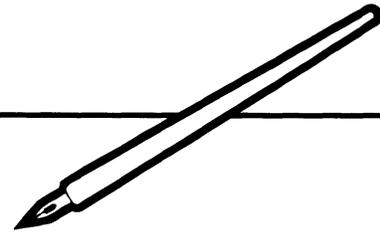


Clarion
THE CANADIAN REFORMED MAGAZINE

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Thanksgiving 1991

Thanksgiving in the year 1991 is not an automatic thing. It is good that we think about, and have to think about, the reasons we have for giving thanks to God for granting a good harvest and for the fruit on the labour of our hands. Of course, it never should be an automatic thing. We must always think about what we do, not the least with respect to our relation with God. This is not the point. What I mean is the fact that for many the fruit of the labour of their hands is not abundant. I had a conversation with some farmers. One does not recommend to his sons to take over the farm because, he said, there is no bread for a young, growing family in a farm. Another one had to sell the farm because the payments he had to make on a fairly big loan had become practically impossible. The harvest was and is good, in general, but the prices are very low. Some farmers lose the farm through bankruptcy.

I also spoke to a few framers. They told me that about two years ago they were paid approximately four and a half dollars per square foot. At the moment, one said, it is approximately two dollars. And another was even below that price. For some the income is so low that there is hardly enough to make ends meet. Or it is not there. We can also regularly hear of truckers protesting against the government's measures which are destroying them. Thus, there are farmers and people with a construction or other business who see their once flourishing enterprise break down, so that they have no other choice than to be declared bankrupt. This picture is not confined to Ontario.

There is another aspect. Thanksgiving in the year 1991 will possibly be combined with other people than farmers and contractors in construction and small business owners, for instance, government employees, going on strike for higher wages and other securities. They demand more in a situation in which the government's income is lower because of the recession. In that way, too, most of us will become a little poorer yet. The governments do not go broke yet. They have the possibility to increase the taxes a little more and add loan to loan for a yet further increasing the taxes.

Thanksgiving in 1991 - is it still possible?

Let us dive a bit deeper. Why does the government need so much money from the taxpayers? Part of the problem is the enormous bureaucracy. Another part is the fact that from twenty-five to thirty per cent of the tax dollar is needed for paying the debts of the country made by the governments by taking out loan after loan. When a person spends more money that he has or receives, he will soon go broke. This counts for both private and business life. Here the government is in an advantageous position. They can increase the taxes and continue spending more than they get in. Thus, they can, in

fact, let others, the citizens, pay for the loans and for the interest. And the government can speculate that there will be a constant economic growth. When it really comes to the point, is this not a form of stealing? Stealing is sinning against God's law. We cannot build our human society with transgressing God's commandments. Such transgressing will only break society down and destroy it. In fact, not only the government is to blame. Many in the Canadian society, and in all countries in our world, live for money. Greed is dominating the thinking and actions of many people.

Stealing and greed are not the only sins. The government allows murder of life that is given by God, especially of the unborn. This is done under the pressure of the adherents of modern humanism and because this humanism is the philosophy of many government officials. This same humanistic system of government and a large part of the population, living by the so-called human rights, often protects criminals at the cost of their victims. Here is a lack of justice in the biblical sense of the word. In the matter of sexuality God's laws are ignored. There is adultery and fornication. And the government, for instance in sexual education for the youth of the country in the public schools, does the opposite of fighting free sex by promoting "safe sex" among students. Besides, in our society homosexuality must be considered as an alternative form of experiencing ones sexuality.

It will not be difficult to present a similar picture with respect to the transgressing of the fifth, the sixth and the ninth commandments, too. And here we are not even touching the first four commandments of God's law. There is no love for God and no kindness for the neighbour in the land (Hos. 4:1).

In other words, we live in a society and under a governing and judicial system for which the revealed will of God is not the norm. We live in a situation in which the laws of God are rejected and ignored. However, the laws of God cannot be transgressed without grave consequences. Lawlessness brings God's punishment not only on individuals but also on nations. This is not just Old Testament language. We find the same in the New. Paul writes that God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness (Rom. 1:18). And in Eph. 5:5-6 the apostle says that because of immorality and covetousness, sex and greed, "the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience." Besides, we all know of the plagues of God described in the book of Revelation, which are brought upon a world and its inhabitants who refuse to repent (Chapters 6, 8-9, 16).

Thanksgiving 1991: it is a wonder of God's goodness that there was a good harvest, that the grain in the fields and the fruits on shrubs and trees did grow and mature, so that there was a good harvest in many areas. It is the undeserved goodness of God that there is still labour and that there are the

fruits of that labour. It is the undeserved goodness of God that, although perhaps not as easily as before, we do have the means to live and eat and drink. God still holds on to His promise given to Noah, after the flood (Gen. 8:22),

While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease. In the light of all this, it is clear that we have many reasons to thank God for all the good gifts in harvest and labour, in life and life possibilities, granted us once again, in 1991. God did not pour out all His wrath, yet. He still gives time for the preaching of His Word in this world. This gospel is still being preserved by faithful churches. It is still publicly proclaimed in the world, in order that people may repent and turn from their unbelief and sin back to God and to His Word.

Thanksgiving 1991: how shall we give thanks? Shall we give thanks because we, personally, still saw God's gracious blessing on the labours of our hands? Or shall we put our thanksgiving in a broader framework? God places His church in this world to fulfill its task of being the light of Christ in it. Therefore, let us thank God that we, with the world in which we live, may still live in God's "today when you hear His voice do not harden your heart" (Ps. 95, Heb. 3-4).

Let us show true thankfulness that appears in thankful faithfulness and in humble service, in love, to God and to the neighbour, according to God's commandments. Let us be thankful that God still gives us all what we need for such a life for the glory of His name and the coming of His kingdom in obedient service. 

The Impact of New Trends in Biblical Interpretation on Preaching₂

By J. De Jong

Second part of the inaugural address given at the Convocation of the Theological College, September 6, 1991.

Reformed interpretation

How ought one to read and to preach on Mark 2, 1-12? It is true that there is no explicit reference in the text to the fact that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Yet that is present in the text by implication, and in the context of the whole gospel of Mark. For the gospel of Mark opens with the words: "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God," Mark 1, 1. Here we see how much proper interpretation is to be governed by the principle of the unity of Scripture! In the gospel, Jesus is immediately introduced as the chosen Servant of God, the Messiah. A voice from heaven says: "Thou art my Beloved Son, with Thee I am well pleased," 1, 11. Later, the man with the unclean spirit says: "I know who you are, the Holy One of God," 1, 24. So here in our text we find the self-revelation of Him who is the only Son of God, the Saviour, the Messiah. In a sense the Pharisees are right in asserting, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Therefore Jesus proves that He is also true God, and that He comes from the very bosom of God as His messenger to save the world. At the same time, the context makes clear that Jesus went about preaching the gospel of repentance: "The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the

gospel," 1, 15. He is administering the salvation of God. He is on the way to the cross! Hence He receives and possesses the authority to forgive sins. The paralyzed man and his helpers believed that Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of David, who was to redeem Israel, and establish His kingdom of justice, righteousness and peace.

The key to the passage is thus exactly that part of the passage which both Bultmann and the interpreters of the new hermeneutic prefer to play down or ignore, viz. The statement of Jesus: "My son, your sins are forgiven." Jesus here publicly reveals Himself as the Messiah of God. For He discloses Himself as one who is both able to forgive sins, and mandated to do so. Only God can forgive sins; hence Jesus is the only Son of God, (1, 1). And the miracle of the healing of the paralytic serves to confirm this reality which He wished to impress upon all present, and all of us today. At the same time the Lord Jesus shows that the true road to healing and physical and spiritual renewal is through repentance and true faith. Healing and restoration finds its basis in sharing the forgiveness of sins!

So we come to the heart of the message of this text for the church today. Not the paralyzed man, but Jesus Christ must stand in the center. Jesus reveals Himself here as the Son of God who is the promised Messiah. And He accents the most important element in His work.

He came to forgive sins, and through this forgiveness lay the basis for the reconciliation of sinners with God and the restoration of life in the covenant with God. Therefore through faith in Him and through being ingrafted in His death and resurrection we may be restored!

Why do these new interpreters end up with a such hollow gospel? With all their accent on the event of the word they turn a blind eye to the enduring content of the word. That content is given to us in a fixed form, the canon of Scripture. At bottom the new interpreters have abandoned the confession concerning the unity and the inspiration of the Scriptures. For them, the Bible is nothing but a loose collection of man-made stories. To be sure, the stories reflect a meeting with the divine, but the exact character of that meeting is left undisclosed. Some words of Jesus are held to be authentic, but there are no guarantees, and no certainties.

This new trend in interpretation also has no room for the work of the Holy Spirit. The new interpreters presuppose a certain type of experience through which the Word can happen to people. Experience sets the basis for empathy, the fusion of the two worlds, the world of the text and the world of the listener. We also insist that in the proclamation of the text, the sermon must be addressed to the person in his language, and in his world of thought. But, as Paul says, the unspiritual man does not understand the

spiritual things of God, (1 Cor. 2,14). The proclamation of the Word always needs the attending work of the Holy Spirit to open the hearts of the believers. Acts 16, 14 tells us that as Paul was preaching, the Lord opened Lydia's heart to give heed to what was said by Paul. The Holy Spirit works through the Word, and so brings us to true understanding.

In summary, the impact of the new trends in biblical interpretation is to silence the preacher, and to hollow out the gospel message. Unfortunately we are not helped by these modern developments, except in so far as they make us rethink and reevaluate our own position. The Reformed approach to preaching will always insist on returning to the text. Yet the text must not be seen as a limited and time-bound expression of God's Word, suited only for the culture of the day in which it was issued. God's Word as this is written in Scripture is a Word for all time. It portrays Jesus as the Messiah!

Only by accepting the unity, authority and inspiration of Scripture in the obedience of true faith can we as preachers of God's Word properly take hold of His message, and so properly pass it on to others. We are servants of God who are called to "rightly handle" the word of truth, 2 Tim. 2,15. The apostle Paul says that the Word of God must be "properly administered," and the term here literally says: "properly cut and divided." This presupposes accepting the unity of Scripture, and the unity of the books of the Bible. It also demands that we see no cultural gap between *then* and *now*. In Hebrews 3,7 we note how the writer, quoting an ancient text, says... "Therefore, the Holy Spirit says...."

Points to ponder

Can we learn anything from the "new hermeneutic"? Clearly, it has over-accentuated the event character of the word, at the expense of its content. Yet, while upholding its content, we must not depreciate the event character of the proclamation. The proclaimed word should reach and affect the hearers! The preacher should do everything possible to make the whole service a joyous and upbuilding celebration of the victory of Christ! The Reformed worship service should not be a dull and dismal affair which fails to engage anyone. The Reformed sermon should not be delivered as an academic lecture. Rather the preacher must use all his energies to give a forceful and lively presentation of the good news. He must administer the Word in the context of contemporary culture and language. He must appeal to the hearts and consciences of his listeners! If this is done in true humility and obedience, the preacher can count on the work of the Holy Spirit with and

through his sermon. Hearing and understanding occurs, through the power of the Spirit, in the obedience of true faith.

Here we can agree with the new interpreters that the word should always be addressed to the situation, and speak the language of the time in the situation. The congregations do not need sermons which ignore the basic needs and circumstances within them. They need ministers who bring God's Word for the situation at hand in the congregation. Fresh study more than anything else promotes the freshness and liveliness of the delivery of the sermon. For the minister should be engaged in his text. He should feel he has a message to proclaim. If he does his best in this frame of mind, then the Holy Spirit Himself will use the sermon to do His work. Then there will be a lively connection between the pulpit and the pew, through the working of the Spirit, and under the blessing of the Lord. Our hope and prayer is that the training for the ministry, also in the department of preaching, will serve this end!

Board of governors!

In the course of your work with regard to the continuation of the instruction at this institution you came upon my name to fill one of the two vacancies which arose in 1989. You recommended my name to the General Synod of Winnipeg to fill the vacancy created by the retirement of Dr. K. Deddens. I can assure you that filling his shoes is not easy. I wish to thank you heartily for the confidence and trust you have placed in me, and I hope and pray that you may never need to regret this decision. I also count on your continued support and cooperation as I make my way in these new disciplines.

Board of trustees!

On behalf of my wife and family I would like to express our sincere thanks to you for all you have done in facilitating our move to Hamilton, and in assisting us in our most recent relocation. We trust we may count on your continued support with regard to our financial and practical needs.

Esteemed colleagues!

I also wish to thank you publicly for the way I have been received into the circle of the colleagues, and for all the support I have received as a novice professor of this College. We may enjoy good fellowship and brotherly harmony in our work, and I hope that this climate will remain for us all in the future. Particularly encouraging for me has been the support of the emeriti professors who served as my teachers at this College, and in particular I recall with gratitude my teachers in the departments with which I

have been entrusted: the late Rev. H. Scholten and Rev. G. VanDooren.

Consistory of Burlington South!

You have done much to open the way for me to continue my studies. For this we as a family will always be grateful to you. At the time, none of us expected that it would end up with a teaching appointment. Yet the day came when you were asked to "hand over" your minister for the work of the churches in common at this institution. Particularly in the last few years we greatly enjoyed the work in the ministry, and I still miss the regular visits in the South congregation. In a real sense I am still attached to your congregation, and I hope we can always interact in brotherly harmony and love in the future.

Father and mother!

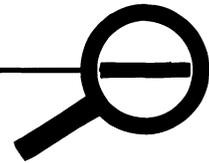
It is with gratitude that we as a family may witness your presence with us this evening. You have done much to assist us at every step of the way, also in our years in the ministry, and again in our most recent move. We are especially thankful to the Lord for your good health, and for the opportunities to enjoy so much regular contact with you. May He guide and keep you also in the future!

Students!

After a considerable period of absence from the student world you have again given me an impression of what student life is all about today. I have enjoyed the interaction with a group of young men who take their work seriously and are eager to learn. I pledge to do the best I can to provide you with the information and the tools to conduct an effective and rewarding ministry, and I trust that I may count on your patience and understanding as I work my way into the new areas with which I have been entrusted.

Allow me a final word of thanks to the churches which I am now privileged to serve in this capacity. Those of you who know me will recognize in me nothing more than an ordinary son of the churches who later developed a particular interest in the study of theology. Still later, the Lord made me a minister, for which I will always be grateful. But also in the position of teacher in the training for the ministry I have only one desire: to be of service in the best possible way for the good of all, and the well-being of the churches. I deeply appreciate the regular contact I may enjoy with the congregations in this area, and I hope and pray that the Lord will strengthen the bond between the College and the churches, so that all our work may be as effective as possible, for the upbuilding of the church, and for the glory of God's name. Let Him be honoured in our lives, now and always! 

By C. Van Dam



A Confessional Conference

Plans are in the making for a confessional conference for Presbyterian and Reformed churches. *Christian Renewal* (September 23, 1991) reported that thirteen men, eight from the Christian Reformed Church (CRC), two from the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), two from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) and one from an independent Reformed Church came together in St. Catharines, Ontario in August to discuss the need for such a conference and to come up with a statement of intent.

The statement of intent

The St. Catharines meeting came up with the following statement of intent.

1. That a Confessional Conference be held October, 1992, at a place to be determined by the Organizing Committee; all persons attending shall be delegated by a church.

2. That the purpose of the Confessional Conference shall be:

(a) to address the issues of egalitarianism and origins. To that end the Conference shall:

(i) articulate a clear statement of the hermeneutical and revelational principles involved;

(ii) develop confessional statements to serve as the biblical response to the two contemporary issues of egalitarianism and origins; and

(b) to explore ways in which God might bring us into one united Reformed church based on the Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards.

3. That the steering committee elect an organizing committee composed of 5 members and instruct it to make recommendations to the steering committee concerning the holding of the conference including the venue, agenda, procedure and publicity.

Appreciation and questions

It is clear that behind this statement of intent is a godly concern about the in-

fluence of evolutionism, feminism, and other manifestations of the spirits of this age. We can identify with this committee on that score for we share their apprehension and we wish them well in their struggle to be true to the Lord and His Word. It will be a very good thing to discuss these current problems in a conference and generate a greater sensitivity to what professing Christians are up against. The papers which are read at the conference can be published and if sufficient unanimity exists, a summary of biblical teaching can be made available for the general public. Also the matter of exploring ways to bring about a united Reformed church based on the

Three Forms of Unity and the Westminster Standards is worthy of time at a conference (although I do not see how all these weighty topics can be adequately dealt with in one and the same conference). Indeed the unity of Presbyterian and Reformed churches is a matter that is good to discuss, in whatever forum, private or public. To be sure, ultimately the churches themselves will, however, have to deal with this matter and make decisions. A conference cannot do the work of the churches.

With all the appreciation I have with the goals of such a conference, I do have difficulty with the stated objective of developing confessional statements. Is a



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conference as envisaged here able to deal adequately with developing and agreeing on confessional statements? If a group of delegates from different ecclesiastical affiliations and backgrounds come together to draw up a common confession in the face of certain modern evils, the result could very well be a confessional statement that is stronger on the negatives, i.e., strong on being against many things, and weaker on the positive. It is relatively easy to agree on what we are against and to draft a document accordingly. But can such a document really be expected to serve the truly ecumenical purpose of actually uniting in a positive way the different churches that could get involved in this enterprise? That is, will such a declaration really be instrumental in any concrete way to bring together under one ecclesiastical roof those who belong together? In all fairness, I doubt this. In the July issue of the *Mid-America Messenger* reference is made to articulating "a common faith response (confession)" to the enemies of the day. The article goes on to say that such a testimony could function in several ways. The first way mentioned is that it could be used by any congregation or denomination "to tell others where it stands in terms of current debates." Now the temptation would be real for a conservative congregation to adopt such a statement or confession and as a consequence avoid making other more difficult decisions, (such as leaving a church, i.e., "denomination" that tolerates and propagates false doctrine). After all, such a congregation could reason that the adoption of this confessional statement is sufficient action to remain a true church of the Lord. If that were to happen, then true reformation would have been hindered because the congregation in question was lulled into a false sense of security because she adopted a certain biblical statement and her responsibility over against the deformation in the "denomination" would have been played down.

Whose responsibility?

This brings me to a second point. Is it the responsibility of a conference or of the church to agree on confessional statements in response to new attacks on the truth? Biblically and historically the answer is the church. The church is "the pillar and bulwark of the truth" (1 Tim. 3:15) and has to guard what has been entrusted to her. The Synod of Dordt and the Westminster Assembly determined the confessional bases of re-

spectively Reformed and Presbyterian churches. If it is the responsibility of the church, then why not leave this to churches to initiate and decide on? Is a private initiative, laudable though it be in intent and purpose, not inappropriate when such an enterprise is something to be left for the church since it is clearly in the church's domain? The majority of those present were from the CRC and this initiative arose from within the CRC. Why not raise this matter at the next meeting of the Christian Reformed Alliance to be held in November? That is an organization of church councils which decided a year ago already to tackle one of the points on the agenda of the Confessional Conference, namely, unity among like-minded churches. The issue of a contemporary confessional response to the current crisis would fit on this agenda.

A new confession necessary?

There are other matters that could be raised as well. Assuming that we would be up to the task to produce a new confessional document, the first question that should be addressed is whether we need a new confessional statement at this time. Is the question of creation/evolution not adequately covered by our existing confessions (Belgic Confession, Art. 12-14; Heidelberg Catechism, L.D. 9)? Should the classic Reformed liturgical forms for the ordination of officebearers and for the solemnization of marriage not provide adequate and repeated opportunity for biblical teaching

on the roles of man and woman, husband and wife? In any case, the question whether we really need a new confession should be honestly raised. The need for such a document cannot be a foregone conclusion.

In summary

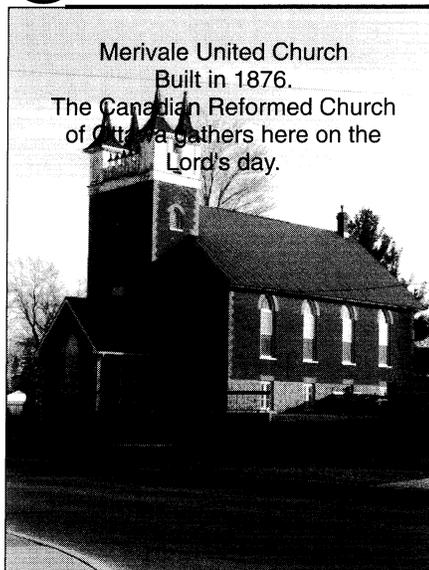
In summary, there are actually three separate issues that this confessional conference would deal with. The difficulty is that not all these issues, as they have been formulated, belong on their table. The first issue, the discussing of the current problems respecting origins and feminism, properly belong at such a conference and such a forum will probably be very beneficial.

The second matter, the development of confessional statements in response to a current crisis, belongs to the province of churches affiliated together in a federation or "denomination," or (within the present situation of the CRC) an Alliance (or other official conservative body that may be formed). To stay close to home, if I may take the Canadian Reformed Churches as an example, because these churches have agreed on the doctrine and promise to maintain it, even linguistic changes in the confessions are discussed at the level of the General Synod. If there is a desire for a new confessional statement, a consistory should be approached and if there is support for the idea it can be taken via the ecclesiastical way to General Synod.

The third matter, ecclesiastical unity, can be discussed in all kinds of forums, private and public, but the proper place for actually dealing with it is at the synod, or in special situations as that in the CRC, the Alliance or a similar such body. A synod, or such an Alliance representing a union of Reformation minded councils, can appoint committees to meet representatives of other churches and so proceed on this issue. A single conference with delegates from congregations and church bodies tackling all these issues at once will invite confusion.

The above was written by a sympathetic observer. Who cannot but be warm for the cause of Christ in fighting heresy and seeking the true unity of all believers? On the other hand, we should not rush into things because we "must do something." But, we should leave for ecclesiastical assemblies what belongs in their province. It is good to heed the divine injunction. "All things should be done properly and in orderly manner" (1 Cor. 14:40). C

OUR COVER



An "Election Theology" of Covenant

By D. Engelsma

A discussion on the relation between Covenant and Election. See my reply in this issue.

J. De Jong

One thing becomes clear from Dr. De Jong's contribution to the discussion concerning the Reformed doctrine of the covenant with the children of believers: the doctrine of the "Liberated" and the doctrine of the PRC concerning the covenant of God with the children of believers are two, sharply differing doctrines. Their difference concerns basic truths of the Reformed faith; exegesis of crucially important passages of Holy Scripture; understanding of the Canons of Dordt; and the practical matter of the approach to the baptized, covenant children.

The "Liberated" teaching is that God makes the covenant promise, "I will be the God of your children," with all that this promise contains, to every child of believing parents. With this promise comes the demand that the child believe in God when he grows up *as a condition upon which the promise depends for its realization in the child.*

The doctrine of the PRC is that the covenant promise, with all that it contains, is for the elect children of believing parents only. The demand or calling that accompanies the promise, rather than being a condition upon which the fulfillment of the promise depends, is based upon the promise and constitutes both the way in which God realizes the promise (the way of faith) and the part in the covenant (believing) of the one taken into God's covenant by the promise.

In order that the issue between us not be obscured or confused, several points in the debate must be clarified. First, I did not misrepresent the "Liberated" doctrine when I wrote that it teaches that God extends His covenant grace to all the children of believers. This is sim-

ply what it means that His covenant promise is to them all. The covenant promise is a gracious promise. At the very least, it makes known the gracious attitude of God toward the object of the promise, as well as His desire to save the one to whom the promise is given. This is certainly what the PRC understand by the covenant promise, although we also hold that the promise is gracious in the sense that it works the renewing power of salvation in the one to whom it is given.

But the "Liberated" too regard the promise as gracious in the sense that it makes known the favourable attitude of God toward those to whom He gives the promise. The "Liberated" have always condemned the disciples of Abraham Kuyper for restricting "grace" to "subjectively-realized grace," i.e., regenerating power in the heart, and for failing to rec-

ognize that also the word of promise itself is grace. The "Liberated" theologian J. Kamphuis makes this very point against the Kuyperians in his book, *An Everlasting Covenant* (Publication Organization of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia, 1985). Criticizing the Kuyperian view of the covenant and infant baptism, Kamphuis writes:

This means (i.e., the teaching of Abraham Kuyper and his followers – DJE): If that grace will be real grace, it has to be innerly present in man, and cannot be "only" a word, a promise. Is not the choice of words revealing? Only that which has been realized subjectively can really be called grace, and is to be clearly distinguished from the contents of God's speaking in a promising way. Real grace is here subjectively-realized grace (p. 44; all emphasis his – DJE).

CHURCH NEWS



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R. Sietsma

for missionary work in Brazil.

According to the “Liberated,” the word of promise is “real grace.” I agree. But De Jong must not then charge me with misrepresenting the “Liberated” when I say that they teach that God extends His grace to all the baptized children of believers. For they maintain that the word of promise is for all the children.

That there is in the “Liberated” doctrine of the covenant the teaching that God *desires* to save all baptized children is plain from Klaas Schilder’s explanation of the crucially important phrase in the Reformed baptism form, “sanctified in Christ”: “It belongs to the contents of the promise that has to be embraced in faith, that the *Holy Spirit desires* to sanctify us, (indeed) *imparting to us that which we have in Christ* (in the promise, by rights)” (quoted in Kamphuis, p. 80). Kamphuis explains that in the covenant promise of baptism, which according to the “Liberated” is given to all the children, “the Holy Spirit promises us that He *wants* to sanctify us.” Kamphuis adds, “the LORD really means it when He says to *all* children of the Covenant: ‘holy,’ ‘sanctified’...” (p. 81).

There is good reason, in fact, to analyze the “Liberated” position as teaching that God extends His covenant grace to all the baptized children in the sense that He bestows upon them all a significant blessing of the covenant. I refer to their explaining “sanctified in Christ” as meaning that all baptized children “have been *adopted* as God’s children (as ‘sons’) by a “*public, judicial act* of God.” Of this public, judicial adoption of every baptized child as a child of God, baptism is a sign and seal, according to the “Liberated” (Kamphuis, p. 83).

I frankly find this incredible in a Reformed church. Adoption unto children of God by a public, judicial act of God of all the children of believers, the Esaus as well as the Jacobs, those who perish under the wrath of God now and eternally as well as those who have eternal life? But this is certain: it is no misrepresentation to describe the “Liberated” covenant view as one which has God extending His grace to all the baptized children. This is inherent in their fundamental doctrine that the covenant promise is for all the children. And this means that the “Liberated” must explain both to themselves and to others, why their covenant view does not necessarily involve them in serious transgression of two fundamental truths of the gospel as confessed by the Reformed churches: the irresistible nature of God’s grace and the impossibility of falling from grace

(which the Canons of Dordt describe as God’s not allowing the elect to “lose the grace of adoption,” V/6).

A second point that must be clarified is that the PRC do indeed emphatically hold and freely preach demands in the covenant. We would not like to think that we come a whit behind the “Liberated” in this regard. There is in baptism the demand to the children to repent, believe, and obey God’s law. The Declaration of Principles adopted by the PRC in 1951 states that the promise of God in baptism “confronts us with the obligation of love, to walk in a new and holy life.” There is also in the baptism of the infants a demand of the covenant to the parents to instruct their children in the truth to the utmost of their power. The PRC maintain Article 21 of the Church Order of Dordt which requires parents to instruct their children in good Christian schools as one of the “demands of the covenant.” A theology of the covenant that has election as its foundation in no wise weakens, much less abrogates, the responsibility of children, parents, or church. On the contrary!

The PRC also preach the warning – the awful warning of Hebrews 10:25-31 – that the baptized member of the covenant people who violates the covenant by his unbelief will be beaten with double stripes. Nor are these empty words with us. When our own physical children manifest themselves as profane despisers of the covenant, we exclude them from the kingdom of Christ by Christian discipline.

But the PRC differ from the “Liberated” in that we deny that the demand to the children is a condition upon which depends the fulfillment of the promise. Rather the demand to believe is the way in which God realizes the covenant in the case of the elect children. Their obedience to the demand, namely, believing, is itself the fruit of the promise in their lives. The promise does not depend upon the demand (faith). But the demand (faith) depends upon the promise. With regard to the reprobate children, the same demand, namely, repent and believe!, is their duty, regardless of their inability. Indeed, their responsibility is heightened by the fact that they receive the covenant sign, are reared in the covenant truth, and have membership for a time among the covenant people.

The third point that requires clarification so that the real issue can be profitably discussed is that, for the PRC, “faith-as-a-demand” is not the same as “faith-as-a-condition.” Dr. De Jong simply identifies “demand” and “condition.”

He writes: “Paul stresses the *condition* of the covenant: the call to faith! And the requirement of faith as the way to salvation does not detract one iota from the certainty of God’s promises.” The implication is that the “*call* to faith” and the “*requirement* of faith” are the same as “*faith-as-a-condition*.” Again, he writes, “(the theology of the PRC) refuses to entertain the scriptural teaching of faith as the way or condition to salvation...” Faith as a “way” is supposed to be the same as faith as a “condition.” The effect of this identification of “way” and “demand” with “condition” is that the impression is left that by denying “*faith-as-a-condition*” the PRC are, in fact, denying *demands* in the covenant. The impression is also left that in affirming “*faith-as-a-condition*” the “Liberated” are only affirming *demands* in the covenant.

Leaving out of sight for the time whether Scripture and the Reformed creeds permit the church to call faith a condition, I only want to establish here that the PRC make a sharp distinction between faith as a demand and faith as a condition. The former, we teach; the latter, we as firmly deny. And such a distinction rings perfectly true to everyday life. A Reformed husband requires godly submission from his wife, not as a condition for becoming his wife, but as a demand based on her being his wife. Submission is also the way in which she expresses what it means to be a wife. Similarly, the honor that a father requires from his child is not a condition that the boy must fulfill in order to become a child, but rather that which is demanded exactly because he is a child.

The issue between the PRC and the “Liberated” is just this: Does God, particularly in baptism, promise the blessing of the covenant of grace to every baptized child on the *condition* of faith? Is the covenant conditional in its establishment with the children of believers personally? The “Liberated” Reformed Churches say yes. They hold that all children of believers alike are in the covenant in this sense that God promises them all salvation and extends to them all His covenant grace in Christ. Against this view, I charged that it conflicts with cardinal doctrines of the Word of God. Specifically, I charged that this view makes the covenant promise and grace of God dependent upon the child; that it necessarily implies that the death of Christ fails to secure the salvation of some for whom Christ died; and that it expressly teaches that the promise of God fails in some instances. 

The Covenant and the Children of Believers – A Reply¹

By J. De Jong

Readers may recall that in the January 18 issue of *Clarion* (Vol. 40, #2) I dealt with a number of criticisms directed against the doctrine of the Canadian Reformed Churches by David Engelsma, professor of Dogmatics and Old Testament at the Protestant Reformed Seminary in Grand Rapids, MI. My editorial was published in the March 15 issue of *The Standard Bearer* as a letter to the editor, and Prof. Engelsma began his response in the same issue. He has spread his response in a series of six editorials, the last of which appeared in the September 1 issue of *The Standard Bearer*. We decided to wait with the publication of any rebuttal until Prof. Engelsma had completed his response to what was brought forward in the January 18 issue of *Clarion*.

Prof. Engelsma asks that we publish an adaptation of his editorial response to my article as a letter in *Clarion*. Now it is rather difficult to squeeze six lengthy editorials into one letter. Besides, in certain cases Prof. Engelsma uses very strong language against us; the last issue, in particular, makes some forceful accusations against Dr. J. Faber which only cloud the issues. None the less, we have opted to publish the chief elements of Engelsma's response, and we will print excerpts of his editorials with our reply in a number of instalments. We do this in the expectation that *The Standard Bearer* will also give a fair coverage of our rebuttal, so that the readers of that paper can form an honest and unbiased opinion of the issues involved. In a letter addressed to me, Prof. Engelsma said that his paper is "open to this kind of debate, in the interests of the Reformed faith." This is exactly what we are interested in, and we hope readers will also keep in mind that our focus is on *issues* and not individuals. We have reason to believe that the whole matter of the covenant is a critical issue in the Protestant Reformed Churches today, and that some members of that church are open to a more scriptural

view on the covenant. In this issue you will find the first part of Engelsma's response.

Misunderstandings

The first thing Engelsma wants to do is clear up any misunderstanding lest the debate become obscured or confused. And he claims that I do him no justice in stating that he misrepresented our viewpoint. However, Engelsma then promptly goes on to insist on the same misrepresentation. He insists that we hold to the teaching that God *extends* His covenant grace to all the baptized children "in the sense that He bestows upon them all a significant blessing of the covenant." Here Engelsma has not considered what I wrote on this point. At the very least, his circumscription of "our" position (which is simply the older Reformed stand) is decidedly ambiguous, and only lends fuel for his false charges against our doctrine.

My point was this: the scriptural view is not that God *extends* His covenant grace to all the children of believers, but that God *promises* His grace to all the children of believers, and together with this promise gives the command to repent from sin, and believe the gospel. This is not simply a quarrel about words. For in the former (Engelsma's) rendition God is presented as giving something which He in some cases later takes away. And this is exact the charge that Engelsma proceeds to make against us. But this charge is based on a caricature. At most one can say God extends His grace to all the children of the covenant in the sense that they share the *promises* of the covenant. But this is not to be taken in the sense that God implants grace in the heart of the child from which the child can later fall away. In suggesting this Engelsma does what the Synodicals repeatedly did; he confuses the *promise* with its *fulfilment* in the child.

The reference to J. Kamphuis also does not help Engelsma here, even though the book quoted is to be recommended. For Kamphuis nowhere says

that the word of promise is "real grace." Sharing the gospel promises means sharing the promises of justification by Christ's blood. But this is to be distinguished from the inner sanctification of the Holy Spirit, which comes through faith.¹

Hence it is easy for us to do what Engelsma asks, namely to show that our doctrine does not transgress the two fundamental principles of the Canons of Dort which he mentions. For the public, judicial adoption which is signified and sealed in holy baptism gives all the rights of the *promises* to the baptized child. But it does not say anything about the planting of a seed of regeneration or grace in the individual soul or heart of the child. Rather, this public, judicial act accents both the promises and the responsibility of the child, the parents and the church. For along with the declaration of adoption God accompanies His demand for repentance and faith. And where a child spurns the promises, and refuses to believe, he incurs the wrath of the covenant.

Already at this point Engelsma shows the tenor of his position. In his view no one can say that the "Esau as well as the Jacobs" are adopted to children of God by a public, judicial act of God. He says He finds this incredible in a Reformed Church. Why? Here he makes clear that in his view parents cannot take God's promises at baptism at their *face value*. For who knows whether his child is an "Esau" or a "Jacob"? Here we sense the same religious subjectivism that Kamphuis exposes in the book that Engelsma quotes from. In effect, no parent at the baptism font can really be sure about God's speaking. For the promise is made to depend on the working of grace in the heart of the baptized person.

Maintaining the covenant demands

The second clarification that Engelsma wishes to bring forward is that the

Protestant Reformed do preach and uphold the demands of the covenant. But, he says, the PR deny that the demand to the children is a condition upon which the fulfilment of the promise depends. He says that the demand to believe is the way in which God realizes His covenant “in the case of the elect children.”

Here I could not agree more, at least with respect to the demands of the covenant as the *instrument* with which or the way in which God realizes His covenant. All the attempts by Engelsma to suggest that we have a different view than this Reformed view are futile and incorrect. Hence in much of his polemic he is simply blindly beating the air. His implication that the Canadian Reformed Churches hold to a covenant view in which faith must be present as a *prior* condition in order for the promise to be realized is sheer fiction. The demand is never a *meritorious* condition which must be present *before* the promise takes effect. The demand is an *attending* condition which forms the means by which God realizes His covenant counsel.

But why does Engelsma say “in the case of the elect children”? For God also realizes His covenant wrath in the case of the non-elect children, the reprobate. Therefore *all* the children of believers must be regarded as included in the church and the kingdom of God. If they are not included, (which is Engelsma’s essential position) it does not make sense to “exclude them from the kingdom of Christ by Christian discipline.”

Demand or condition?

A third point of clarification that Engelsma introduces is that he objects to my identification of faith as a *demand* with faith as a *condition*. The PRC, he says, “make a sharp distinction between faith as a demand and faith as a condition.”

It is true that the PRC make such a sharp distinction, and it is also true that we do not. For in making this sharp distinction, the PRC have chosen a road which no one has ever taken before. Engelsma as much as admits this, for he recognizes the distinct possibility that Scripture and the Reformed creeds permit the church to call faith a condition. And indeed, many in the Reformed line have used this term, qualifying it to mean: it is the *attending* condition which God attaches to the promise as the way or the *means* to bring it to fulfilment. The Reformed also always said that it is Christ who has acquired and also fulfils the condition through His Spirit. But no one in Reformed history has avoided – for doctrinal reasons – the use of the term *condition* as such. That is a new and strange teaching introduced by the PRC. In declaring any use of the word “condition” as invalid, the PRC have rejected many Reformers! And what do they gain by it?

It should also be clear that Engelsma’s example does not apply in our usage of the word “condition” at all. For he speaks of a situation where submission is required on the part of a woman “as a condition for becoming” a wife. This

makes a caricature of our view of the covenant. For the LORD places us in the covenant *unconditionally*, by mere grace. So we say that we are His chosen people by sheer grace alone! But in placing us in the covenant, He also adds the demand for faith and repentance.

A bad start

At this point, Engelsma has not yet begun to answer my rebuttal to his charges. But already here we find him carrying on with caricatures of our doctrine which form the basis for asserting his charges all over again. I will not go into what he has said about other churches, for they can speak (and have spoken) for themselves. But in our case I would say that if a Reformed dogmatist makes it his aim to publicly criticize other churches as having “cardinal doctrines against Scripture” he should at the least be properly informed about *what it is* that they confess. To him and to all others I would say: judge us by our confessions, and not by what one may have heard or read as the chief mark of our doctrine. For we teach nothing but what is found in the Reformed creeds, and we most certainly have not invented a doctrine of works or merit which we wish to secretly introduce into the doctrine of the covenant.

In the next issue, D.V., we will deal with Engelsma’s first reply, and clarify this point further.

¹See J. Kamphuis, *An Everlasting Covenant*, p. 80. 

“Manna” Canadian Reformed Society for World Relief

The Lord provides for our every need both great and small. The mandate of “MANNA” is to provide Christian charity to people in great and immediate need of food, clothing, shelter, and education.

History

“MANNA” has its roots dating back to the mid 1960s when it began as the “Korean Relief Fund” in Edmonton, Alberta. For several years, it successfully supported an orphanage in Korea. The group disbanded in 1979 when it became clear that the orphanage was self-sufficient. Members of this group then established the Canadian Reformed World Re-

lief Committee – West supporting work done by the CRWRF Burlington, as well as assisting other relief projects such as Christian Blind Mission, and water projects in Dakar and Senegal. In 1984 the group was officially incorporated as a society under the Societies Act of Alberta, and subsequently obtained registered charitable status.

Mufu Children’s Home

Since 1983, “MANNA” has built, supported and maintained a children’s home in Mufu, Kenya, Africa. The home is situated about 25 km north of Embu, in a small village called Mufu, on the lower

slopes of Mount Kenya. The home is located in a corner of a school compound.

Children residing in the home are assisted with basic living necessities: clothing, food, love, shelter and education. Currently 38 children, ranging in age from 5 to 18, live in the home which is under the direction of Pastor Nderi and his wife. There are two other workers in the home: a housemother and a cook.

“MANNA” maintains regular communication with the children in the Mufu home. The letters received from the children always express gratitude to God for the opportunity to go to school and receive an education. They are all very

much aware that an education in Kenya is a real blessing and a privilege accorded to relatively few children. Richard (16) writes, "Okay, let me take this opportunity to thank you all my sponsors in Canada telling you that I am very happy to you for helping me, so that I can get educated in this way. So let me tell you God bless you all and again God will invite you also in heaven, where lastly we shall all go and we shall communicate with you there if it is God's will." Damaris (15) says she is doing well in school and intends to become a doctor. She writes, "The thing I want from you is to help me in prayers so I can be a doctor."

The children vividly describe their daily routine which includes devotions before breakfast; sweeping and cleaning the compound; and washing the dorm. After school, they work in their small individual shambas (garden plots). Together, they care for the general shamba. They plant maize and sweet potatoes as well as flowers. The evening is spent doing homework and the day is closed with Bible reading and prayer. Sundays are spent listening to and learning about the Word of God. They all sing in the choir and the older ones assist in teaching the small children of the church.

Various projects need to be undertaken in order to adequately maintain a children's home. Fetching water from the river, half a kilometer away, is no longer part of their daily routine since this year "MANNA" finalized its commitment to ensuring the provision of a reliable water supply. The children are now able to en-



Standing outside their compound are some of the children in the Mufu Home

joy a dependable source of water near their home.

Financial support

"MANNA" channels financial aid for the operation of the home through "Stichting Redt een Kind" ("Save a Child") in the Netherlands. After investigating the management of various relief agencies, "SREK" was found to be most compatible with our own Reformed beliefs and principles. As well members of

"MANNA" felt confident that contributions made would be used solely for the purpose intended. "SREK" is a reputable Christian agency supported by many members of sister churches of the Canadian Reformed Churches in the Netherlands. Established in 1968 it effectively supervises 19 children's homes in Kenya as well as 30 homes in India, 5 in Uganda, and more recently in Ethiopia. Close communications are maintained with this agency, and its field representative, Dr. L.C. Rookmaaker, provides regular progress reports.

Financial support for the work of "MANNA" is received from most of the churches in the region of Manitoba and Alberta. Schools, choirs and individual sponsors contribute generously to the work of "MANNA." An incredible show of support is received from students. Students, for example, at Parkland Immanuel Christian School in Edmonton, host an annual Heart Week drive in February with proceeds donated to the Mufu Home. The children at the Mufu Home enjoy receiving letters and cards from their brothers and sisters abroad, and readers are welcome to write. The address of the children's home is:

A.I.C. Mufu Children's Home
P.O. Box 85
Runyenjes, (Embu)
Kenya, Africa

"MANNA" has been richly blessed with the resources to contribute to the upbringing of God's covenant children. The children at the Mufu Home are receiving gifts that many Canadians take for grant-



Mrs. Nderi, the pastor's wife, outside her home



Dining facilities at the Mufu Home

ed: food, clothing, a loving environment, and a Christian education. The amount of work required to effectively operate and maintain a home like the Mufu children's Home is tremendous. Thanks to the contributions of our faithful supporters, "MANNA" has been able to fulfill our commitment to the Mufu Home. "MANNA" also continues to investigate relief projects throughout the world, and whenever possible to finance such efforts.

Additional information about the "MANNA" Canadian Reformed Society for World Relief can be obtained by writing or phoning the national secretary at the address below.

Mrs. Henrietta Hoeksema
15912-107 A Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5P 0Z2
Tel. (403) 489-2620



Welcome Rev. T. Hoogsteen

By D.G.J. Agema

"Blest is he who has as helper...Jacob's God, the LORD so faithful...." With the singing of these words from Ps. 146 Classis Ontario-South of September 11, 1991 could, with gratitude, conclude the examination of Rev. T. Hoogsteen. For Rev. Hoogsteen this examination marked the end of a long and not always easy road. A road in which he and his wife had to trust in the faithfulness of God.

It is my privilege to introduce Rev. Hoogsteen to the readers of *Clarion*. Rev. Hoogsteen grew up in Aylmer, Ontario as a member of the Christian Reformed Church. After completing his studies at a local high school, he went to Grand Rapids to continue his education at Calvin College. In due time he saw the way clear to go to Calvin Seminary and so, in 1973, he could enter the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church, as pastor of the congregation at Blyth, Ontario. While serving in his first congregation the desire to continue his studies increased, with the result that in 1979 he moved to the Netherlands. He became pastor in two synodical congregations (Haaksbergen and Neede), while at the same time studying at the Theological Seminary of the synodical churches in Kampen.

While in the Netherlands, Rev. and Mrs. Hoogsteen were confronted with

the deformation in the synodical churches. In 1983 Rev. Hoogsteen received a call from First Christian Reformed Church at Brantford, ON. His hope was that returning to Canada would also mean returning to a more Reformed surrounding. However, right from the beginning of his pastorate in Brantford it was clear that this was not the case. Rev. Hoogsteen realized that the seeds of deformation sown in the Christian Reformed Church were growing rapidly. In his congregation he was confronted with many different opinions concerning doctrine and worship. He also saw how the authority of Scripture was being questioned, while the Confessions were not maintained. As pastor he was expected to keep the peace of the congregation in all this. In order to do this he would have to compromise the Reformed faith. For the sake of the truth of the Gospel he could not, and right from the beginning he strove to maintain the truth of the Gospel. This led to many struggles. I may also add that Rev. Hoogsteen was much involved in the organization of the concerned members in the Christian Reformed Church.

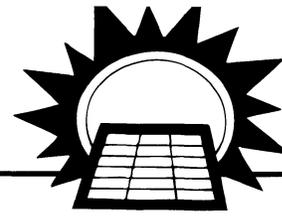
Through contact with members of the Canadian Reformed Churches it became increasingly clear to both Rev. Hoogsteen and his wife that they could

not stay as concerned members in a church where the authority of Scripture is challenged, not only by individuals but also by major assemblies. They also realized that they should not form an independent group, but that the Lord demanded from them to be joined to the Canadian Reformed Churches. They joined the Canadian Reformed Church at Ancaster.

Rev. Hoogsteen then expressed the desire to continue as minister of the Word but now within the Canadian Reformed Churches. And so he was examined by Classis Ontario-South and as a result could be declared eligible for call within our churches.

We are thankful with and for Rev. and Mrs. Hoogsteen that our Lord has led their lives this way. Indeed, Jacob's God is faithful and gives help to those who call upon Him. We welcome Rev. Hoogsteen and pray that he may receive a call and so enter the ministry of the Word within our churches. At the same time our thoughts and prayers go out to the concerned members in the Christian Reformed church and those who have left this church. May the Lord give unity in the true faith. I conclude with the prayer that the Lord may bring together those who belong together and divide those who do not belong together.





By Mrs. R. Ravensbergen

By faith Abel offered to God a more acceptable sacrifice than Cain, through which he received approval as righteous, God bearing witness by accepting his gifts; he died, but through his faith he is still speaking.

Hebrews 11:4

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Hebrews 11 is a well-known chapter in the Bible. Many names of people who lived in the O.T. dispensation are mentioned here. These people are used by the Lord to reveal to us some parts of the history of the church. They all were sinful people, just like we. However they had the promises of God for things to come. They believed these promises about things they did not see. And in their actions they showed that their faith helped them to hold on to what God had promised. Such a faith is a gift from God, it is the work of the Holy Spirit.

Abel is the first person mentioned in Hebrews 11. Abel was the second son of Adam and Eve, and a younger brother to Cain. He was a keeper of the sheep. When his older brother brought an offering to the Lord, Abel did so as well. He picked the nicest sheep he could find, and sacrificed them to the Lord.

Both brothers did the same thing, yet there was a difference. It says in the Bible, "And the Lord had regard for Abel and his offering, but for Cain and his offering He had no regard" (Gen. 4). What the Lord saw, was something that nobody else could see, for it was in the hearts of Cain and Abel.

Abel believed through what his parents had taught him, that he was God's child. God worked this faith in Abel's heart. Therefore his sacrifice was a fruit of his faith. And God was pleased with "Abel and his offering." It was not the burned sheep that pleased the Lord, but it was Abel himself. Abel was not a perfect man, he was a sinner just like we are. Yet, he pleased the Lord because he showed the fruits of his faith in his sacrifice.

The Lord gave Abel a great reward: his name is mentioned in Hebrews 11, together with the names of other people who pleased God by their

works, as the fruits of their faith. Even though his brother Cain killed him, Abel lived on with the Lord, and in the history of the church he is remembered as a witness of faith, as his name is mentioned in Hebrews 11.

We live in the time of the New Testament. Many promises of the Old Testament have been fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Others still await fulfillment in the future. They have been revealed to us in God's holy word. For us, too, there is the call to believe God's promises. We have them all in the Bible. The stories of the people briefly mentioned in Hebrews 11 are there to strengthen us in our faith. We can learn from them that God's children and God's church may have to face trials and disappointments. But through God's grace we, too, can continue in faith, just like those people many years ago.

Birthdays for November:

WILMA VAN DRONGELEN

306 - 33375 Mayfair Avenue
Abbotsford, BC V2S 2M7

On the third it will be Wilma's 34th birthday.

ROB LUINGE

34395 Immel Street
Abbotsford, BC V2S 4T6

And on the 13th it will be Rob's 17th birthday.

I wish you both a very happy birthday.
Until next month,

Mrs. R. Ravensbergen
7462 Highway 20, RR 1
Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

News from the Women's Savings Action

September 1991

College evening

At the College evening, we – on behalf of all of you – were privileged to be able once again to present a cheque of \$20,000 for the purchase of books and periodicals. This amount was kept at the same level to enable us to continue building up a reserve for the eventual expansion of library facilities. A donation of \$1500 will also be given towards the building of additional shelving in the library.

Contributions

If you have already glanced at the list of contributions you will have noticed that we collected a total of \$27,076.16 during this past fiscal year. We are very grateful for this increase in contributions. To be realistic, some of this increase may be due to the fact that more congregations kept in mind that our fiscal year runs from June 1 to May 31. Nevertheless, the total does represent quite a substantial improvement over that collected during the last few years. Once again we collected more than we contributed to the library of the Theological College.

Appreciation

In April we attended the annual meeting of the Library Committee. We were asked to pass on the sincere appreciation of the faculty and library staff for the dedicated efforts of the Women's Savings Action representatives in raising funds not only for the purchase of books and periodicals but also for the new library computer and laser printer. Because of their unceasing labours the College community continues to benefit from an up-to-date library and the latest in library technology. Be assured that the work of the Women's Savings Action is not simply taken for granted!

Tax receipts

Just a reminder that each of the representatives is now able to make out tax

Theological College Women's Savings Action

Contributions June 1, 1990 to May 31, 1991

Abbotsford	\$ 2,471.32
Albany	634.86
Ancaster	817.00
Attercliffe	392.50
Barrhead	901.00
Brampton	
Burlington East	939.50
Burlington South	595.30
Burlington West	1,285.00
Calgary	200.00
Carman	510.50
Chatham	552.00
Chilliwack	450.00
Cloverdale	1,656.00
Coaldale	1,724.00
Edmonton, Imm.	968.77
Edmonton, Prov.	1,984.71
Elora	33.00
Fergus	306.09
Grand Rapids	95.92
Grand Valley	382.50
Guelph	297.73
Hamilton	1,165.00
Houston	
Langley	2,069.00
Lincoln	244.35
London	100.00
Lynden, WA	194.74
Neerlandia	
Orangeville	400.00
Ottawa	
Port Kells	1,160.00
Smithers	730.38
Smithville	1,024.25
Surrey	1,755.91
Toronto	60.00
Vernon	370.50
Winnipeg	604.33
Total collected	\$27,076.16

receipts for gifts of \$10.00 or more. An organization as small as ours has to set a minimum limit because of the costs involved in the printing and mailing of receipts.

Thank you

We would like to publicly thank each of the Women's Savings Action representatives and their "teams" for the dedicated and enthusiastic cooperation. We would also like to publicly thank each and every one of you for your very faithful support; without that we could not make a presentation every year again at the College evening. A hearty welcome to the new congregations. Best wishes also to the newly established Theological Library Fund in Australia. Above all, we thank our heavenly Father without whose blessing none of this would be possible.

Chairman

Mrs. E. Mulder
1225 Hwy 5, RR 1
Burlington, ON L7R 3X4
(416) 689-8018

Secretary

Mrs. J. Van Dam
642 Ramsgate Road
Burlington, ON L7N 2Y1
(416) 634-0593

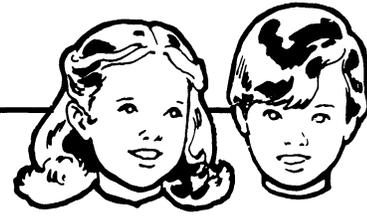
Treasurer

Mrs. C. Zietsma
54 Como Place
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Please note: Our fiscal year runs from June 1 to May 31. A number of contributions came in after May 31, 1991 and will not appear on the financial statement until the following book year.

By Aunt Betty



Quiz Time!

Dear Busy Beavers,

Are you the one who RETURNS the books to the library?
Do you sometimes have to REwrite something for the teacher?

You know that REform means to make something over again, to form it again.

And now we can "talk" about REformation Day, October 31.

Well, not too many people talk about Reformation Day.

Too bad! Because on Reformation Day we remember how the Lord REformed His church.

God's people no longer lived close to His Word!
Ministers did not preach His Word.

But the Lord is faithful. He did not leave His people in the darkness of their sin.

Just like in Old Testament times, the Lord sent leaders to save His people.

Luther nailed the paper with the famous 95 Theses to the chapel door at Wittenberg.

That was the *START* of the Reformation. A little later John Calvin started his work.

He was a famous teacher of Reformation times.
He wrote clearly about what the Bible tells us.

Too bad people don't talk about Reformation Day.

Yes, Reformation times were long ago.
But they were a gift from the Lord.

He was busy REforming His church.

He was bringing it back to the treasure of His Word.

Yes, the Bible was put right up front again.

And that's where it should be.

Because the Bible is the treasure of God's people.

It tells us how to keep REforming our life to God's good will.

FOR YOU TO DO

Remember Luther's daring rescue as "Squire George"?

Remember the story of how John Calvin (disguised as a vinedresser!) escaped from Paris?

Other reformers, too, endured danger and hardships. One lost his life!

Look up your church history story-book and find out what these reformers had to endure for the sake of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

BIBLE REFORMERS

Can you match the name of the person to what he did to bring God's people back to the true worship of the Lord?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| 1. Jacob
Gen. 35:4 | a. told the Israelites to put away foreign gods, gathered them at Mizpah, set up the stone called Ebenezer. |
| 2. Gideon
Jud. 6:25-27 | b. removed high places, broke down pillars and Asherah, destroyed Moses' bronze serpent which the people had made an idol. |
| 3. Joshua
Josh. 24:1,14 | c. buried family idols under the oak near Shechem. |
| 4. Hezekiah
2 Kings 18:4 | d. stood on a wooden pulpit in the square by the Water Gate to read the book of the law of Moses to all the people; Nehemiah and the Levites helped him explain the reading clearly. |
| 5. Samuel
1 Sam. 7:3,5,12 | e. gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem to urge them to continue to serve the Lord faithfully. |
| 6. Ezra
Neh. 8:1-12 | f. read the "lost book of the covenant" found in the temple and renewed the covenant with the Lord. |
| 7. Josiah
2 Kings 23:2,3 | g. pulled down the altar of Baal, cut down the Asherah beside it, and built an altar to the Lord. |

MAGIC SQUARES!

by Busy Beaver *Tesha Hopman*

1. an insect
2. to say something that isn't true
3. the opposite of no

1. the past form for "sit"
2. the past form for "eat"
3. something to drink

BIBLE NAMES WORDSEARCH

By Busy Beaver *Lisa Burger*

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

Can you find:

Rebekah	Miriam
Sarah	Rachel
Abraham	Benjamin
Isaac	Joseph
Moses	Leah
Hezekiah	Reuben
Ruth	Judah
Hannah	Joshua
David	?
Jesse	

RIDDLE FUN

From Busy Beaver *Vickie Aikema*

1. What piece of furniture is like a well tailored man?
2. Why is Prince Charles like part of the postal service?
3. What's the difference between a bee and a flea?
4. What do you get if you cross lots of automobiles and a country?
5. What's the favourite place for German early birds?
6. What cane can be felt but not seen?
7. Which two letters are bad for the teeth?

(See answers)

MAGIC PICTURE CODE

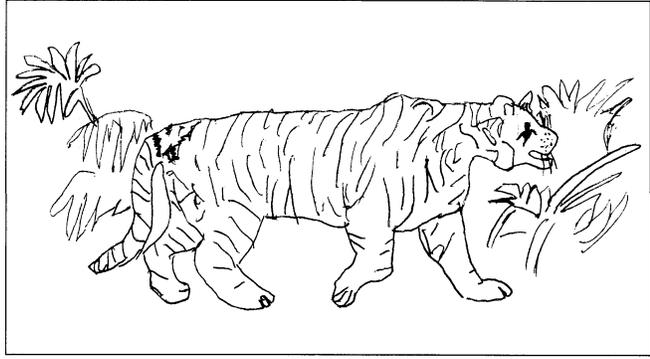
By Busy Beaver *Ruby Knol*

A	☆	I	☼	K	-	P	-	□	U	-	
B	*	J	-	L	-	Q	-	□	V	-	◊
C	*	A	-	M	-	R	-	△	W	-	☞
D	✓	I	-	N	-	S	-	△	X	-	◇
E	✓	J	-	O	-	T	-	△	Y	-	♥
F	✓	K	-	P	-	U	-		Z	-	⋮

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 ☞ ☞ ☞

THIS IS AN INDIAN TIGER

By Busy Beaver *Gerald Bartels*



"Happy Birthday!"
 and
 "Many Happy Returns of the Day!"
 May our heavenly Father bless and keep
 you in the year ahead.

Carin Meliefste	1	Theresa Bredenhof	11
Robbie Blanken	6	Ken Stam	12
Randy Dijkstra	7	Juanita Wildeboer	12
Peter Vanderzwaag	8	David De Bruin	14
Josh Rosa	10	Cheryl Jelsma	14

Sheryl Linde	15
Margaret de Witt	17
Dan Vander Veen	19
Doug Vander Veen	19
Jaclyn Hulst	20
Gredina Jaspers	20
Karen Vandergaag	21
Rachel Pruijm	24
James Aasman	28
Joni Schulenberg	30

Answers to Riddle Fun

1. a smart dresser 2. He is the royal male 3. The bee makes a flight. The flea makes a bite. 4. a carnation 5. Worms 6. a hurricane 7. Dk (decay)

Time to say "Good-bye," Busy Beavers. I'm looking forward to your letters!

Yes, I will send you a reward for your REFORMER story OR quiz!

Give it your best shot!

Love to you all,
 Aunt Betty