of God, summarized in the articles of the Christian faith (that's how it read back in 1967) and taught here in this Christian church to be the true and complete doctrine of salvation? . . ." She adds the question: "Is this what gave me the status of confessional member?" Sr. Vandergugten answers this question herself: "I don't think so. It made me a communicant member with new privileges and responsibilities."

Again, Sr. Vandergugten is correct. Her public profession of faith before the elders and in the midst of the congregation, made her a communicant member of the church. She received the privilege of communion at the table of the Lord. Here we have the proper distinction in church membership. We have non-communicant and communicant members. The former is a membership through birth in a family that belongs to the church, a membership sealed by baptism.

The latter is a membership after public profession of faith in which one consciously accepts God's promises for oneself.

Our sister is again right when she states that her public profession of faith did not give her "the status of confessional member." This is the more true, as she continues to say, because "she had been a confessing member well before that time" of her public profession. In other words, the terms communicant member and confessing member do not cover each other. She was already an actively confessing member before she was a communicant member.

We take note here of the fact that sr. Vandergugten uses the two terms "*confessing member*" and "*confessional member*" indiscriminately. For her, these terms appear to be identical in meaning. On this point I disagree. In my opinion, sr. Vandergugten is not clear here, and assumes things without proof. As is clear from the term itself, a *confessing member* of the church is one who actively confesses the truth of the gospel. The term *confessional membership*, however, does not necessarily have this same meaning.

The basis for the identity of the two terms for our sister is the link she suggests between the term *confessional membership* and the public profession of faith and especially one of the questions asked in the *Form* for this profession. For she continues by asking whether "perhaps" the term *confessional membership* "has evolved" in connection with the change in "the wording of the question asked at public profession of faith."

Before 1980 this question in the Form for the Public Profession of Faith spoke of "the doctrine which is contained in the Old and New Testament and in the articles of the Christian faith and which is taught here in this Christian Church." After the Synod of Cloverdale 1983 the formulation changed to ". . . the doctrine of the Word of God, summarized in the *confessions*, and taught here in this Christian Church. . . ." In other words, Sr. Vandergugten suggests that the change in formulation from "articles of the Christian faith" to "the confessions" in the Form for the Public Profession of Faith caused the evolution of the term *confessional membership*.

What is happening here? Sr. Vandergugten suggests, in fact, two connections for the term *confessional membership*, the first one with the *Form* for making public profession of faith, and the second one with the change in formulation from "articles of the Christian faith" to "confessions."

I use here the verbs "assume" and "suggest." For there is no clear proof for these links. There is no proof that the evolution of this term is caused by the change in formulation. Moreover, something else becomes clear now too. This is the connection Sr. Vandergugten makes between the term *confessional membership* and the Anabaptist idea that one becomes a member of the church by confessing one's faith. Indeed, if the term *confessional membership* must be connected with the act of public profession of faith, so that this act of confessing makes one a confessing or confessional

member of the church, then the link with the Anabaptist idea is very close and this term should be rejected. However, once again, this link is suggested and assumed but not proved. In fact, it is my thesis that this link is not there in the way it is suggested.

I, too, see a connection between the term *confessional membership* and the questions which appear in three of our liturgical forms (Infant Baptism, Adult Baptism and Profession of Faith). However, this connection is there with the question as such as found in all three forms, and completely independent of the formulation before or after 1983. The difference in formulation does not change anything. The issue is the contents of the question as such. The question deals with "the doctrine contained in the Old and New Testament and in the Articles of the Christian faith, and taught here in this Christian Church." The key words are here the word "doctrine" and the expression "taught here in this Christian Church." These words point to the doctrine contained in the Articles of the Christian Faith as this is worked out in our confessional standards, the Three Forms of Unity, because that is "the doctrine ... taught here in this Christian Church."

Therefore, we should not connect the term *confessional membership* with the act of confessing but rather with the confessions containing the doctrine of Scripture as the church confesses it. Confessional membership is not a matter of the activity of confessing but of the documents containing the confessions. Therefore, we have to understand this term not in a subjective, individualistic, Anabaptist context but in a Reformed confessional framework.

Now one could ask whether *confessional membership* is identical with communicant membership, since the question of acknowledging or believing the Reformed doctrine is asked of those who become communicant members (adult baptism and public profession) or who are already communicant members (parents with the baptism of their infant). My reply would be that there is no identity. The two terms deal with different matters. Just as confessing membership is not identical with communicant membership, since a non-communicant member can also daily be confessing his/her faith in Christ, so a confessional member can quite well know and openly acknowledge his/her total agreement with the doctrine of the Reformed Churches before he/she has become a communicant member. Thus, he or she acts as a confessional mem-

ber who speaks in accordance with the confession of the church.

It is nice to notice in her article that sr. Vandergugten herself presented proof of being a good confessional member of the church. For she openly maintained, in agreement with the confession (B.C. Art.34; Heid.Cat. QA.74; Canons of Dort I,17), that children are fully members of the church, such in opposition to the Anabaptist error.

I would plead for this proper acceptance and use of the term to indicate that we are and want to be a church which adheres to its confessional standards. When I say "we" this means, in principle, all the members. We are a federation of Reformed churches. Therefore, we teach the youth of the church the Reformed confessions as the contents of our faith. We teach the youth and others who would like to join the church, to think and speak in accordance with the confessions, for we believe that they agree with the teaching of God's Word. This the kind of church we are and want to remain. A church that does not maintain what it claims to confess loses its strength.

We live in a time of intensifying relativism, with strong individualism, and subjectivism that not only attacks modern society but also the churches. The term **confessional membership**, pointing

to a church that is based as a community on the same truth, the same confession, can be a beacon in the wilderness of modern subjective relativism.

Of course, the term can also be used in an improper way. We can handle it as a law with which we bind and slay people. We can use it in such a way that it becomes a slavemaster instead of a term filled with the joy of confessing the gospel of salvation.

On the other hand, we can also make a caricature of it and then reject it. On one point, in my opinion, sr. Vandergugten is doing this. She writes that when she made public profession of faith, she "answered with heartfelt honesty to the question, Do you believe the doctrine of the Word of God, summarized in the articles of the Christian faith . . . and taught here in this Christian church." Yet, just before this statement, she points to the fact that at her public profession of faith she did not really know the contents of the *Canons of Dort*. Herewith, I think, a contrast is created between the norm and the reality. The reality can show weaknesses. But we should not make the weaknesses the norm for our church life. We should keep the rule as norm, and together work hard to live up to the rule, as much as is possible. C

# Clarion

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# Meditation

By G.Ph. van Popta

Read Acts 16:11-34

*"And they spoke the Word of the Lord to him and to all that were in his house."*

## GOD PLANTS THE CHURCH IN EUROPE

God sent Paul and Silas to Macedonia. The gospel of Jesus Christ had to be proclaimed not only in the East but in the West as well.

The missionaries got into trouble in Philippi. Paul had cast an evil spirit out of a slave girl. This spirit had made the girl able to tell the future. Her owners made a lot of money off her. They were upset that this easy source of income was gone.

They dragged Paul and Silas to the market place before the rulers of Philippi and charged them with disturbing the city with their teachings. The magistrates ordered Paul and Silas stripped and flogged. Then they were thrown into prison. The jailer put them in the inner prison, a pitch dark cell, and fastened their feet in stocks. John McRay writes about what it would have been like for Paul and Silas:

Roman imprisonment was preceded by being stripped naked and then flogged, a humiliating, painful and bloody ordeal. The bleeding wounds went untreated; prisoners sat in painful leg or wrist chains. Mutilated, blood-stained clothing was not replaced, even in the cold of winter. . . . Most cells were dark, especially the inner cells of a prison, like the one Paul and Silas inhabited in Philippi. Unbearable cold, lack of water, cramped quarters, and sickening stench from few toilets made sleeping difficult and waking hours miserable. . . . Prison food, when available, was poor. Most prisoners had to provide their own food from outside sources. . . . Because of the miserable conditions, many prisoners begged for a speedy death. Others simply committed suicide.\*

Prisons are pretty rough places. You do not go to prison to hear a choral concert. You would sooner expect to hear shouted obscenities than pious psalms.

But at midnight the prison in Philippi was alive with the sound of music. Paul and Silas, their backs raw from the beating they had received, their feet fastened in stocks, prayed and sang hymns to God.

"And the prisoners were listening to them." The criminal element of Philippi, the dregs of Philippian society, were listening to the prayers and praise of Paul and Silas. The pris-

oners on death row and those hoping beyond hope that some day they would be free heard the words of life flowing from the lips of the missionaries.

As some were singing and others were listening, God made the earth quake and the foundations of the prison shake. He threw all the doors open and loosened everyone's chains.

The jailer awoke. He assumed that the prisoners had escaped. His life was not worth a plugged denarius. He drew his sword and was about to kill himself, but Paul called loudly from the bowels of the prison. He told the jailer not to harm himself for all the prisoners were still there.

The jailer called for lights, rushed to Paul and Silas and, scared out of his wits, fell down before them. He brought them out of the dungeon and asked them: "Men, what must I do to be saved?" Paul and Silas told him: "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." They spoke the Word of God to him and his family. His whole household was baptized. Old and young, they were grafted into the church. The jailer took Paul and Silas into his house. He washed their wounds and gave them food. Together they rejoiced in their salvation. The communion of saints was alive and well.

And thus did God establish the first Christian congregation in Europe. It was small at first. Lydia, the businesswoman, was a member, as were the members of her household. The jailer and his family had joined the church. There were some others (v. 40). But the church would grow. From Paul's letter to the Philippians we know that a consistory of elders and deacons was established (Phil. 1:1). A pastor named Clement served the Philippian church (Phil. 4:3).

The church at Philippi actively supported missionary Paul (Phil. 4:13). From this European base the gospel spread west throughout the continent, to Great Britain, Australia and the Americas.

All thanks to the gracious and sovereign God for the universal proclamation of the gospel!

\*John McRay, "Stench, Pain, and Misery: Life in a Roman Prison," *Christian History* Vol. XIV, No. 3 (1995): 14.

## What's Inside

Scripture and confession – two things which are in the heart and upon the lips of Reformed believers.

Recent issues of *Clarion* have included letters, articles and an editorial about the place, function and role of the confessions in our lives. Prof. Geertsema addresses the topic of "Confessional Membership" and tries to arrive at some balanced conclusions.

As well, recent issues have dealt with Bible translations. Dr. J. De Jong's editorial entitled "Which Version Now?" (No. 14) has generated some dialogue between various readers and Dr. De Jong, as you will see.

We publish the second installment of Wes Bredenhof's primer on Reformed Apologetics.

James Dykstra introduces the RefNet. *No! It's got nothing to do with fishing.*

Finally, a reminder: We gladly publish reports of league days, ordinations, installations, and other noteworthy events, but please keep them short, under 1,000 words. Thanks.

GvP

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# Reformed Apologetics – Preliminary Considerations

By Wes Bredenhof

*Part Two of the modified text of a speech given at the CRUCS Retreat, Evans Lake, BC, February 24, 1995.*

Before going into greater detail about the method of apologetics, it is necessary to speak further about certain essential doctrines of Reformed theology. In fact, apologetics is closely related to the study of systematic theology. This explains the presence of a brief summary of Christian theology in any good Reformed book about apologetics. In VanTil's words, systematic theology is "the system of truth that we are to defend."<sup>1</sup> We have to know what it is we are defending, and whether or not it has any bearing on how we defend it. Thus, there is a symbiotic, interdependent relationship between theology and apologetics.

Ideally then, all aspects of systematic theology should also be dealt with in this article. However, since this is only meant to be an introduction, only the essentials points will receive treatment. The points of theology which I will omit are already quite familiar to most believers. They deal with Christology (the doctrines of Christ and His work), Ecclesiology (the doctrine of the Church), Eschatology (the doctrine of the last things), and Soteriology (the doctrine of salvation). With perhaps the exception of Eschatology, the basic elements of these doctrines are fairly common knowledge among us.

With that in mind, we should proceed to discuss the Reformed doctrine of God and the Reformed doctrine of man. These two doctrines are most important for the study of apologetics. In order to know how to reach the unbeliever, we should know something about the character of man and in order to know what it is we are defending we should have an understanding of the character and nature of God.

## The doctrine of God

First, I would like to discuss the character of God. What is God like? For a fairly detailed answer to this question we could turn to the Belgic Confession Article 1:

We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that there is only one God, who is a simple and spiritual Being; He is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, just, good, and the overflowing fountain of all good.

There are a lot of words packed into this first and smallest article of the Belgic Confession. Almost everything that the Bible directly says about God is here summarized, except for one essential point: the aseity of God. "Aseity" is also known as independence. This means that God is in no way dependent upon anything else. He is self-supporting and self-dependent. Nothing is over Him. He is absolute. This truth of Scripture is best summarized in Chapter 2, Article 2 of the Westminster Confession, which states that:

God has all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of Himself; and is alone in and unto Himself all sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which He has made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting His own glory in, by, unto, and upon them: He alone is the foundation of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; and He has most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever pleases Himself. In His sight all things are open and manifest; His knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent of any creature; so as nothing is to Him contingent or uncertain.

We could then summarize everything about the personality of God by saying that He is "absolute personality."<sup>2</sup> This means that God is absolute. He alone is autonomous. He is a law unto Himself. To use VanTil's words (concise as he usually is): "In His being, knowledge and will God is self-contained. There is nothing correlative to Him. He does not depend in his Being, knowledge, or will upon the being, knowledge or will of His own creatures. God is absolute. He is autonomous."<sup>3</sup>

But still the question could be posed, what does "absolute personality" involve? What does it entail? We can see quite clearly that God is indeed absolute – but what does it mean when we say that He is personality? The answer to these questions is partly discovered in the phrase "a spiritual Being," in the Belgic Confession. God is not impersonal; rather, He is explicitly personal. The Triune God interacts with His people on a personal level through the working of the Holy Spirit. We often say that we have to strive to be like God. By this we mean that we should try to imitate His personal or communicable qualities (of which some are listed in Article 1 of the Belgic Confession). These personal qualities help us in seeing God as not only above our world, but also as being concerned with it and connected with it through His qualities. God is not just transcendent (beyond us), but He is also immanent (around and within us). In a sense, we can relate to God because He possesses personality, just like we do.

To summarize, then, we can say that only God is autonomous and only He is sovereign. He is the creator of all things and upholds all things. With that statement in mind, we can see that God's very existence is necessary for the existence of truth, knowledge, and

reason. God is the very source of these elements of creation. It is only in Him that these things have any meaning. This way of reasoning is called the transcendental argument for the existence of God and is foundational in presuppositional apologetics.<sup>4</sup>

### The doctrine of man

Now we can turn to the Reformed understanding of the character of man. The Scriptures are full of insights into who and what we are as human beings. However, we also have to examine the Scriptures to see who we were – before the fall into sin. What was man like? How was and is he distinct from his Creator?

We know from Genesis that man was created in the image of God. This means – as the Heidelberg Catechism states in summary – that we were created “in true righteousness and holiness.” Man shared in two personal attributes of God’s being. Yet, man was still very different from God in that he was only finite. As Richard Pratt points out, “Man is limited by his physical body to finite existence.”<sup>5</sup> This means that there were things that Adam could not know. Even though he was a perfect man, Adam could not know everything. Adam’s created limits remind us that, despite our technological prowess, we will never be like God, knowing everything. Was not the desire to know everything the impulse that led Adam into sin? Adam wasn’t satisfied with second-best. He wanted to be just like God. He wanted, craved, thirsted after autonomy.

The truth is that Adam could never be autonomous. Like Adam, all of us are totally dependent on God for even our very existence. We are totally unable to make any meaning of our lives without Him. We can’t think or reason without Him. We can’t even wake up in the morning without Him.

Yet, the impossible autonomy is what fallen man desires. He wants to be his own boss, run his own life, make his own rules. Fallen man just wants to rebel against his Creator and live his own life with no interference. This worldview based on pretended autonomy is characteristic of our modern world. It should also be noted that the deception of autonomy always involves a rejection of God’s Law. Man wants to make his own “standards.” So today we see that homosexuality is accepted, abortion on demand is a right, pornog-

raphy is healthy, the Welfare State is glorified as a god in its own right, and so I could continue. What we have to realize is that autonomy is not only a myth but is also ultimately self-destructive, for “The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).

Because of the effects of sin, the unbeliever chooses the path of independence or autonomy, and almost always finds himself lost in the falsehoods of the great deceiver. Occasionally, by grace, the unbeliever will discover a truth that comes from God, but these truths that the unbeliever discovers will never lead him to salvation. An example of this might be the fact that the great majority of unbelievers believe that it is wrong to murder. They have arrived at a truth which they can only realize through God’s grace, through the vague knowledge of Him which they naturally possess – as Calvin writes.<sup>6</sup>

In contrast to the unbeliever, the person redeemed by Christ is an entirely new and different person. He has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit and has been liberated from slavery to sin. He acknowledges his complete and utter dependence upon God for all things. Because of this dependence on God, the Christian can consistently arrive at the truth. Because of the effects of sin, Christians do occasionally wander into falsehood and the deceptions of the evil one.

Therefore, we must always fight against the influence of sin in our lives. Sin is deception and rebellion. Sin is the embodiment of falsehood. Sin is also inherently irrational because it attempts to counteract the will of the Source of all rationality.

With that thought in mind, I’ll summarize my point as succinctly as possible. It all boils down to this: Men are either in league with satan or with God. Men are lost in falsehood and unable to consistently recognize truth, or they are in allegiance with the source of all truth. There is no middle ground.

Now what is the relationship between God and mankind in terms of knowledge? God continually reveals Himself to mankind, both through nature and Scripture. God’s knowledge is separated from our knowledge. His knowledge is completely comprehensive as opposed to our limited knowledge. Our minds are full of mysteries whereas God is omniscient. For Him, there are no mysteries. Any of the knowledge that we do possess is a result of God’s revelation and comes from



### Candidate J. Plug

accepted the call to the Geref. Kerk at Lutten, the Netherlands and declined the calls of Burlington West and Lincoln.

Him. Without God in this picture, there could be no knowledge at all. Contrary to post-modern philosophy, man does not create his own reality or truth. Instead, truth is all part of God’s creation, God’s revelation to mankind.

### Approach to unbelievers

If the unbeliever cannot even understand truth properly, what is the point of approaching him? Is there some neutral ground that a believer can share with the unbeliever? The Bible says, “What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?” (2 Cor. 6:14). The Lord Jesus Christ tells us in Mt. 12:30, “He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.” There is no point of neutrality between the unbeliever and the believer. One is completely given over to autonomy, the other to theonomy (dependence upon God and His law rather than man and his law).<sup>7</sup>

How then can we approach the unbeliever? Can we even do apologetics? The best answer comes from the venerable Dr. VanTil. He talks about the “point of contact.” When he uses this phrase, he means the intellectual place where we meet the unbeliever. When VanTil speaks about a “point of contact,” he does not mean “common ground,” a phrase commonly used by many traditional apologists.<sup>8</sup> Regarding this point, VanTil writes:

The point of contact for the gospel must be sought within the natural man. Deep down in his mind every man knows that he is the creature of God and responsible to God. Every man, at bottom, knows that he is a covenant-breaker. But every man acts and talks as though this were not so. It is the one point which cannot bear mentioning in

his presence. A man may have internal cancer. Yet it may be the one point he will not have one speak of in his presence. He will grant that he is not feeling well. He will accept any sort of medication so long as it does not pretend to be given in answer to a cancer diagnosis. Will a good doctor cater to him on this matter? Certainly not. He will tell his patient that he has a promise of life, but promise of life on one condition, that is, of an immediate internal operation. So it is with the sinner.<sup>9</sup>

In this discussion of apologetics it is clear that we need to keep in mind the importance of Romans 1. In the 19th verse of this chapter, it says, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them." Further, in verses 21 and 28, Paul says that the natural man does not want to acknowledge God. All men know that God exists, but not all men acknowledge His existence. Most prefer to think that they are autonomous. This autonomy is the fundamental presupposition of the unbeliever. By presupposition I mean the fundamental assumptions and assertions which govern the thinking of each and every person. As VanTil writes, every man knows in his heart of hearts that he has broken God's law and will stand in judgment. But the effects of sin are too strong for him to acknowledge his violation of God's law. The natural man cannot reason consistently with his presupposition of autonomy. He sometimes refers, unconsciously, back to the knowledge of God which he possesses. He will appeal to the absolute laws of science, morality, and logic, without even realizing that he is being inconsistent. Unbelievers regularly abandon their atheistic world-view and use the Christian world-view.

Now I'd like to take another look back at the alternatives to the Reformed foundations for apologetics. Why is the Reformed method more Scriptural? What makes it so much better? I'll answer these questions by asking and answering another question: What is one of the big differences between the Reformed and all other systems of apologetics? Of course, the answer is the doctrine of Man (though the doctrine of God is also quite different). To one degree or another, both the Roman Catholic and Arminian systems teach the doctrines of Free Will.

They teach that man is actually autonomous – he can reason quite well thank you very much – and is able to make consistent rational decisions without God's interference. Both systems, in the words of VanTil, "flatter the natural man."<sup>10</sup> They do not strike at the root of the problem. Using the methods of Roman Catholic or Arminian style apologetics is like weeding a field and only taking out what is on the surface. The roots are giving the problem, and the roots are what the Christian apologist must attack.

The acknowledgment of these fundamental differences is essential in developing a Biblical apologetical system, for, as VanTil says, "when autonomy is over and over regarded as the root of all evil in theology why then should it be welcomed in apologetics?"<sup>11</sup> If we denounce the Arminians for their doctrines of free will in man's salvation, how can we turn around and use these doctrines in apologetics? In the following quote, VanTil provides an excellent illustration of the nature and importance of the differences:

Suppose we think of a man made of water in an infinitely extended and bottomless ocean of water. Desiring to get out of the water, he makes a ladder of water. He sets this ladder upon the water and against the water and then attempts to climb out of the water. So hopeless and senseless a picture must be drawn of the natural man's [and the Roman Catholic's and Arminian's] methodology based as it is upon the assumption that time or chance is ultimate. On his own assumption his own rationality is a product of chance. On his assumption even the laws of logic which he employs are products of chance. The rationality and purpose that he may be searching for are still bound to be products of chance.<sup>12</sup>

The deceptions of chance and autonomy can therefore have no place in an apologetical system. Neutrality is a myth. We have no common ground to share with the unbeliever. Reformed apologetics must therefore approach the unbeliever in a different fashion. We must show the foolishness of unbelief by undermining the presuppositions of the non-Christian. Argument by presupposition is the only Biblical method of apologetics, because it recognizes the truths about man's nature found in Romans 1 and elsewhere in the Word

of God. Reformed apologetics recognizes that every person has presuppositions and the fundamental presupposition of the unbeliever is that of intellectual independence. This pretended intellectual independence is what keeps him bound in his sin. He cannot properly interpret the evidence for Christianity until he denies his intellectual autonomy.

## Summary

This article can be summarized by saying that if there is one really important theme in the philosophy and theology of VanTil (and indeed in Calvinism itself), it is this: there is no neutrality and there is no autonomy. In apologetics or anything else, men are either for God or against Him. There is no grey area between the believer and the unbeliever. One is in covenant with the source of all truth, and the other is in covenant with the source of all falsehood.

*Wes Bredenhof is a student of history at the University of Alberta and a member of Providence Canadian Reformed Church, Edmonton.*

## Notes:

<sup>1</sup>*Apologetics Syllabus*, p. 4

<sup>2</sup>*The Defense of the Faith*, p. 12

<sup>3</sup>*Apologetics Syllabus*, p. 7

<sup>4</sup>"As we have seen . . . 'argument by presupposition' is the same as 'transcendental argument.' VanTil . . . affirms that it is the God of Scripture who alone can give predication any intelligible meaning and who alone must be the original interpreter of any and every fact of the universe." "The Consistency of VanTil's Methodology," Scott Oliphint, *Westminster Theological Journal*, Spring 1990, p. 44

<sup>5</sup>*Every Thought Captive, A Study Manual for the Defense of Christian Truth*, Richard L. Pratt, Jr., Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1979, p. 20

<sup>6</sup>Cf. Calvin's Institutes, 1.3.1

<sup>7</sup>That is, theonomy with a small 't,' not necessarily in the Christian Reconstruction sense.

<sup>8</sup>"My Credo," Cornelius VanTil, in the volume: *Jerusalem and Athens: Critical Discussions on the Theology and Apologetics of Cornelius VanTil*, E.R. Geehan, ed., Phillipsburg, New Jersey, 1971, p. 21

<sup>9</sup>*Apologetics Syllabus*, p. 58

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 63

<sup>11</sup>*The Defense of the Faith*, p. 279

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 102

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# The Reformed world goes online

By James Dykstra

I remember when I first became fascinated with the Internet, that world wide group of interconnecting computers that allows users to send mail around the world and retrieve a dizzying array of information, all in less time than it takes you to read this sentence.

I had decided to spend the year in Ottawa in order to study at the university there. A friend back home had convinced me to get a modem for my computer so that the two of us could regularly exchange electronic mail. It seemed the perfect approach. E-mail was considerably cheaper than regular long distance phone calls, and, since a message can circle the globe literally in seconds, considerably quicker than using Canada Post or the U.S. Mail.

Having been introduced to the "Net," I spent a considerable amount of time exploring. With relative ease for a person not terribly familiar with computers, I found my way around the world by using oddly named Internet search tools such as archie, veronica, jughead, and gopher. I spent time on computer systems in Amsterdam, Cincinnati, New Zealand, Vancouver, Paris, and other more exotic centers. What I found there often surprised me. Sure, there were all those discussion groups and information sites you hear about. You know which ones I mean. They have the little coded names like "motss" which is a group intended for "members of the same sex." There were areas that discussed and approved of Satanism, child pornography, and a whole host of things considerably sicker than that.

However, there was also a whole lot more. There was a large Christian component to the Net. In one town there was an electronic Bible study. In Oregon there was a service where Christian grad students and profs could discuss various issues. In numerous cities, local churches made their home towns aware of their worship services and beliefs by occupying a small spot on the Internet. In Grand Rapids, Michi-

gan, Calvin College made the entire Bible available to anyone who might want to electronically browse the Word of God. Though I had found a huge number of Christian resources, I was yet to discover the most interesting: electronic mailing lists.

These mailing lists may be where most of the Christian activity on the Internet takes place. They operate by having a member on the list send an e-mail message to a central site or mail server, which then forwards the message to all the other members of the mailing list. Any of these other members who receive the message can then respond by sending their comments to the mail server, which once again forwards this response to other members of the list. By doing this, a "discussion" is created. This kind of a discussion suffers from most of the problems of regular mail – the major one being that in writing, it is often difficult to determine someone's tone. Is a comment meant as a joke, or a put-down? Is a question earnest or sarcastic? On many lists these kinds of misunderstanding can lead to insults being hurled back and forth. Such insults – or "flames" as they're popularly known – being bandied about can often result in full blown "flame wars" which can take the fun out of this method of communicating.

One of the more interesting mailing lists to develop – and a personal favorite of mine – is one which has been dubbed the "RefNet." This reformed network started life three years ago as the regular mailings between eight Canadian Reformed university students who wanted to keep in touch with each other. Slowly other people were introduced to this small band. Over three years, the group has grown to more than a hundred people. While Canadian Reformed students are still the major participants in this forum, it has included members from all over Canada, the U.S., Australia, the Netherlands, and South Africa. In addition to the students, there are now teachers, house-

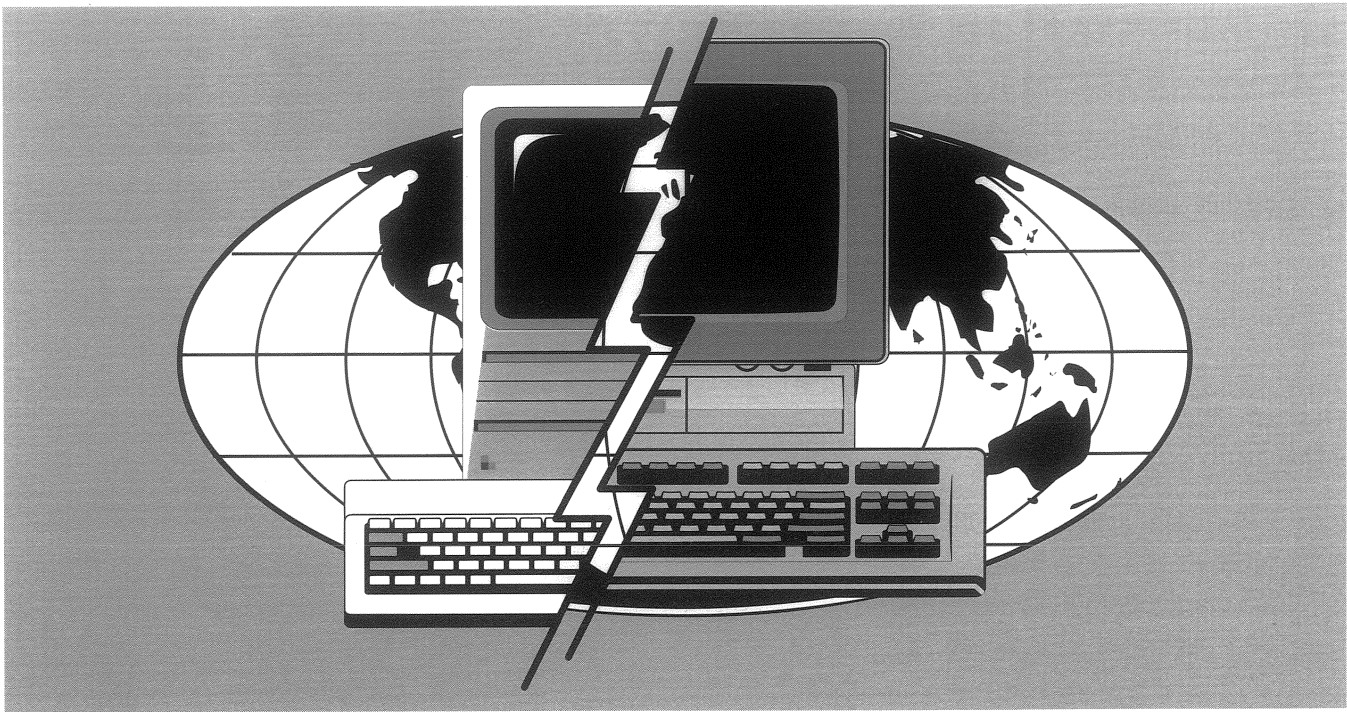
wives, ministers, elders, computer technicians, retired people, and numerous others. The denominational base has also grown to include some members of independent and regular Christian Reformed churches, Reformed Presbyterian churches, Orthodox Presbyterian congregations, Free Reformed Churches of Australia, the Free Reformed Church of North America, and other denominations.

Topics for discussion on the RefNet have been diverse. They have looked at Bible verses, church liturgy, the exclusive use of psalmody in worship services, briefs presented to the Canadian Senate, the integration of faith and university studies, regular updates on the recent Canadian Reformed synod, the use of the Internet in the classroom, and a host of other issues. Whatever seems to be of general relevance has been talked about, hashed and reshaped.

Simply because most of the topics raised are discussed by Christians and dealt with from a Christian perspective does not mean that problems never arise. Flames are occasionally tossed back and forth. People do become upset when replies do not contain the degree of tact that is necessary. As in any conversation, electronic or face-to-face, some people have been known to talk too much. In short, all the problems of regular conversation crop up on the RefNet. They are generally handled with Christian tact and diplomacy, but human shortcoming have been known to aggravate difficulties at times.

For many members of the RefNet, this forum has proven to be a valuable means of keeping in touch with thinking, Reformed Christians. This can be especially useful for those who are not living in areas where there is a substantial population of religiously mature Calvinists. Being able to informally bounce ideas off other Reformed Christians about God, the Bible, our role in creation, and all the related issues has proven helpful for many.





For others the RefNet has helped them as they moved around the country and even the world. It has meant that though they may be thousands of miles from familiar ground, the people they have “met” on the RefNet are there, ready and willing to help them because they are all members of the body of Christ. In this way, a sense of community, even the communion of the saints, has been developed far beyond whatever town someone may live in. Though I sit at my computer in Edmonton, I know that people I have come across in Vancouver, Toronto, or Sioux Centre, Iowa are willing to help me in any way that they can.

Despite the obvious benefits, the RefNet has drawn its share of criticism. Some have claimed it is elitist since the Internet is not presently something that people can generally access. This criticism has some justification. However, all new methods of communication are somewhat elitist at first. Much as the telephone quickly moved from the toy of an elite few to an essential element in most homes, computers with their modems and Net surfing abilities are poised to do the same. What is today’s elitist toy, is set to become tomorrow’s essential tool. Evidence of this shift is already apparent. The initial members of the RefNet all used university Internet accounts to get access to e-mail. An increasing number of RefNet members are no longer using university accounts. They have switched to community ser-

vices such as FreeNets, or commercial Internet providers like Netcom. The Internet was formerly accessible only to those working or studying at universities, but is increasingly accessible to the general population.

Others have criticized the interdenominational nature of the RefNet. They seem to fear that this form of contact will create problems with official efforts of the Canadian Reformed Churches to develop ties with other denominations. This thought, while understandable, assumes that the only contact permissible with like minded Christians from other denominations is that done at an official level. Such an attitude would seem to defeat the purpose of establishing ties with other denominations, namely establishing true unity in Christ with fellow believers. What kind of unity can there be if we are not allowed to deal with members of other churches as fellow Christians rather than as the denomination they are part of? Actually, what the RefNet seems more likely to do is to transform the stiff, formal ties that we have with other denominations into tight-knit, personal bonds between far-flung Christians. This complements the goal of greater unity in Christ rather than hindering it.

A further critique of the RefNet is that it puts members of the Canadian Reformed Churches who may not be ready for it in contact with members of other denominations. The fear is understandable, but perhaps exaggerat-

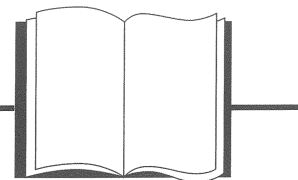
ed. While it is possible to sometimes be swept away by an enticing but wrong idea put forward by another Christian, this is not a problem exclusive to the RefNet. This can happen when meeting Christians from another denomination face-to-face, when reading a book or an article, or even when talking with a Canadian Reformed person who might have some wrong notions. The Bible commands us to test the spirits, and if we are prepared to do this the RefNet presents no greater danger than any other contact with Christians.

The RefNet is not a perfect resource for Christians, but it has proven to be very beneficial. It has its problems. All contact with other Christians does, regardless of the denominations involved. While some problems are inherent to the nature of the Net, they are not insurmountable. Overall, the RefNet has proven to be a fascinating opportunity to examine our relationship with God – in all its aspects – in the company of other thinking, Reformed Christians. Because of this, I’ll remain a dedicated RefNet fan for a long time to come.

*If you’d like to know more about joining the RefNet, e-mail the author at [linus@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca](mailto:linus@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca).*

*When he’s not surfing the Net, James Dykstra is a part-time secondary school teacher and graduate student.* ©

By G.H. Visscher



## In defence of Synod's recommendation of the NIV

While I hesitate to disagree with my friend and colleague Dr. J. De Jong, his recent editorial (*"Which Version Now?"* 44/14, July 14/95) cannot be left unchallenged as it seems to me that some of its confusing elements are only going to lead to more confusion in the churches.

On the one hand the article acknowledges that the NIV is "considerably superior to the others suggested" and that the Synod made an "understandable choice." On the other hand, the article suggests that the language of the NIV is too "interpretive" and not "dignified" enough for pulpit use and that churches should make the change very gradually and carefully.

What is to be regretted here is that while Dr. De Jong suggests that he does not deal with the report as such, he in fact dismisses very quickly the gist of the substantial Report of the Committee on Bible Translations which attempted to illustrate that all translations are "interpretive" and that in the experience of the committee members the interpretive aspects of the NIV are generally to be appreciated, though not necessarily in every instance. In many cases in fact, other translations are more interpretive and less reliable than the NIV.

One would also be hardpressed to prove that the RSV is more "dignified" in its use of language, as Prof. De Jong suggests. While some texts could perhaps be quoted in this regard, it would not be too hard to produce texts which prove the opposite as well. If the RSV gives this impression, it is probably largely due to its use of "thee" and "thou" for God and the further linguistic changes that this necessitates; but since this distinction is not made in the original languages and since such word usage has been or is in the process of being eliminated throughout all other major translations, this must be considered a non-issue. The impression that the RSV's language is more dignified

may also be precisely because it is still dependent to a degree on the KJV and its style of expression. But we should remember here that while the original authors of the Bible each had their own style, none of them spoke the language of a former day; nor did they go out of their way to make their Aramaic, Greek, or Hebrew especially *dignified* or especially *familiar*. They spoke the language of their day, to the common man of that day! Has the objective of a good translation not always been to do exactly the same in another language? I think of the well-known words of William Tyndale spoken to the church leaders: "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scripture than thou doest" (quoted on page 49 of the report). The *NIV*, admittedly not without failing, has made that its objective. The preface to the *NIV* says: "Concern for clear and natural English – that the New International Version should be idiomatic but not idiosyncratic, contemporary but not dated – motivated the translators and consultants." The words quoted in the report ring true: "For those who are used to the Bible in the King James Version or the Revised Standard Version, this translation sounds like the Bible. The *NIV* is closer in style and form to the RSV than to any other English version. . . ." (page 41); it is striking that these words were written by a man who was instrumental in providing a truly *familiar* and *colloquial* translation (Robert G. Bratcher, translator of *Good News for Modern Man: Today's English Version*); he realized that the *NIV* is not in that camp. So should we!

Moreover, it is questionable whether it is appropriate to judge a 1995 decision from a 1980 viewpoint. In 1980, the RSV may have been the best choice. But in 1995 that choice is no longer an option since the NRSV has arrived in its stead. The quotation from 1980 boomerangs ("there must be strong ar-

guments to switch over to another version"), for what stronger argument can there be than the fact that the RSV is being phased out!?

It is striking that Dr. De Jong has not paid attention to one area where there is a *real* difference between the RSV and the *NIV* – in its approach to the text. As is clearly pointed out in appendix 5 of the Report to Synod 1995 as well as elsewhere, the *NIV* takes a much more conservative view with respect to the authority of the original text. Much like the translators of the KJV, the translators had to agree to "the authority and infallibility of the Bible as God's Word in written form" (*Preface to the NIV*) – something that cannot be said of the translators of the RSV. Should that not be applauded and considered a major improvement? It is rather ironic when churches become *conservative* about a *liberal* translation such as the RSV! In this respect our Australian sister churches took a route that is to be respected, deciding already in 1994 that it was desirable for the churches "to move away from the RSV in two years" (Acts Synod Byford, art. 55).

The question of timing is another thing that could be raised with respect to Dr. De Jong's article. In one respect it is too early. The Acts of Synod 1995 are not even out yet; I know of at least one church that has overtaken the synod to incorporate the effects of a new translation into the *Book of Praise*. While personally I see no reason for great urgency here, it seems only proper to at least wait with discussing this point until the Acts have appeared. In another respect it is too late. Should these thoughts not have been aired before synod made a decision? Doing so now only contributes to unrest concerning a carefully made recommendation and decision. It also brings us to the peculiar situation that it is our professor of church polity who is urging churches, which are committed to considering synod decisions "settled and binding"

(article 31, C.O.), to consider this one such only in a gradual and guarded fashion!

While Dr. De Jong argues that it is for the sake of the pulpit and the pew that the RSV should be maintained, one could argue that it is precisely for this reason that the switch should be made as soon as possible. A great many in the pew are already reading from the NIV, and that number is growing. Schools are handing out the NIV at graduations, couples are receiving NIV's as wedding Bibles because suitable RSV Bibles cannot be found. What family, even if RSV's can be found, wants to put out hard-earned money for new RSV's when the synod has decided that a switch needs to be made? Comparing translations is a worthwhile exercise, but if we want to talk about a "wedge," here is one that is not beneficial: the Word of God being read in one translation from the pulpit and from another in a growing number of pews. The matter has been carefully considered by a synod committee; synod has agreed with its recommendations; let us consider it "settled and binding" so that the pulpit can speak to the pew as it ought!

No one is trying to promote "permanent revision." But this change is clearly necessary, whether it be sooner or later. And in my view, the pain and aggravation will be less if we do it sooner.

### Reply to Rev. G.H. Visscher:

I can appreciate the concerns raised by Rev. Visscher, and I suppose I could have expected them since he was a member of the Committee on Bible Translations, and senses that my comments are critical of the Report. To be honest I did not want to discuss the Report directly, since not only he but a couple of my colleagues also expended much effort on it. Yet the Report as such is worth the discussion! I had hoped that others would give it their attention, and was disappointed that no one entered into a discussion with any aspects of the Report. One would expect that a piece of work of this size would not just slip away unnoticed!

For my part, I cannot hide the fact that I had trouble with one of its conclusions – in particular: the statement that the NIV is superior to the version currently in use, the RSV. I believe that if this was the case the churches would have been aware of this and moved to using the NIV long before 1995. Thus,

while I appreciate the extent of the work that has been done in the Report, the overall assessment of the RSV relative to the NIV is problematic. My remarks in the editorial should be seen in this light. With this in mind, allow me the following points of response:

1. No one can escape the fact that the NIV is *more interpretive* than the RSV. This follows not only from the different approaches in translation, but also the different parameters governing the translations. The NIV is an entirely *new* translation of Scripture; the RSV is a revision of an older version which was very literal, the AV. The NIV applied contextual translation; the RSV maintained as much as possible a faithfulness to form. I do not think it is possible or helpful to camouflage these differences.
2. For me the point of dignity in usage goes far beyond the use of the antique pronouns. It is reflected in a more classical use of the English language, and in maintaining a reverent and solemn usage for devotional reading. Here as well, I see no argument. Two areas where the more familiar usage of the NIV stands out – to mention only these – are its use of contractions and its approach to sexuality. The latter point I find significant, since this affects our daily 'walk and talk.' Incidentally, it might be pointed out that the criterion of dignity is the *first one* mentioned by Prof. Holwerda in his discussion of the new Dutch translation.

I have more difficulty with what Rev. Visscher says about the "original authors of the Bible" both because of what this says and what this does not say. With regard to what it says, my question is: can we say this? The gospel writers, for example, were not only familiar with an ancient usage, but even retained many aspects of Hebrew idiom in their writing. But then what it does not say: for as Reformed people we are taught that behind the "original authors" we have the *primary author*: the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit does not just speak in Scripture to the "common man of that day" but to the average person in every age. Hence it is incumbent upon translators to give the exact rendering of the text as much as possible. In the *words* of Scripture, the Spirit speaks to the

church! (Cf. Jn. 14:10). That is why I would still opt (as long as reasonably possible) for a translation matching what 1980 said about the RSV: "scholarly word for word."

3. My colleague wonders whether a 1995 decision should be judged by a 1980 viewpoint. He says: "In 1980, the RSV may have been the best choice." This does not sound all that positive about 1980, and if I may judge from the Report, I wonder if there is real agreement with 1980. At the same time, let me stress that I do not want to give a judgment on the 1995 decision. I only wanted to introduce, as my co-editor G. Van Popta called it, a 'cautionary word.' I believe the editorial also took the issue of availability into account. At the same time, when I think of all the effort that has gone into a translation such as the RSV, I still find expressions like "the RSV is being phased out" and "the demise of the RSV" as being too loaded.
4. In his sixth paragraph, Rev. Visscher says that I have not paid attention to one area in which the two translations really differ, the approach to the text. I am sensitive to this difference, and believe that this makes a real difference in individual cases. But because of all the factors involved, and looking at the whole picture, I cannot accord with the judgment that this is a "major improvement." My reasons? First, even though the NIV translators were all evangelicals, they were not all *Reformed*; and second, they applied contextual translation which, as one writer put it, is "fraught with dangers." I would not want to call the RSV translation, which in the last twenty-five years has found general acceptance among our people with a minimum of unrest – a *liberal* translation. Nor would I regard my relation to it as "conservative."
5. On the question of timing I cannot add much more than the points I have mentioned above. I do not think a matter of this weight should be determined by "timing." I do not want to quarrel with the decision of Synod 1995, but I am all in favour of proceeding in a "guarded and gradual fashion." From what I have read in the Press Release, this is not adverse to the line taken by Synod 1995.

6. I cannot comment on what is happening in the pews today. On that score I admit I am no longer on the "front line" so to speak. Ultimately, a consistory must judge the weight of the matter of availability of the RSV. My only point is that besides availability, there are other factors and arguments to be considered as well, which to me would lean in favour of a cautious rather than hasty approach.

J. De Jong

### Response to Mr. C. Loopstra:

Rather than touch on all the points raised, allow me to restrict my reply to the following comments. I hope these remarks will also serve as a reply to other letters which have been submitted.

1. Mr. Loopstra's letter appears to connect the idea of dignity of language strictly with the use of the older pronouns *Thee* and *Thou*. I do not think that the notion of "dignity of language" as it was introduced in the 1980 Report is concerned specifically with the use of these pronouns. I only referred to this particular usage in a note, since it is not (at least for me) the *essential* point. "Dignity of language" is reflected in the entire character of the RSV,

and that is what I believe should be retained as long as possible.

2. It is easy to use phrases like "traditionalism" and "arguments that are not based on Scriptural grounds." Let's not forget that the Anabaptists used phrases like this, too! But the fact of the matter is that the English of the King James version was not only born out of the Reformation, but influenced the liturgy and practice of the Reformed and Presbyterian churches for over four hundred years! The language has a timeless quality to it, and it is precisely that feature of it that should make us very careful with our changes. Luther Weigle, one of the co-workers on the RSV put it well when he said: "For use in worship the Bible must be cast, not in what is merely the language of today, but in enduring and simple diction which is worthy to stand in the great tradition of Tyn-dale and the King James Version."

3. Mr. Loopstra says: "Of course, amending the Liturgical Forms is easy enough." I am surprised at the ease with which this is said. I believe that doing this 'amendment' properly is not just a computer exercise but actually amounts to a *new modernization*. The same holds for the Psalms and Hymns. If we pursue this path, I cannot escape

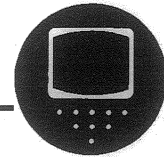
the suspicion that it will be regarded as outdated as soon as it has been completed. I have the same suspicion with regard to the NIV. In this regard the 1980 *Report* was correct in saying that the RSV is *not* the "most modern version"; yet its use of language makes it a "worthy successor to the KJV."

4. Mr. Loopstra suggests that we should not erect "non-essential barriers" to the world around us. For me it remains a question whether the margin of the potential for error with respect to what is essential and what is not essential is not greatly increased by moving to the NIV. For we may become more "appealing to the contemporary world around us," but simultaneously that much more estranged from the real world of the Bible. For us and our children the central question should still be: *what does the text really say?*

J. De Jong 

The views expressed in Reader's Forum are not necessarily those of the editorial committee or the publisher. Submissions should not exceed 900 words. Those published may be edited for style or length.

## PRESS RELEASES



### Press Release of Classis-Contracta, Alberta/Manitoba held in the Edmonton "Immanuel" Church building on August 10, 1995.

Elder H. Klaver, representing the convening church, the "Immanuel" Church at Edmonton opens the meeting, reads John 12:20-36 and leads in prayer. He welcomes the delegates to the meeting.

The delegates of the convening church examine the credentials and find them to be in good order. Delegates are:

Rev. R. Aasman and Elder A. Dykstra ("Providence" Church at Edmonton)

Elder H. Klaver and Elder R. Duker ("Immanuel" Church at Edmonton).  
Classis is declared constituted.

Officers: Rev. Aasman (chairman), Elder H. Klaver (clerk).

#### Agenda:

1. Matter of the approbation of the call of the Rev. G.A. Snip to the "Immanuel" Church at Edmonton.
2. The agenda is adopted as proposed, with one item being added.

The following documentation is received and reviewed.

1. Letter of call and accompanying letter (dated Feb. 6, 1995).
2. Letter of acceptance of call (dated March 13, 1995).

3. Certificate of release from the Church at Lincoln, Ontario (dated June 14, 1995).

4. Certificate of release from Classis Ontario South (dated June 14, 1995).

5. Letters indicating date and time when Rev. Snip will become the responsibility of the "Immanuel" Church at Edmonton (dated April 2 and May 12, 1995).

6. Letter indicating the announcements made to the Edmonton "Immanuel" congregation regarding the proposed date of August 27, 1995 as date of installation of Rev. Snip.

All are found to be in order. There are no objections. The "Immanuel" Church at Edmonton will be notified of this approbation.

Classis appoints the "Providence" Church at Edmonton to represent Classis AB/MB at the installation of Rev. Snip.

At the request of the Church at Barhead, Classis appoints Rev. Aasman to represent Classis AB/MB at the dedication ceremony of their new church building (October 20, 1995).

Question period is not made use of. Censure ad. Art. 44 CO is not necessary.

The Acts are read and adopted and the Press Release is approved.

The chairman, Rev. Aasman, closes the meeting with prayer.

H. Klaver (clerk).

**Acts of Classis Pacific (Contracta) of the Canadian Reformed Churches held in the "Maranatha" Church, Surrey, BC, on August 8, 1995.**

*Article 1 – Opening.*

Rev. C. VanSpronsen, the chairman of the convening church of Surrey (Maranatha), called the meeting to order, led in prayer and read Isaiah 62: 6-12. He extended a warm welcome to all the brothers present.

*Article 2 – Credentials.*

Upon the request of the chairman, the delegates of the Cloverdale church

examined the credentials and found them to be in order. The following delegates were present:

Cloverdale.....elders H. Leyenhorst and C. Nap.

Surrey .....elder G. Geurts and Rev. C. VanSpronsen.

*Article 3 – Appointment of officers and constitution of Classis.*

The following officers were appointed:

As chairman ..Rev. C. VanSpronsen  
As clerk .....Br. G. Geurts.

Classis was constituted.

*Article 4 – Adoption of the agenda.*

On the agenda was the approval of the call extended by the church of Smithers to Rev. J. Huijgen.

*Article 5 – Approbation of the call.*

The following documents were presented:

1. Letter of call from the church of Smithers to Rev. J. Huijgen.
2. Letter of acceptance of the call by Rev. J. Huijgen.
3. Letter of honourable release from the church of Fergus, ON.
4. Certificate of honourable release from Classis Ontario North dated June 9, 1995.

5. Notice of assumption of responsibility for Rev. J. Huijgen by Smithers as of July 17, 1995.

6. Letter from the church of Smithers declaring that the name of Rev. J. Huijgen had been announced twice to the congregation and that no objection were received.

These documents were found to be in good order, and Classis decided to approve the call of the church of Smithers to Rev. J. Huijgen.

*Article 6 – Delegation to Installation.*

Classis delegated Br. C. Nap to represent Classis at the installation of Rev. J. Huijgen on August 20, 1995.

*Article 7 – Question period.*

The opportunity for questions was given by the chairman.

*Article 8 – Adoption of the acts.*

The clerk presented the acts which were approved. A copy will be sent to *Clarion* as a press release.

*Article 9 – Closing*

After the chairman thanked the brothers for their attendance at this special classis, br. C. Nap led in prayer. Classis was declared closed.

For the classis,  
G. Geurts, clerk **C**

# Installation of Rev. R. Schouten

June 11, 1995, was a special and happy day for the church of Abbotsford, B.C. After 3 1/2 years of vacancy our minister emeritus, Rev. M. VanderWel was able, as he put it, "to pass on the torch" to Rev. R. Schouten. The installation took place in the morning worship service where Rev. VanderWel chose as text 1 Tim. 4:6-10. The theme of the sermon was: Paul's instruction to Timothy how to be a good servant of Christ Jesus in his ministry among the congregation. Paul speaks about 1. his nourishment 2. his training 3. his hope.

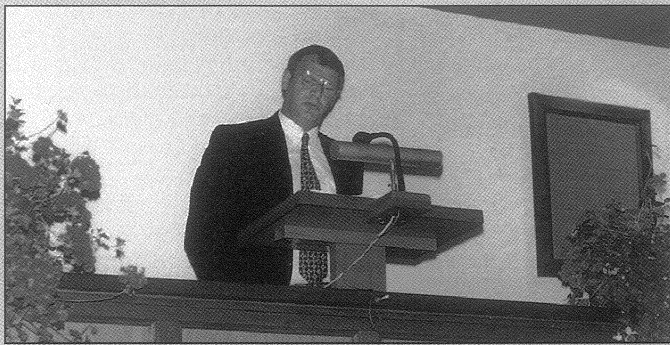
By diligently searching the Scriptures, the minister, as well as the whole

congregation takes nourishment from words of faith and sound doctrine. Training for our physical bodies is important but what is much more important is spiritual training. We do not have to train in our own strength but we have been given the Holy Spirit. We have a hope that is based on the promises of the living God. We were encouraged to take up the training and run the course with perseverance, not alone, but looking to Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith.

After the service Rev. VanLuik extended his best wishes on behalf of Classis Pacific with fitting words



Rev. R. Schouten and family



*Opening – Chairman John Pruim*



*Rev. Schouten – closing remarks*



*“Handing over the gavel” Past chairman to new chairman*

referring to 2 Cor. 3:5,6. As chairman of the consistory of Abbotsford, Br. John Pruim gave words of encouragement to Rev. Schouten in his ministry and to the congregation to remember the minister in their prayers.

In the afternoon Rev. Schouten chose as text for his inaugural service 2 Cor. 3:5-6. The theme of the sermon was: Called to ministry in the new covenant; and the given points were: 1. the qualifications for this ministry, 2. the effects of this ministry.

Paul is on the defensive for false teachers had come and downplayed Paul as a minister. Paul remembers his call from God and has great confidence in Christ. He is a minister of the new covenant which was foretold in Jer. 31. Paul speaks about the law of Moses for the false teachers kept it central in their worship and in doing so, Christ faded into the background. Paul makes it clear that what the law of Moses cannot do, the Spirit does, renewing us so we love the law that God gave and are obligated to keep it. We are to be changed to be like Christ, be busy walking by the Spirit, and remain faithful under the preaching of the Word.

On June 13, 1995, a welcome evening was held for Rev. Schouten and his family. Following a welcome song Br. John Pruim opened the evening with prayer and by reading from Is. 40:27-31 and Heb. 13:6-22. He welcomed Rev. Schouten, his wife, and daughters and expressed thankfulness that the Lord in His time has given us a pastor and teacher. Letters of congratulations from Port Kells, Vernon, and Aldergrove were read and delegates from Yarrow, Cloverdale, and Surrey spoke words of welcome. Rev. VanSpronsen wished Rev. Schouten well on behalf of his colleagues in the valley and recognized a fine attribute of each minister which Rev. Schouten could strive to be like.

Our very capable emcees Brs. Bob DeHaan and Dan Flokstra kept the evening rolling along smoothly and in a humorous way. There were musical selections on the organ, by the choir and a quintet. Grades K-4 sang two hymns and Grade 5 presented the Schoutens with “hugs and kisses” and a Canucks pennant. The young people depicted a consistory and women’s society meeting in a funny way. Tuesday morning Bible study did a presentation of the

places people live complete with maps. The Women’s Society poetically gave food items corresponding to the letters WELCOME SCHOUTEN FAMILY. The Evangelism Committee (Society) told us how to play the game while the Men’s Society outlined all the men’s jobs for us. All the members of the congregation became related through the relative parade and the Schoutens received a photo album with a page contributed by each family. Rev. Schouten could test his ability to put a name to a face when ten John’s came forward – resulting score? a perfect 10!

In closing Rev. Schouten thanked everyone and relayed that coming from a small congregation he was very happy to find in this large congregation the same fellowship shared by members. In small and large churches there is a similar structure of members, consistory and minister working together under the leadership of the same Head, our Lord Jesus Christ. We can eagerly await the great welcome when He will take us to Himself in glory. A fitting closing to a wonderful welcome evening.

Submitted for the church of Abbotsford  
Rose Boeve **C**

# 32nd Annual Women's League Day

~ Fraser Valley, B.C. ~

By Linda Bredenhof

On June 21, 1995, the Women's Society "The Lord is our Refuge" of Chilliwack, B.C., hosted the 32nd Annual Women's League Day for the ladies of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches, held in the church building of the Free Reformed Church at Chilliwack. About 230 ladies enjoyed themselves with a cup of coffee and chatting with old friends or making new acquaintances until promptly at 10:00 a.m. the chairlady for the morning, Mrs. Marian VanLaar, asked us to assemble in the church hall. After extending a warm welcome to all, especially our "out-of-town" guests from Vernon and even Australia, she asked us to join in singing Psalm 36: 1,2 and 3, accompanied on the organ by Mrs. Adria Schutte. Mrs. VanLaar then led us in prayer after which she read three passages of Scripture related to the morning's topic of "Esther": Exodus 17:8-16, Deuteronomy 25:17-19, and Esther 2:1-18. After stating that our theme for the day was "Great is Thy Faithfulness," she introduced our morning speaker, Mrs. Cheryl Fennema of Chilliwack. In her introduction, Mrs. Fennema illustrated how God's love and faithfulness shines throughout this book and how it shows that God controls every situation, even using sinful people like Esther and Mordecai to preserve for Himself His remnant, His church, His covenant people.

The book of Esther is the first recorded threat of genocide, the attempt to destroy the Jewish nation. This book is very precious to the Jews and they still celebrate the feast of Purim to remember God's saving work at the time of Esther. But Hitler hated the book for he feared the comfort it gave the Jews, so he banned its reading and the celebrating of Purim.

The story of King Xerxes, Esther, Mordecai and Haman is well-known. It's certainly a beautiful and captivating story and even our children tend to glorify Esther for being so brave. But none of the characters in this story are neces-



*Listening attentively (in the Free Reformed Church building)*



*Mrs. Kim Kampen (delivering her introduction on "Burn Out")*



*Mrs. Cheryl Fennema and Mrs. Marian VanLaar leading discussion on "Esther"*

sarily faithful and trusting. Mordecai's family had not returned to Canaan, the promised land, but had chosen to stay in Babylon and remain financially secure. Esther willingly goes to the palace in a sort of beauty pageant and becomes a concubine in the King's harem. Mordecai charges Esther not to make her Jewish identity known so that by having a family member in the palace, his personal career could be enhanced. Haman is so angry that Mordecai refus-

es to bow down to him, that he forces the King to establish a royal decree for the destruction of the Jews. We see Satan here trying to prevent the birth of the Saviour! But God works through Esther who pleads with the King that her people, the Jews, may at least defend themselves, which they are able to do. Here we see God's continual judgment on His enemies and the deliverance of His people Israel.

After the introduction we sang Psalm 33: 1,3,5 and 6 and the floor was opened for discussion. Some of the questions raised were: Were the Amalekites destroyed as God had prophesied? Why are there doubts as to Esther being a canonical book? Why has there always been so much hatred against the Jewish race?

We then sang Psalm 111:2. Mrs. Joanne VanSpronsen and Mrs. Jenny VanDriel from the Surrey Women's Society then read a true story about a Rev. Joseph Ton who had been exiled from Romania but who in 1972, willingly went back as a "sheep in the midst of wolves." (Matt. 10:16) He was arrested, harassed, and threatened to be killed but he told the guards that his supreme weapon would be his death, for by his death all the tapes of his preaching which were circulating around the country would be sealed with his blood and speak 10 times louder. The officer let him go. Only when he had been ready to die for the Lord could he do anything for the Lord in Romania!

The discussion on Esther was continued. Did Esther violate the 7th Commandment? Was Mordecai a believer? Didn't Mordecai bring his problems on himself? Mrs. VanLaar had to close the discussion and she thanked Mrs. Fenema for the making and reading of her introduction. We all sang the traditional League Song and announcements were made. Mrs. Rhea Super of Chilliwack, for pre-luncheon devotions read Psalm 138 and led us in prayer.

We refreshed ourselves with a delicious lunch of salads, buns and dessert,

and then socialized with old friends. The afternoon session was reopened by the chairlady Mrs. Jane deGlint, and we sang Hymn 48:1,2,3 and 4 accompanied by her brother Mr. Peter Sneep of Holland on the organ. The Lynden Women's Society represented by Mrs. Sheryl Bisschop, Mrs. Adria DeMooy, and Mrs. Corrie Klos, provided entertainment in the form of a "Women of the Bible" quiz which was won by the Port Kells ladies. Some of the women questioned about were Eve, Tamar, Rahab, Lot's wife, etc.

We then sang Psalm 40: 1,6,7 and Mrs. deGlint read 1 Kings 19:1-18, Psalm 3, and Philippians 4:4-13. Mrs. Kim Kampen of Port Kells was introduced and read her introduction on "Burn Out." She showed us how in our very busy lives juggling duties between home, church and school, we can become physically burned out. This in turn can quickly also result in a spiritual burnout, for we no longer have or make time for personal prayer or Bible study. This leads to a lack of joy in and for the Lord and His work in the communion of saints. Mrs. Kampen then offered several solutions to this problem. Look to Mary and Martha; the Lord saw Martha's anxiety and kindly told her that Mary had chosen the one thing that was needful, listening to God's Word. We must examine all our activities, tasks and responsibilities in the light of an eternal perspective. It is also important to have a balance in your life, to allow time to develop personal interests and gifts, to spend time with your family

and the communion of saints, to learn to say "no," and to accept your limits.

Together we sang Psalm 27: 4,5, and 6. During the discussion period an older lady reminded us to enjoy it all now for the children are soon grown and gone, although another older lady agreed that young mothers are much busier nowadays than before. It was mentioned that some women are burned out because they have too much to do at home, while also working outside the home, while others feel burned out from boredom and not having enough to do at home. We discussed how to get the family motivated to help at home, also our sons, and if we appreciate it enough when they do.

Mrs. Kampen was thanked for her encouraging introduction and we moved into General Business. The roster was read for next year; Port Kells will be host; afternoon by Lynden. Photocopies and tapes of both introductions will be available; any profit made today will go to CRWRF; please sign cards for missionaries and mission aid workers wives in Brazil; and the Chilliwack ladies were thanked for the good job they had done of hosting the day. We sang Psalm 92: 1,2,3,4,5 and 6 and Mrs. deGlint ended the day in thanksgiving prayer. There was still an opportunity to enjoy refreshments and fellowship before the journey home. We could leave being strengthened and encouraged again by the knowledge of God's love and faithfulness in our lives. **C**

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

### Dear Editor:

Re: The need for a confessional basis for our children's education.

I was a little surprised to learn that after six years of sending my children to one of those "general Christian schools" (as opposed to "THE" non-general Christian schools I suppose) that all this time I was actually "attacking the Word of God," for I "attacked the truth of Revelation." Since when are the confessions

the only way of knowing the "Truth of Revelation"? What a scary thought. Are we to assume that those Christians who were never brought up with reformed confessions have, albeit in ignorance, "attacked the Word of God" all their lives? I think not. As if reformed confessions have the power to make a school, or anyone for that matter, Christian or non-Christian. I know that we, as Canadian Reformed, all too often make this distinction of "good-better-best" of which we, of course, are the best. It is an

argument I've heard often, especially when it comes to school and which, to be perfectly frank, I have no use for because it holds no water. If all we can do is downplay our other Christian brothers and sisters I want no part in it. (Or do we not see them as brothers and sisters?)

Confessions are a good thing and, in my mind, they are a gift from God. Let's not abuse a good thing.

Glen Tams  
Taber, AB



## Dear Editor:

Dr. J. De Jong in his editorial *Which Version Now?* (*Clarion* July 14, 1995) writes that in the NIV "the link to . . . the classical English of the Reformation has been completely severed. . . . The idiom is generally *familiar* rather than dignified." Therefore, according to him, "consistories should be careful before pursuing [sic; pursuing?] a transition to the modern versions."

If I understand Dr. De Jong correctly, then he regards "you" as familiar language, and "Thee" and "Thou" dignified, when it refers to the three Persons of the Trinity, and the only proper language in prayer and praise is therefore "the classical English of the Reformation." Older ones among us, who still remember their Dutch background with "jij" and "U," might be able to follow that reasoning, but those born on this continent, and especially the children, must get the impression that there are two types of languages: the one understandable, the other "well, that's the way it is, but I don't know why."

A further argument of Dr. De Jong in favour of leaving things as they are, is that "the Synod of Winnipeg (1989) adopted the definitive version of our *Book of Praise*." That reasoning is rather arbitrary: Don't do what Synod 1995 recommended, for Synod 1989 came with a definitive version of the *Book of Praise*, and judge that as a kind of a law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be repealed. Therefore, hold 1989 settled and binding until "availability of

the the RSV . . . becomes an insurmountable problem [and] a change becomes unavoidable." Shouldn't we rather say: Since the demise of the RSV is at hand, which was not the case in 1980 or 1989, but was anticipated by Synod Lincoln 1992, let us not disregard what the Committee on Bible Translations reported to Synod 1995, and consider the decision of Synod 1995 settled and binding, as it is not proved to be in conflict with the Word of God or the Church Order. Such an attitude would really promote "uniformity of usage in the whole worship service."

P. Van der Schaaf  
Toronto, ON

## Dear Editor:

I am writing regarding the Meditation offered by the Rev. G. Ph. van Popta entitled "The Death Knell of Denominationalism" in the *Clarion*, Vol. 44, No. 12, of June 16, 1995.

Specifically, I am somewhat confused by the author's choice of the term "denominationalism" to denote factions within the church (such as Paul speaks of, 1 Cor. 3), and discrimination based on race, gender, or status.


The common use of the term "denominationalism" today, does not refer to different factions, but to different federations of churches. And most often these federations do not exist because of differences in race, or gender, but due to differences in teaching and confession. For example, there are at least

five "denominations" or federations in North America, which originate in the Dutch National Church. The differences cannot be attributed to race, but to differences in doctrine and lifestyle.

I am convinced by the historical record of our churches, that we do seek the unity that Christ desired and commanded, and when we do come across denominations separated from us solely on account of race, or some other human characteristic, we follow the guidelines given by Christ to unify.

However, "denominationalism" as defined by the common use of the term, does not hinder and obstruct the work of Christ, it is the result of His work, by which He gathers and preserves a true following, as He Himself teaches us in Luke 12:51-53. And in Matthew 10:34-36, the same teaching is recorded, and Christ speaks of "a sword," which we know from Eph. 6, is the Word of God.

From this, I believe that we should not fight against denominationalism, but rather, courageously bear the sword that Christ Himself has brought, while still seeking the true unity Christ prayed for. Not the unity of those who may cry, "Lord, Lord. . . ." or do "mighty works" in His Name, but instead the true unity of ". . . those who do the will of My Father in heaven."

Yours in Christ,  
E. Salomons  
London, ON 

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# Looking Back

By Bret Davis

Reformation Christian School in Blue Bell has arrived at a notable landmark: five years of operation as a Reformed Christian School. We will mark this occasion of God's blessing on October 28, 1995. We warmly welcome you to attend our celebration and join with us as we express our thanks to God.

Five years of training the covenant children! Now, for the first time since we prayerfully embarked on this ad-

venture, can we pause to look back at these early years of struggle and blessing. We have come to a small rise in the road which we have been commanded to take.

Many of you have vivid memories of the early days of the founding of your own schools; we have just begun to form our own memories. The difficulties of the few early years, when we weren't sure we could make it, now begin to fade from view. Instead, the

work of our Faithful Father comes more clearly into our gaze.

We realize that we have not been alone, for many people within the Canadian/American Reformed Churches as well as our sister churches in the Netherlands, have travelled this road with us. Many were heard at heaven's throne as they asked for the Lord to sustain us on our journey. Our brothers and sisters also gave of their time, talents, and financial resources.

There was a brother who came from British Columbia to install a heating system; two brothers who came from Ontario and labored tirelessly on our construction project; one Christian company has continually amazed us at their commitment to our cause; one brother who gave enough money to purchase our building and to operate for a year; and the list goes on. So very many of you have given to our common cause. These expressions of your commitment to this small group in Blue Bell makes us recall that it is the Lord who blesses, and He who provides what is needed.

The church building, now also the home of our school, is near the final stages of renovation. Turning a 180-year-old building into a school was no easy task! The teachers are pleased to have "real" classrooms.

Our three teachers, Linda Gibson, Ellen Davis, and Brenda Kok, have perseveringly labored to ensure that these younger Reformed Christians are on their way to understanding the creation as God intended. Because of the wide range of ages of students in the two classes, developing the curriculum was a significant challenge.

Along with the skill subjects – math, grammar, spelling, and reading – Teachers have formed their lessons into unit studies. With this approach, even the youngest students have studied such things as the major civilizations and their cultures, and have seen in some detail the battle between the seed of the woman and that of the serpent. They have been able to grasp the history of the church from the Garden through the ages until the present. Not only have they been taught "the three R's", but most importantly, with the

biblical Reformed tools, have analyzed the subjects studied. The children have also been taught the love of good literature. On an average, each student reads about 150 books a year. Greek, French, and Latin have been taught to the older students, and nearly the whole of the Bible has been studied verse by verse.

So you can see, looking back with us over the first five years, that we have much for which to be thankful. Because of our size, we are still limited in our resources, but we will move ahead in faith and obedience.

Again, we invite you to rejoice with us. For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.

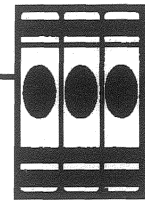
(If you plan to attend please contact Bret Davis at:

34 N. Highland Avenue  
Norristown, PA 19403  
or call: 610-630-1796



## BOOK REVIEW

By P. Aasman



## Meditations

**Twilight**, Andrew Kuyvenhoven. CRC Publications: Grand Rapids, 1994. (price: \$ 2.95 US)

Kuyvenhoven has, after 17 years, published his second book of daily meditations. In the Preface, he states that he could call this volume *Daylight II*, but chose instead to call it *Twilight* because, as he confides, "I have always done better meditating at dusk than at dawn."

One familiar with Kuyvenhoven's writings will expect to find lively and surprising insights into Scripture. This volume does not disappoint. The assigned Scripture passage is rarely more than 10 verses. On average, the meditation is about as long as the Scripture reading. Yet in spite of this

brevity, a combination of vivid imagery and penetrating commentary enables the author to deliver a memorable message.

One will not always agree with the view point expressed, but when you have 365 separate meditations, it is not surprising that one would occasionally disagree. But there are weaknesses. The author tends to moralize at times. For example, the month of February is about Elijah's call to Israel to repent of idolatry. The meditations are very interesting and moving, but they are often not distinctly Christian because one is often not led by the meditation to Jesus Christ either openly or by implication. Although this makes it all the more delightful when at a later date, you are brought by the meditation to the heart

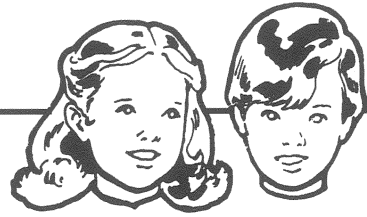
of redemption again, yet it often leaves one with bare moral injunction. Jesus Christ called the bare moral injunctions heavy burdens, hard to bear. However, it will not be difficult for the family to profit from the meditation since it provides focus for discussion on the redemptive nature of each Scripture. Even though the meditations are brief, there are often pointers for such discussion.

Just as bare Scripture reading without meditation on and interaction with the text profits the family little, so the reading of a meditation without reflecting on it and interacting with it will profit the family little. With this in mind, this book will be a help and a delight for family devotion.



# OUR LITTLE MAGAZINE

By Aunt Betty



## Dear Busy Beavers,

Today let's think about a text from the Bible. In the letter of James, we read this text,

*"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only." James 1:22a.*

What do you think that means?  
We hear the Word, God's Word, often.  
We read or listen to the Bible at home,  
at school, and in church.  
In His Word God tells us how to live.

Now, after we hear His Word, we have to *do* what God tells us.

It's like when our Mom or Dad tells us to do something. We have to go and *do* it, we may not say, "Yes, Mom" and not do it!

So when we read the Bible, let's find out what God wants us to do, and let's do it!

## Quiz Time!

One of the animals mentioned most in the Bible is sheep. Fill in the blanks with the right name.

- \_\_\_\_\_ was a famous shepherd boy who became a king. 1 Samuel 16:1,13.
- \_\_\_\_\_ said that God would feed his flock like a shepherd. Isaiah 40:11.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is the good shepherd who knows his sheep. John 10:14.
- \_\_\_\_\_ told the shepherds about the birth of Jesus. Luke 2:8,9.
- \_\_\_\_\_ was a shepherd while his brother was a farmer. Genesis 4:2.
- \_\_\_\_\_ included in his daily supplies one hundred sheep. 1 Kings 4:22,23.
- \_\_\_\_\_ led the Israelites in an offering of seven thousand sheep. 2 Chronicles 15:8-11.
- \_\_\_\_\_ took brown sheep for his own. Genesis 30:33.
- \_\_\_\_\_ received the first fleece of a sheep. Deut. 18:4.
- \_\_\_\_\_ gave the king of Israel many sheep as tribute. 2 Kings 3:4.

## WELLS

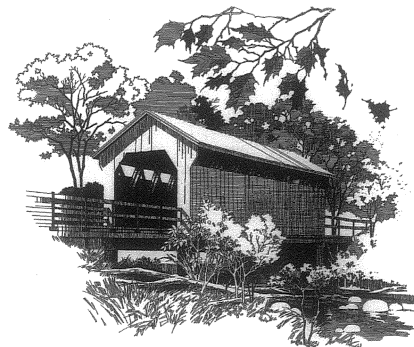
Wells were very important in Bible times. Match the person with the proper statement about wells.

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Herdsmen of Gerar, Genesis 26:20 | a. Produced bitter water.  |
| 2. Isaac, Genesis 26:18             | b. Was given water at the well in Beer.  |
| 3. Jesus, John 4:6-14               | c. Fought over a well.   |
| 4. Uzziah, 2 Chronicles 26:9,10     | d. Witnessed to a woman at a well.   |
| 5. Isaiah, Isaiah 12:3              | e. Built towers and wells in the desert.   |
| 6. Abraham's servant, Gen. 24:10-13 | f. Waited at a well to find Isaac a wife.  |
| 7. Joseph, Genesis 49:22            | g. Refused to drink water because three men risked their lives getting it for him. |
| 8. Moses, Numbers 21:16             | h. Was blessed as "a fruitful bough by a well."                                    |
| 9. David, 2 Sam. 23:15-17           | i. Prophesied that people would "draw water out of the wells of salvation."        |
| 10. Marah, Exodus 15:23             | j. Dug again the wells of his father.  |

## OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

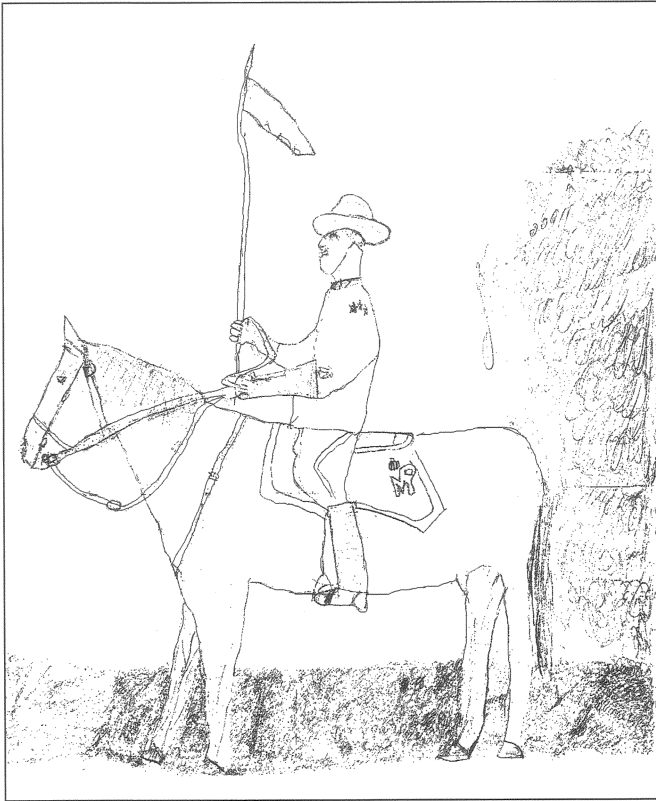
It's almost October already, so here we are to wish these Busy Beavers a very Happy Birthday and a wish for the Lord's blessing on their lives in the coming year!

Jaelyn Bartels	1	Amanda Jager	11
Alyssa Lodder	2	Joel Jelsma	13
Crystal Dekker	2	Kristina Fennema	17
Arlene Winkelaar	3	Byron Tuininga	17
Richelle Kruisselbrink	3	Amy VanderHorst	18
Laura Kanis	4	Leo Knol	20
Gerard VanWoudenberg	5	Cynthia VanLeeuwen	22
Trevor VanderVelde	7	Colette VandenBos	25
Katherine Wiersema	7	Alisha Dokter	28
Marja Vanderkamp	8	Michael Janssens	28
Florence Bouma	10	Michelle Dekker	29



# ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE

by Busy Beaver *Reuel Feenstra*



## BIBLE CODE

by Busy Beaver *Denise Vis*

A-1	G-7	M-13	S-19	Y-25
B-2	H-8	N-14	T-20	Z-26
C-3	I-9	O-15	U-21	
D-4	J-10	P-16	V-22	
E-5	K-11	Q-17	W-23	
F-6	L-12	R-18	X-24	

20 8 5 6 5 1 18 15 6 20 8 5

12 15 18 4 9 19 20 8 5

2 5 7 9 14 14 9 14 7 15 6

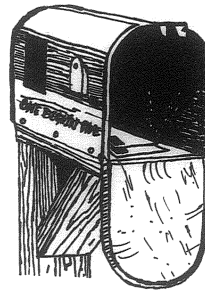
23 9 19 4 15 13 (Prov. 9:10)



## SCRAMBLED BIBLES NAMES

by Busy Beaver *Daniel Vis*

1. obcja \_\_\_\_\_
2. haasr \_\_\_\_\_
3. alerhc \_\_\_\_\_
4. ebethiaz \_\_\_\_\_
5. uaes \_\_\_\_\_
6. khebera \_\_\_\_\_
7. odg \_\_\_\_\_
8. vaddi \_\_\_\_\_



## FROM THE MAILBOX

Hello, *Reuel Feenstra*. I guess you were sad that a raccoon killed a few of your pets! Did you hear any noise that night? Thanks for the excellent picture of the Mounted Police! Bye, Reuel.

Hi, *Michelle Linde*. Sounds like you had a very exciting summer holiday! How is school going now? Keep up the good work on your drawing! Bye, Michelle.

Hello, *Tamara VanLeeuwen*. What a nice picture you sent me. The colours are beautiful. But if you want me to put a picture in the *Clarion* it has to be in black and white, ok? Bye, Tamara.

Answers to Scrambled Bible Names:

- |            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| 8. David   | 4. Elizabeth |
| 7. Cod     | 3. Rachel    |
| 6. Rebekah | 2. Sarah     |
| 5. Esau    | 1. Jacob     |

### Aunt Betty

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

That's all for today!  
Love to you all!

Aunt Betty 

With thankfulness to the Lord we are pleased to announce the birth of our first child, a son, born July 19, 1995

**KYLE ROBERT**

Tony and Jodie Supér

1st grandchild for  
Bob and Coby Hellewell

2nd grandchild for  
Henry and Ann Supér

7445-132 Street  
Box 1010  
Surrey, BC V3W 1J8

The Lord has blessed our family with the birth of

**KALEB EDWARD**

Born July 12, 1995

A brother for *Luanne, Amanda, Joshua, and Jodi*

Ed and Lorraine Feenstra  
(nee DeBoer)

RR 2, Diltz Road  
Dunnville, ON N1A 2W2

We thank our heavenly Father, who blessed our lives richly with the birth of our third child, a daughter

**JESSICA LEANNE**

Born August 11, 1995

A sister for *Shawn and Sarah Marten and Henrietta Riepema*  
(nee de Witt)

122 Colborne Street  
Elora, ON N0B 1S0

*Psalm 147:4*

*He determines the number of the stars and calls them each by name.*

We thank the Lord for blessing us with the birth of our second child, a son

**RILEY JAMES**

Born August 21, 1995

A little brother for *Meagan Sherri*

Proud parents are

Pieter and Tineke Nijenhuis  
(nee DeRuiter)

25 Hastings Boulevard  
Guelph, ON N1E 4G3

*O give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good, for His steadfast love endures forever.*

With great thankfulness to our heavenly Father we are pleased to announce the birth of our dear son

**BRETT MITCHELL**

Born on July 22, 1995

A brother for *Carissa Joy Caitlin Dawn*

Adrian and Jacqueline Hamoen

Box 31  
Vega, AB T0G 2H0

With great joy and thankfulness to the Lord, who has made all things well, we joyfully announce the birth of our second child, a son

**JEFFREY EDWARD**

Born: July 02, 1995

A new little brother for *Dwayne*

His thankful parents

John and Wilma Jansen  
(nee Gansekoele)

23 Ross Street  
Elora, ON N0B 1S0

In thankfulness to the Lord who made everything well, we are happy to announce the birth of our son and brother

**MITCHELL ALEXANDER**

Born: August 10, 1995

A brother for

*Riemer, William, Adriana, Gregory, Ava, Anita, David, Bryan, Kristofer*

Allan and Corrie Faber

7195-115th Street  
Delta, BC V4E 1X8

Our covenant God has richly blessed us by granting us a healthy son. We named him

**JORDAN RICHARD**

Born July 14, 1995

Ray and Hannah Buitenbos  
(nee Kingma)

12th grandchild for  
Mr. and Mrs. John Buitenbos

26th grandchild for  
Rev. and Mrs. Piet Kingma

20th great-grandchild for  
Mrs. R.A. VanderSluis

28th great-grandchild for  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Buitenbos

1170 Billings Court 3B  
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*"... but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."*

*Isaiah 40:31*

Knowing and thanking the Lord, who in His infinite wisdom, and through mysterious ways unknown to us, has brought us together, we

**META BOSSCHER**

and

**JAY KOSTER**

wish to share our joy, and announce our engagement.

September 1, 1995

1283 Walkers Line  
Burlington, ON L7R 3X5

*Praise is due to Thee, O God, in Zion;  
and to Thee shall vows be performed.*

*Psalm 65:1*

With thankfulness and praise to  
God, we

**MONICA NORDEMAN  
and  
DON BOS**

joyfully announce our  
engagement.

August 19, 1995

5460 Bell School Line  
RR 6 Milton, ON L9T 2Y1

*"O give thanks to the LORD, for He  
is good; for His steadfast love en-  
dures forever."*

*Psalm 118:29*

With thankfulness we

**KELLY DEVRIES  
and  
SARAH VANDELLEN**

announce our engagement.

August 18, 1995

14463-80th Avenue  
Surrey, BC V3S 8C2

*Sing to Him, sing praises to Him.  
Tell of all His wonderful works!*

*Psalm 105:2*

With thankfulness to our heav-  
enly Father, who has brought  
us together, we

**ADRIAN PAUL  
VANDENHAAK**

**and**

**SYLVIA VANDERVEEN**

joyfully announce our  
engagement.

September 9, 1995

17108-64 Avenue B416  
Edmonton, AB T5T 2C9



With thankfulness to our Father, we

**CATHARINA CHRISTINA**

daughter of  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul de Ruiter  
and

**RONALD WILLIAM**

son of  
Mrs. R. Beukema

are happy to announce our forthcoming marriage  
which will be held, the Lord willing, October 27,  
1995 at the Canadian Reformed Church in Carman.

Rev. P.K.A. de Boer officiating.

RR 4

Fergus, ON N1M 2W5

*Ephesians 5:31*

With great joy and thankfulness to God, Mr. and  
Mrs. Ben Vanderzwaag are pleased to announce the  
marriage of their daughter

**KIMBERLEY MARIE**

**to**

**PAUL ANTHONY**

son of Mr. and Mrs. John Van Eerde.

The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on  
Saturday, October 7, 1995 at 2:30 p.m. at Maranatha  
Canadian Reformed Church in Fergus, Ontario.

Rev. W. den Hollander officiating.

Future address

54 Amaranth St. East

Grand Valley, ON L0N 1G0

*"Let Thy steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we  
hope in Thee."*

*Psalm 33:22*

With joy and thanksgiving to God Mr. and Mrs.  
Harry Scholtens announce the forthcoming mar-  
riage of their daughter

**HILDA ELISABETH JOHANNA**

**to**

**WAYNE MICHAEL**

son of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Bartels.

The ceremony will take place, the Lord willing, on  
Friday, October 6, 1995 at 2:30 p.m. at Rehoboth  
Canadian Reformed Church, Burlington, ON.

Rev. G.H. Visscher officiating.

*Future Address:*

3552 Highway 56

RR 2

Binbrook, ON L0R 1C0

*Colossians 3:14, 15*

*And above all things put on love which binds every-  
thing in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule  
in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one  
body, and be thankful.*

Mr. and Mrs. A. Witteveen of Abbotsford, B.C. are  
happy to announce the marriage of their daughter,

**HETTY**

**to**

**JULIUS**

son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Jagersma of Coaldale, Alberta.

The ceremony took place on August 4, 1995 in the  
Abbotsford Canadian Reformed Church with Rev.  
M. VanderWel officiating.

42326 Elizabeth Avenue

Chilliwack, BC V2R 5C9

Zuidwolde (DR) 1945 ~ October 3 ~ 1995 Beamsville, ON

Ps. 91: 1,2

*He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High, who abides in the shadow of the Almighty, will say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress; my God in whom I trust."*

With the words of this text we are pleased to announce the 50th wedding anniversary of

**MARTIN VANDERVELDE**

and

**ANNE VANDERVELDE (nee Hansma)**

Due to their personal circumstances, we hope to celebrate this joyful event, the Lord willing, within our family circle.

Their thankful children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren:

Wellandport, ON: Henk and Emily VanderVelde

Dugald, MB: Angelina and Tim DeGelder  
Sylvia, Joanna, Bryan

Wellandport, ON: Mark and his fiancée,  
Christy Stoffels  
Ingrid and Jake Jansema  
Vanessa

Greg  
Winston  
Nicoline

Hamilton, ON: Carla and Tom Zietsma  
Jonathan  
Jared  
Nadia  
Joel

Burlington, ON: Irene and Collin Spithof  
Daren  
Leanne  
Erica  
Carissa  
Ramon

Fenwick, ON: Taco and Margaret VanderVelde  
Brendan  
Aren  
Jordan  
Marisa  
Alexa

Thamesville, ON: Evelien and Clare Wiersma  
Jolene  
Chandra  
Jenica  
Kellen

Beamsville, ON: Fred and Grace VanderVelde  
Hannele  
Nadine  
Kendra  
Jordana

Andy and Brenda VanderVelde  
Breanne  
Laurissa

Mailing Address:  
RR 2, 4219 Mountainview Road  
Beamsville, ON L0R 1B2

1970 ~ October 2 ~ 1995

**JOHN and HARMA GRIT (nee Keep)**

We thank and praise the LORD for blessing and guiding Dad and Mom through their first 25 years together. We pray for the LORD's everlasting guidance in the years to come.

With Love:

Grand Valley, ON: Margaret and Dave Van Ommen  
Crystal, Shawn, Elizabeth and  
Nicholas

Orangeville, ON: Lori and Gary Kottelenberg  
Kayla  
Paula  
Terry  
Amanda  
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Benjamin

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October 3, 1970 ~ October 3, 1995

*"I can do all things in Him who strengthens me."*

Phil 4:13

With joy and gratitude to our heavenly Father for His guidance and care throughout their marriage, we are pleased to announce the 25th wedding anniversary of our dear parents and grandparents

**HARRY and TINI BOUWMAN (nee Meima)**

Their thankful children and grandchildren

Burlington, ON: Teny and Gerhard Visscher  
Brad, Charlene, Daryn, Mark,  
Wayne, Estelle

Kelmscott, Australia: Clarence and Arlene Bouwman  
Harwin, Jared, Riana, Tristin

Fergus, ON: Jake and Anita Bouwman  
Harold, Gregory, Richard, Lynetta,  
Curtis, Brandon, Kenton

Abbotsford, BC: Jeannette Bouwman

Fergus, ON: Teresa and John Jongsma  
Martin, Lydia, Angela, Katrina,  
Harmen

Calgary, AB: Otto and Jeanette Bouwman  
Jeremy, Georgene, Clarissa, Derrick

There will be an open house on Monday, October 9, 1995 from 2 - 4 p.m. in the Canadian Reformed Church of Fergus. Best wishes only please.

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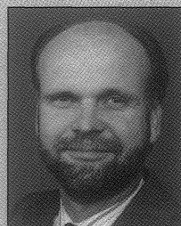
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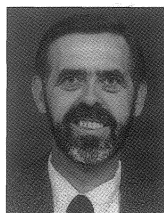
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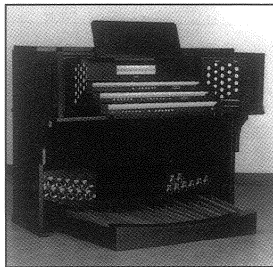


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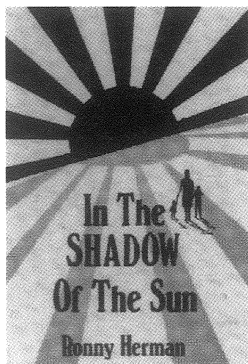
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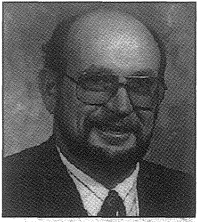
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