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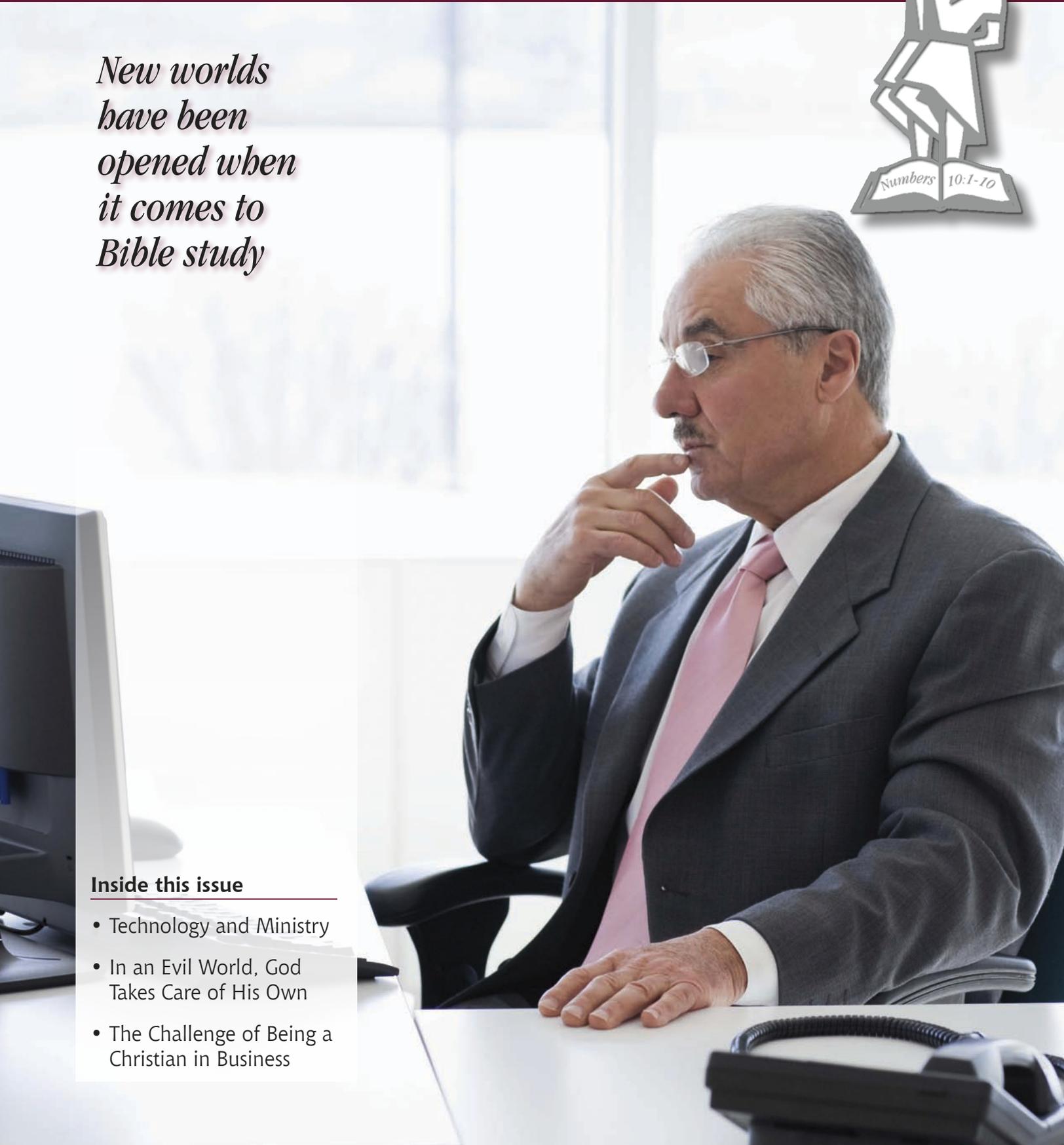
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*New worlds
have been
opened when
it comes to
Bible study*

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- In an Evil World, God Takes Care of His Own
- The Challenge of Being a Christian in Business





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Technology and Ministry

New worlds have been opened when it comes to Bible study

We've come a long way

I was ordained into the ministry in the year 1972 and I started my work with pen, paper, and pencil. After about three years I graduated to the typewriter, first to the manual version and then some time later to the electric kind. It wasn't until about 1981 that I purchased my first computer. It was called an Osborne 1 and was classified as a transportable. This meant that you could pack it up and take it places, although not without the threat of a hernia. It came complete with two five inch 64K floppy drives and a tiny five inch monitor in the center.

I might add that while I was among the first group of ministers to make the switch to the computer age, the real pioneer among Canadian Reformed ministers was the Rev. Dick DeJong. A few years earlier he had bought a Radio Shack TRS80 (commonly nicknamed the Trash 80) and was always singing its praises. Without him going on and on about the marvels of this new technology, I might have waited a few more years to make the switch.

Since those days in the early 1980s I have owned an assortment of computers of both the IBM and Apple type. They really don't last more than three or four years and this means that variety is the order of the day.

Now, before some of you ask, let me say upfront that I am an Apple Mac fan. I have tried and tried the IBM type and always found them a frustration. Right now I am typing this editorial on some sort of IBM compatible that needs frequent rebooting and that always gives me the urge to go to the garage, find my hammer, and do some serious re-modeling to it. On the other hand, the Mac has always been for me a much more user-friendly device. It works right out of the box. It's really

intuitive. The software is all programmed along the same lines. Nor does it attract an endless array of viruses.

In any case, what you can gather from this short survey is that I have seen a lot of electronic change over the years. When I relate some of it to my younger colleagues, they will often give me that sort of befuddled look. Some of them cannot imagine a world without computers, much less laptops.

Improvement?

At this point you might also be itching to ask, "Has the advent of the computer age made much of a difference in the parsonage?" Having experienced the pen, typewriter, and now computer ages personally, I would say that it has. Indeed, I have no longing to go back to what are often called "the good old days." For one, there is the freedom that it brings. When you take out pen and paper, you are always hesitant to begin writing for fear that you will make a mistake and have to begin all over. With a computer you can write what you want and come back at any time to correct and change your copy without the need for a complete re-write. Also, with a computer you can easily store what you have written and bring it back, even years later. In addition, once something is written you can print it or send it electronically wherever you desire. No more hand re-writes, no more spirit duplicator, no more Gestetner machine, no more photocopying, and no more going to the mail box. For the pastor who writes weekly, life has improved immensely.

Bible software

At the same time it has also improved on the software front. In the first years of computer Bible



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software was of only limited value; however, in the last years it has come into its own. The result is that you can now purchase and make use of some really great Bible software. Mention can be made of *Bibleworks* (for IBM or Windows machines only), *Accordance* (for Macs only), and *Logos* (for both).

For some time I tinkered with *Bibleworks* but for some reason it never really clicked with me. (Unlike some members in my family, I'm not really a "techie.") Then in May of this year some of the younger local colleagues and I went south to Bellingham for a two day *Logos* Bible Software Training Camp run by Morris Proctor.

Now that was an educational marvel! In quick order I was taught the basics of a whole new Bible program. This involved learning how to do all sorts of simple and complex searches, to organize my material, to set up libraries on Bible books, doctrines, and persons, to access Hebrew and Greek resources. It did not take long and I started to wax nostalgic thinking about how great it would have been if I had had all of this at my disposal thirty years ago. Alas, that clock cannot be turned back.

For the pastor

Of course, that's how God meant it to be, and I can live with that. Still, with the rise of the more recent Bible software, new worlds have been opened when it comes to Bible study. These are worlds that should definitely be explored by every minister of the gospel. If your pastor is still doing his sermon prep the old way, which means opening up all sorts of Hebrew and Greek Bibles, taking original languages concordances off the shelf and painstakingly searching through them, doing tedious and time consuming word studies, as well as digging through all sorts of commentaries, he needs to make use of these new tools. It will save him a great deal of time and add a whole new dimension to his study. Hopefully, the tremors will even be felt on the pulpit.

Church News

Declined the call to the Emmanuel American Reformed Church of Denver, Colorado:

Candidate Tim Sikkema

Accepted the call of the Free Reformed Church of Armadale, Western Australia to serve as a missionary in Lae, Papua New Guinea:

Candidate Tim Sikkema

Change of Worship Location and Time

Beginning September 5, the Providence Canadian Reformed Church of Hamilton will be worshipping at the Netherlands Reformed Church building, 582 Southcote Road. For the month of September, the worship service times are changed to 11:30 AM and 4:30 PM. They will return to their normal times (9:30 AM and 3:00 PM) in October.

For church members

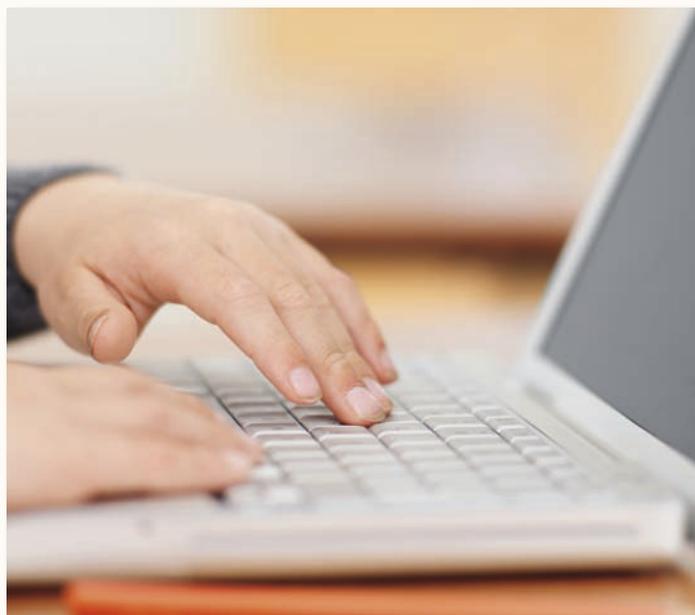
Much of the same sort of positive fallout can also be experienced by church members. Many of you (and I wish it were all of you) are involved in Bible study on a regular basis. Although I suspect that for most of you the approach you take is still the old one: Bibles and commentaries on the table, along with paper and pen. As such there is nothing wrong with this tried and true method.

Still, if you are computer literate and are gifted with somewhat of an adventurous spirit, I would suggest another approach. Visit the *Logos* website, explore it and consider purchasing one of their basic packages and learning how to use it. I guarantee that soon your Bible study will become a whole new learning experience.

The downside

Thus far I have painted a rather rosy picture; however, we need to be sober and realize that every new tool and invention usually comes with a downside to it. And in that regard computers, and even Bible software, are no different. Hence a few rules or caveats need to be in place.

The first rule when it comes to computers and computer software is that you need to be determined. There is always a learning curve that needs to be conquered. So if you are going to spend the money to do this, make sure that you devote the time and effort to it that is needed.



The second rule is that you need to be disciplined. Computers are wonderful devices but they are also great at side-tracking you. This means that you can spend a great deal of time investigating this and looking into that without accomplishing much of anything. In addition, computers open up for you both a world of information and of danger. By the former I mean that by them you gain instant access to vast databases of information and by the latter I mean that pornography and illicit material always lie close at hand. Hence you need to be disciplined.

So with these provisos in mind, go ahead and explore the Bible in a whole new way.

For your information

Accordance Bible software (www.accordancebible.com) is a program for Apple Mac computers only and comes highly recommended.

Bibleworks (www.bibleworks.com) is a much touted Bible program for use on Windows machines only. A number of my colleagues use it and are very happy with it.

Logos (www.logos.com) offers by far the largest selection of Bible software programs. You have your pick of eight programs beginning at the basic called "Home" and going all the way up to the massive "Portfolio" package. In addition, you add all sorts of modules to each program.

Along with this, you can download the *Logos* app from the Apple iTunes store and that will allow you to use your iPhone or iPad to access what is on your main computer. Why, just the other day I saw Herman Bavinck's massive four volume *Reformed Dogmatics* on an iPhone. Who would have guessed it?





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MATTHEW 13:52

In an Evil World, God Takes Care of His Own

"The word of the Lord came to Elijah: 'Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. You will drink from the brook, and I have ordered the ravens to feed you there.'"

1 Kings 17:2-4

Not long ago I received an e-mail that asked the question, "Would you run?" The email asked the reader to imagine that on a Sunday morning in church, two men enter who are covered from head to toe in black and who are carrying submachine guns. One of the men announces, "Anyone willing to take a bullet for Christ, remain where you are." Whereupon the majority of the congregation leaves. Out of 2000 people in that church building, only twenty are left. The men then take off their hoods and say to the pastor, "Okay pastor, we got rid of all the hypocrites. . . Now you can begin your service. Have a nice day." The two men then turn and walk out.

The suggestion is that most of us are hypocrites and do not trust in the Lord. When the going gets tough, we abandon our Christian principles. We confess Him with our mouths, but not with our deeds. Is that necessarily true? Is that the conclusion we should come to?

In 1 Kings 17:2, Elijah is told by the Lord to flee. His life is in danger, for King Ahab wants to do him harm. Elijah had just told the king that it was because of his disobedience that the Lord is going to withhold rain and send a severe drought. Ahab is a wicked king who will eliminate anyone that gets in his way, even a messenger from God. He is intent on maintaining his wealth

and power, even if it means that he has to engage in idol worship.

And so Elijah flees. But his leaving is not an act of cowardice. In his flight he has to trust in the Lord, not only to protect him, but also to provide for him. The Lord brings him to a place where he can observe God at work, where he can see and experience how God looks after his creation. There Elijah can observe firsthand how the Lord God refreshes the animals from the flowing waters of the brook, how He feeds the birds with the fruit of the land, and how He gives them shelter among the trees and the clefts in the rocks. Everywhere he sees the hand of God, as the Lord God reveals his greatness in nature.

The Lord also provides for Elijah. Every morning and evening the ravens bring him bread and meat. He also has plenty to drink from the brook in the Kerith Ravine and God protects him there from Ahab.

In Article 2 of the Belgic Confession, we confess that we know the Lord God, "First, by the creation, preservation and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most beautiful book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many letters leading us to perceive clearly the invisible things of God, namely, his eternal power and deity." Great and small creatures are like letters from God to us, love letters.

For if He looks after the animals as well as He does, will He not much more take care of us, who are so much more valuable to Him? That's the rhetorical question the Lord Jesus asks in the Sermon of the Mount (Matt 6:26). And the answer is obvious: of course God will!

In today's world, we too have to trust in the Lord to provide for us and to protect us. Sometimes we too have to flee from evil. The world of today, just like the world in Ahab's days, often engages in shady and immoral practices in order to amass wealth. As Christians we may not partake of those activities. That may mean we have to forego a promotion or a lucrative contract. That may even mean you have to quit your job. But the Lord God wants us to trust in Him, for He promises that He will always take care of us.

But that doesn't mean we have to put ourselves into harm's way. It doesn't mean that, if we have to choose, we should allow others to hurt us. Elijah fled because he wanted to live to bring glory to God's Name. He fled because of God's command to serve Him as prophet.

The same is true for us. The Lord God gives us a purpose here on earth. He wants us to serve Him and to seek his kingdom. That is why He feeds us and takes care of us. That is why He blesses our labour. He gives us life and sustains it, to bring glory to his wonderful Name. **C**



The Challenges of Being a Christian in Business

"I never swear on the job site." That was the response from a friend who had heard that I had just become the new executive director of the Canadian Christian Business Federation. We were having a conversation over coffee after Sunday morning worship.

His initial reaction to the idea of being a Christian in business is all too common. We tend to think almost immediately of the Ten Commandments when we muse about how we should act: don't swear, don't steal, don't covet someone else's business or company car, don't work on Sundays. But surely there is more to it than that.

My friend told me that, decades ago, when competition was pretty stiff to land a construction contract, he would have to bend the rules a little. He'd cut corners just so that he could eke out a small profit. He cringed a bit when he said that; he felt ashamed. "But everybody was doing it," he said.

How should a Christian act in business? More pointedly, how should a Reformed Christian act in business? It was that question, asked back in the mid-1980s, that brought together a few Christian business leaders to look at creating an organization where they could come together regularly to search the scriptures in order to discern how they should carry out their business. That led to the formation of the Reformed Christian Business and Professional Organization Inc. After a few years it called itself the Canadian Christian Business Federation (CCBF).

The organization finds its basis "in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, the inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God, as interpreted in Reformed creedal standards." Its mission statement is as valid today as it was back in 1987: "As stewards of God's creation and totally dependent on God's grace, members of the Canadian Christian Business Federation seek to promote their Christian business and professional tasks in service to their Master, Jesus Christ, by the study of Scriptures and prayer, by fostering understanding of ethical business activities, and by working to promote a God-pleasing business climate in society."

In short, God rules all aspects of our lives and we must carry out our business activities in a God-pleasing climate. That is as Reformed as it gets.

What does that mean, practically speaking?

- We must ensure the stewardly use of resources and we must produce goods and services with respect and care for creation.
- We must encourage a business structure that allows for responsible Christian activities.
- We must manage our businesses Christianly. This is achieved by counseling, sharing, advising members, and promoting relevant literature.
- We must promote harmonious labour relations and meaningful work experiences through appropriate management practices. That means treating employees fairly, providing a fair wage, being sensitive to one's personal and family needs.
- We must encourage apprenticeships or internships for young people. That is why the CCBF is developing partnerships with Christian colleges and universities so that their students have an opportunity to work within a Christian business setting as part of a mentoring program.
- We must practice Christian business ethics and standards within and outside of business.
- The CCBF also participates in the development of public policy and speaks out on matters of public policy proposed by the government as it relates to the justice system or business enterprises, in order to promote the glory of God in our society.

Since God rules all aspects of our lives, we aren't merely Sunday Christians. We take what we learn on Sundays and apply it to our lives throughout the week. If all of life is religion, then a Christian business leader is engaged in ministry. He or she reflects Christ when dealing with customers, with employees, with suppliers, with the bank, with Revenue Canada.

It's tough being a Christian in business these days. There are a wide range of economic pressures to make ends meet and, better yet, to make a profit. That is why the role that the Canadian Christian Business Federation plays today is as relevant as it was a generation ago; perhaps even more so.

Our members come from every conceivable sector – agriculture, the environment, construction, real estate, insurance, engineering, manufacturing, chiropractic, veterinary services, automotive, retail, financial institutions, trucking, the legal profession, technology, landscaping, travel, and religious organizations. They share one strong bond: they need each other.

CCBF members meet in chapters currently scattered across Ontario – but Alberta and British Columbia are next. They gather over monthly breakfast meetings to talk about their personal and business lives and to engage in a Bible study around various leadership themes. Over those breakfasts they talk about integrity, risk-taking, stress management, accountability, team building, decision-making, power and influence, communication skills, time management, justice, dependence upon God, conflict management, servant leadership, self-discipline, empowerment and vision. In fact, if one was to attend every monthly breakfast meeting for five years, they would deal with a different topic with different biblical references every month.

Since the CCBF is a generation old, several initial members have since passed on their businesses to a new generation. This presents an entirely new set of challenges. In some cases, the passion and vision that led Dad to start a business in the 1960s or 1970s has not been passed on to Son in 2010. What's more, technology has changed and so has the marketplace. The business world today isn't the same as the business world in 1970.

CCBF continues to expand its mentorship program. A new, young member recently launched an import/export business but felt ill equipped to meet these challenges so he asked for a mentor. CCBF hooked him up with an older member who has been involved in import/export for thirty years. They meet together to discuss business practices and strategies. They also undoubtedly do that with the Bible in their hands. CCBF will continue to develop a network of mentors; those men and women who have a wealth of experience and who are now eager to share that experience with others.

What are some of the struggles of a Christian in business today? The questions come quickly but the answers are more difficult to discern:

- How much profit should I make on the goods I produce or sell?

- How much should I pay my employees? What is a fair wage? What are reasonable benefits?
- How do I treat my employer? How hard should I work? Should I really call in sick when I'm not?
- How do I define customer service/ What can a customer rightly expect from me?
- What do I do with employees who steal, or who consistently come in late to work?

The Canadian Christian Business Federation is a membership-based organization; in fact it is the only membership-based organization for Christian business leaders in Canada. There are other organizations around who organize monthly breakfast meetings. Men and women come and go but they don't really "belong." They rarely interact between meetings. There isn't that support base and that network that comes with membership. There is an annual print directory as well as an online one which in many ways provides a lifeline for members.

Many CCBF members want to hire Christian employees. They can place their ad for free on the website, www.ccbf.org, to attract new employees. Similarly, there are employees who long to work within a Christian environment and they can also have their resume on file with the CCBF office.

While Christian business owners and leaders are engaged in ministry every day as they carry out their business, that is also the case for CCBF. This work is ministry. It builds relationships and connections.

Being a Christian in business means more than simply not swearing, or being closed on Sundays. It is a lifestyle where Christ is reflected in all that one does and says.

About the author

Keith Knight is the executive director of the Canadian Christian Business Federation, based in Guelph, Ontario.

Born Cornelis Knecht in Delft, The Netherlands, he has been a journalist and editor in both the secular and church press for forty years. He is a former editor of Calvinist Contact, now known as Christian Courier.

He has been the communication director of the Christian Reformed Church in North America, communication director of The Presbyterian Church in Canada for nine years, and served as interim editor for a year with the Anglican Journal. He was served on a number of ecumenical boards and organizations, including nine years on the World Association for Christian Communication.

He is a lifelong member of the Christian Reformed Church, currently serving as chair of council of First Christian Reformed Church in Guelph, Ontario, and as stated clerk of Classis Huron.

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Ancaster Celebrates Twenty-Five Years



work is the work of the Son of God. The Lord Jesus Christ gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by his Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith a church chosen to everlasting life, and we may be evidence to that. The Lord has been faithful to us here." He then guided everyone through the timeline that began approximately a year before institution.

The congregation in Hamilton had grown to about 600 members and a number of brothers formed a committee to investigate the feasibility of instituting a new congregation in Ancaster. The consistory in Hamilton gave their consent to brothers DeJong, Jager, Nobel, Slomp, and Walinga with George Bartels serving as liaison. They had many meetings at the Slomp residence and finally, with an enthusiastic presentation, Ancaster became the newest congregation in the federation of Canadian Reformed Churches on May 5, 1985.

Since this date, the reverends R. Aasman, van Essen, G. van Popta, and J. Ludwig have served the congregation in Ancaster. Streetlight Ministries,

On a sunny, Saturday afternoon in June the members of Ancaster church came together for the annual church picnic and to celebrate twenty-five years of being together. The Lord has richly blessed the congregation in Ancaster since in its inception on May 5, 1985 and this was again evident by the work of the Hospitality Committee as they arranged games, food and more food, and a spot in the agenda for a period of reflection on the past twenty-five years.

Rev. John Ludwig, who accepted the call to Ancaster within the past year, called the members present together to officially open the meal and to introduce George Bartels, vice-chairman of consistory, who would guide the members down memory lane.

Brother George Bartels began his reflection with these words, "We believe that the church-gathering



Ancaster's urban mission project, has been blessed with the faithful service of Rev. P. Aasman. Over time, the congregation grew to over 600 members which allowed a new group of brothers to form a committee to investigate the possibility of institution from whence the congregation of Providence was formed.

Thanks are to the Lord for everything He has given us within the congregation of Ancaster, the

federation of Canadian Reformed Churches and within his eternal church from the beginning of time till now. The period of reflection was closed off by the reading of Psalm 121 which finishes off with the text, "The Lord will keep you from all harm – he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore." The Lord has been faithful to us here in Ancaster.



James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Baker Academic, 2009)

Additional Information: 238 pages

James K.A. Smith is a professor of philosophy at Calvin College and the author of *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism* (2006) and *Introducing Radical Orthodoxy* (2004). Like these earlier studies, the book now under review has been well received, also in Reformed circles. I have heard it mentioned from the pulpit and I know of a number of Reformed educational institutions that are planning to make it a topic of faculty discussion. Not surprisingly so, for it is a timely, thought-provoking study. Although, as will appear, I do not agree with all its conclusions, the book's general message is convincing and needs to be heard among us.

Smith's focus is on the character of Christian education. Especially in Reformed circles it was traditionally assumed, he writes, "That education is about ideas and information. . . . And so distinctively *Christian* education is understood to be about Christian ideas – which usually requires a defence of the importance of 'the life of the mind.' On this account, the goal of Christian education is the development of. . . a *Christian worldview*, which is taken to be a system of Christian beliefs, ideas, and doctrines" (p 17).

Head and heart

Christian education, then, has generally focused on the intellect, the mind, and therefore on ideas rather than on the development of affections. It is this educational model that Smith rejects. Its proponents wrongly assume, he says, that when someone *thinks* as a Christian, he automatically *acts* like one. Human beings, however, are not first of all "thinking things" but lovers. As such they are motivated by a desire for the "kingdom" – that is, for their vision of the good life, of ultimate human flourishing. Their desire *should* be for the kingdom of God, for humanity was created in order to love and worship Him. Sin, however, has distorted our affections and all too often we focus our love on a secular kingdom. Among these secular versions Smith counts materialism, nationalism, the sports stadium, and consumerism – including the shopping mall (see his striking description of the mall as a "liturgical institution," pp 19-23). Whatever kingdom we immerse

ourselves in becomes the focus of our ultimate desires and determines the kind of worship we slip into, gradually and perhaps largely unwittingly. Thought and intellect have little to do with it. One can't think of the mall, for example, in worldview terms.

Because our ultimate desires are formed not by our intellects but by habits, practices, or (as Smith often calls them) "liturgies," Christian education should concern itself with the formation of the proper habits and practices. Rather than focusing on information *for the sake of information*, it should aim at formation and transformation. Smith's rejection of the centrality of worldview thinking is not to be understood, he explains in a footnote (p 17), as a proposal for a newfangled form of anti-intellectualism. For him it's not a choice between heart and mind; he simply wants to establish the *priority* of affectivity, i.e., of the heart. His point is that it is affection that makes the work of the mind possible ("we love in order to know"), and affection is formed not by ideas, but by practices. What people believe in and love and worship grows out of what they do. Students at Christian schools must therefore first of all learn the "liturgies" that will direct their love and worship to God.

How is that to be done? It is not until the last chapter that Smith gives attention to the way in which Christian schools and colleges are to fulfill this task. Most of the book deals with the formation of Christians at home, in society, and in the church. Among the habits and practices shaping the proper desires, he counts daily prayer and the reading of Scripture, going to church on Sunday, and especially participating in the church's liturgy. On the latter topic see Chapter 5, "Practicing (for) the Kingdom: An Exegesis of the Social Imaginary Embedded in Christian Worship," which gives a fine description and explanation of the various aspects of Sunday worship (and is by itself worth the price of the book). Here Smith stresses the fact that humans are relational beings and that Christian worship must ultimately centre in communal worship where Christians meet not as individuals but as members of one body. In the final chapter Smith turns to the specific task of Christian education itself. Here he mentions, among other things, the need of combining academic instruction with Christian practice – including communal life and worship, but also participation in "outreach" programs such as work at homeless shelters in the inner city or in refugee ministry.

Religious intellectualism

Smith says more than once that he wants to leave room for worldview thinking and for the intellectual aspect of the faith in general. He fears intellectualism, however, and more than once refers to worldview and head knowledge in an almost negative manner. It is especially Protestantism, he thinks, that has focused too much on the head rather than on the heart. He admits that in the Reformed tradition worldview thinking has been modified by a stress on the role of *faith* in knowing, and by teaching that we *believe* in order to understand, but he does not think that that correction warrants a return to worldview education. There is, he writes, not that much difference between the human being as a “thinking thing” and as a “believing thing.” Also in the latter model the focus is still on intellectual understanding and therefore on information instead of transformation (p 45). We are moved and motivated neither by thought nor by faith but by the desires of the embodied heart, that is, by love.

I think that Smith is making an important point with respect to intellectualism in the church’s education of its members. Although things may be different today, I remember a time when doctrinal orthodoxy scored at least as high as true piety and when proper knowledge of doctrine (let’s say, knowing the Catechism) was the primary gateway to confessing membership. The fact that God desires our love was not ignored, and certainly not in the Heidelberg Catechism, nor was it forgotten among believers. But I fear that especially in the education of young people doctrinal instruction at times trumped the work of shaping the proper desires and cultivating an attitude of love. As a result, as a church member once complained to me, they missed out on the all-important teaching of the transformative aspects of the faith – of the fact that God wants us to give Him our heart. If that tradition is still with us, then Smith’s book serves as an important antidote. The kingdom is not for those who know or for those who think correctly about certain issues (even though knowledge and orthodoxy are important) but for those who hunger and thirst for righteousness – whose desires are focused on the kingdom of God.

Imbalances

So much for what I believe are the positive aspects of Smith’s study. I now voice some of the questions and

reservations I have with respect to the book. In most cases they are not a matter of absolute disagreement but of what I perceive as imbalances.

(1) It seems to me that while attempting to correct one error, Smith introduces another. He admits a (limited) role for worldview teaching and denies any anti-intellectualist intentions, but I think more emphasis could have been placed on head knowledge. I know that he does not deny its value. His intention is merely to show that in order to understand rightly, we must love rightly. While I agree with this, I think that the content of our understanding gets insufficient attention. There is, for example, little or no mention of doctrinal teaching. The Catechism and its role in instructing the youth is not mentioned. This is especially regrettable, as some critics have pointed out, at a time when in our culture as a whole head knowledge is considered largely irrelevant, when many evangelicals (and Reformed?) are close to being biblically and doctrinally illiterate, and when emotions and feelings are considered more reliable guides than intellectual understanding.

(2) As the foregoing already suggests, Smith’s view of the human being comes across as one-sided. Little attention is given to the fact that reason and rationality are genuine aspects of humanity and that not just our heart and our desires must be transformed, but our mind as well. The Bible mentions both. In Romans 12 we are urged not only to offer our *bodies* as living sacrifices, but also to be transformed by the renewal of our *minds*. And similar messages can be found elsewhere in Scripture.

(3) I think it is a pity that this otherwise so worthwhile study, while rightly warning against the dangers of intellectualism, largely ignores those of the opposite vice – namely anti-intellectualism. We could learn here from C.S. Lewis’s *Screwtape*, who observed (in Letter XXV) that humans have a tendency to cry out against vices that threaten their society least (such as, today, the dangers of an exclusive reliance on “understanding”) and to ardently promote those that are already becoming prominent and even endemic (such as, today, the reliance on feelings and emotions). It seems to me that on this score the book is insufficiently counter-cultural.

(4) The book tends to paint things too much in black and white. The reminder that we are embodied beings and that our desires affect our worship is to the point.

But is it only practices that shape our desires and worship? Surely ideas play a role as well? And is love the product of practices only and not of a realization of the amazing *truth* the Bible reveals to us – namely the gospel of “what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, and no mind has conceived” (1 Cor 2:9)? Similar questions can be raised in connection with Smith’s critique of worldview teaching. He is right in admitting that right thinking does not necessarily lead to right living. But does that *eliminate* the need for right thinking? Why should we not make use of both: worldview as well as a manner of teaching that focuses on the embodied heart? A related question is whether liturgy, including church liturgy, necessarily leads to conversion. Experience does not confirm this. Perhaps more mention should have been made of the role of Scripture and of the Spirit, who works faith not first of all by means of liturgical practices, important though these are, but by convincing us of the *truth* of the gospel. Smith does not of course deny any of the foregoing and he more than once mentions the transformative power of Word and Spirit. At times, however, I wish he had spelled out more clearly that faith, love, and a spirit of discipleship are not the result of doing only.

(5) In the foregoing I have expressed concern about the danger of ignoring the role of the mind. I return to that point, now in connection with the absence in Smith’s study of an acknowledgement of the fact that we must be prepared to give a *reasoned defence* of the faith. This lack is perhaps understandable in view of the author’s primary thesis. I hope, however, that the rejection of intellectualism (with which, once more, I fully agree) will not be understood as a denial of the gift and value of human intelligence and rationality. Such an understanding would be especially regrettable in a time when atheists publish best-selling works to “prove” that the Christian faith is irrational, that God is a delusion, that religion “poisons everything,” and so on. Christians, and certainly Christian students, must learn that while religion is indeed a matter of the heart, the heart does not normally operate apart from the head (although it may do so in the case of small children and the severely mentally handicapped). Human intelligence and rationality are gifts of God, talents that may not be buried. Our faith is *intellectually* defensible. Throughout the ages, intellectual defences have been made. They continue to be made today, not just in response to the challenges

issued by unbelievers, but also to strengthen the faith of believers. Apologetics, together with doctrinal instruction and worldview teaching, should continue to have a place in the curriculum of the Christian school. To discard them would be a catastrophe.

But Smith is certainly right in warning that all this must not be taught as simple head knowledge. We must love in order to understand rightly. Information must lead to formation, transformation, and discipleship. It is this primary message that makes this book such essential reading for all those concerned with Christian education – not only in our schools and colleges, but certainly also in church and at home.



Ray of Sunshine

Corinne Gelms and
Patricia Gelms

Hello, my name is Nancy Schipper. I live at the Beacon Home with all gentlemen! I do flyers on Tuesdays and go to Day Away on Mondays and Wednesday. I like writing letters, listening to Oldies 1150, drinking coffee, shopping, and having company. On Fridays I clean my room and like to have rests. I'll be going to Anchor Camp and I have lots of fun with all my friends. Don't be shy to come for a visit.



Nancy Schipper
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Thank you so much Nancy for your contribution and sharing with us all a bit about what you enjoy. We would like to extend our congratulations to you all celebrating a birthday this month. We hope that you have a wonderful day together with your family and friends. May you be blessed in this new year with good health and much happiness.

October Birthdays

- 3 **JANELL DEBOER** will be 20
6311 Silver Street
RR2, St. Ann's, ON LOR 1Y0
- 6 **HENRY VANDER VLIET** will be 43
c/o Anchor Home
361 Thirty Road
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A note to all parents and caregivers

If there are any address or other changes that we need to be aware of please let us know as soon as possible.

You can contact us by the following means:

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Canticles

God Made the Heavens and the Earth

2

1. God made the heav - ens and the earth by His cre - a - tive Word. The
2. God told the clouds to soar on high, their wat - 'ry wealth to bear, up -
3. Then God looked at the earth He'd made and or - dered plants to grow. Both
4. Then God cre - a - ted two great lights and put them on dis - play. The
5. Then in the deep did God cre - ate the crea - tures of the sea. The

skies and world were all brought forth by the Al - might - y LORD. The
on the breeze and in the sky, and move a - long the air. The
field and mead - ow He ar - rayed with crops and seed to sow. The
moon He made to rule the night, the sun to gov - ern day. The
fish and whale, both small and great He made a - bun - dant - ly. As

Spir - it hov - ered o'er the deep. God said: "Let there be light!" Then
wa - ters on the earth be - low were gath - ered by His hand.
land and soil pro - duced its goods: herbs, veg - e - ta - tion, leaves; shrubs,
stars He cast 'cross heav - en's vault; they praise Cre - a - tor God. From
well the skies He filled with birds, the spar - row and the swan. And

light a - cross the heav - ens swept and scat - tered dark - est night.
roil - ing seas He caused to flow and leave the sol - id land.
flow - ers, or - chards, glen and woods, grain in a - bun - dant sheaves.
east to west they Him ex - alt and spread His fame a - broad.
prais - es to our God were heard at ev - ery new day's dawn.

6. Next God made all the animals
that live upon the land:
the wild, the tame, whatever crawls
emerged at His command.
And then at last God made a man:
He called him to be king.
And from man's rib God made a queen
to help man rule all things.

7. And God saw all that He had made;
He viewed it from on high:
the great foundations He had laid,
the water and the sky.
He saw all creatures great and small;
they all before Him stood.
The Word of God that made it all
declared it very good.

Dear Editor:

Re: Clarence Bouwman, *A Bit of Church History [:] Canadian Reformed: where from and why?* (Clarion, Vol. 59, No. 14, p.365)

The above article purports to describe the beginnings of the Canadian Reformed Churches, so that we may treasure this heritage and “live it out” in our families and in our community. A noble goal. However, the article contains a number of egregious errors that mar it.

1. The author states that the Protestant Reformed Churches, under the leadership of the Rev. Herman Hoeksema, split from the Christian Reformed Churches [sic, Church] in 1924 because the Christian Reformed Church had adopted a Statement of Principles that paralleled the Pacification Formula adopted by the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland in 1905 and because Rev. Hoeksema and others rejected that formula. In fact, the Christian Reformed Church adopted the equivalent of the Dutch formula in 1908. Moreover, Hoeksema did not leave the Christian Reformed Church because of that formula, but because the Christian Reformed Church had adopted Dr. Abraham Kuyper’s theory of Common Grace, the so called “three points” of Kalamazoo.

2. Rev. Bouwman states that there were no Protestant Reformed Churches in Canada at the beginning of the 1950s. But this is incorrect. Such churches were established in Chatham and Hamilton and, pursuant to Dr. K. Schilder’s advice, immigrants from the Liberated churches joined those churches. It was only after the Synod of the Protestant Reformed Churches adopted a Declaration of Principles in 1951, an extra-confessional binding which stated that God’s covenant was made only with the elect, that the church at Chatham liberated itself from the Protestant Reformed yoke and became a Canadian Reformed Church. Although Hamilton also became a Canadian Reformed Church, problems arose there later in the 1950s between those of Liberated origin and those of Protestant Reformed leanings and led to a split there.

3. Contrary to what Rev. Bouwman states, the Canadian Reformed Churches did use the Christian Reformed Hymnal in the early years when they began having English services. It was Synod Homewood 1954 that decided we needed to develop our own *Book of Praise* and our English psalms were then restricted to the few Dewey Westra Genevan tunes in the *Psalter Hymnal*.

I offer these corrections with a view to ensuring that our people are given their correct history.

Yours faithfully,
R. J. Oosterhoff, Tintern

Response

Thank you, brother, for your elucidations. Getting it right is indeed important.

CB

Dear Editor,

The Synod report in *Clarion* Vol. 59, No. 16 contains a questionable statement under the heading of Women’s Voting. The statement in question is “One of the issues that lived on the hearts and minds of the brothers at Synod, and surely of the churches. . . .” While the issue may have lived in the hearts of the members of Synod 2010, it is debatable whether the issue lives in the churches (see Synod Abbotsford, Article 51, Considerations A). Of the thirty-four letters to Synod, only four expressed outright support for opening the voting of office-bearers to female communicant members. That indicates that by and large the majority of the churches favoured the status quo.

Another point which I would like to make is about the first statement of the decision taken by Synod 2010, namely the affirmation that only male communicant members can be called to the offices of minister, elder and deacon. How is that statement going to protect the churches from the next campaign to (firstly) open the office of deacon to women? In countless prior synods, women’s voting rights were denied, and two things were consistently agreed upon, namely that unless new scriptural grounds were presented, the current practice of voting would not change, and secondly that this issue was to be decided by the churches in common. In one fell swoop, Synod 2010 overturned both of those decades-proven decisions. So what assurance do we have that a future synod will not overturn the directive that only male communicant members can be called to the offices of minister, elder, and deacon? The decision itself renders the first statement completely moot.

This decision of Synod 2010 has opened a new era of discord and divisiveness in the Canadian Reformed federation. May the Lord continue to gather, defend, and preserve his Bride in spite of this Synod 2010 decision.

Thea Heyink, York, ON

Letters to the Editor should be written in a brotherly fashion in order to be considered for publication. Submissions need to be less than one page in length.