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Clarion

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DOES CHANGING THE CALENDAR CHANGE ANYTHING?

Fear Factor

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When we fear the LORD our God, we are delivered from all other fears

The beginning of a new year is marked with celebration and wishes of "Happy New Year." After the seasonal joviality has passed, however, one wakes up again to the daily reality of life, a reality no different from that of the year just past. Changing the calendar did not change anything. It will be another year where we are confronted with fear. The daily happenings in the world, the realities of living in this world, and the feeble nature of our soul have the potential to immobilize us.

Immobilizing fears

In terms of the realities of living in this world, if we follow what is happening, there are numerous reasons for fear. Some happenings affect us as we belong to humanity in general, while others affect us because we are Christians. There is the Muslim menace. This is not just a threat in faraway lands, but can strike with deadly power in our own nation. There is the constant threat of some terrible infectious disease that could rapidly spread through the world and potentially result in many deaths. One can add to this the constant fear-mongering by the prophets of climate change. It seems dangerous to travel anywhere, even within your own country. You never know what terrible event might befall you. Floods, forest fires, or ferocious flurries may thwart your travel plans. On the spiritual level, there is the danger of secular seduction, as the world holds out the promise of the instant gratification of the many desires of our old nature.

In terms of the realities of daily life, there is constant uncertainty. With fluctuations in the economy and constantly changing technology, no one can assume there will always be a job to go to. Careful management of money does not guarantee anything. Many years of savings can disappear when a job is lost, there comes a series of unexpected expenses to repair one's house or replace a car, or some debilitating illness strikes. Life has so many unpredictable variables that one can easily become frozen with fear about the future.

Then there is the feeble nature of our soul. Life can take devastating twists and turns that lead us to question God's love for us. There may be a fear that he is angry with us. The reality of life is that it does not need devastating twists and turns for these types of fears to arise in our minds. A sense of emotional and spiritual darkness can descend upon those who seem to have everything going well in their lives. This darkness can lead to all sorts of fears, the worst being that God has rejected them. An emotionally and spiritually healthy person may live in fear that this might happen to them.

Mobilizing fear

Now it may sound contradictory, but there is actually a fear that will take away the fears just mentioned. It is a mobilizing fear as it dispels all other fears. This mobilizing fear is the fear of the LORD.

When we use the word "fear" with reference to the LORD, the aspect of being afraid fades to the background. With respect to the LORD, the word "fear" has the sense of reverence, of standing in respectful awe, for he is the almighty, holy God. True fear of the LORD is not a matter of standing before him terrified at the prospect of being punished, but of loving God and serving him in the way he has taught in his Word.

We hear this in Psalm 34:4, "I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears." A little further, in verse 9, we read, "Oh, fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him have no lack." The whole Psalm is worth reading, but I quoted those two

verses because they bring out that when we fear the Lord our God, we are delivered from all other fears. We see this if through the fears listed earlier. We will work through them in the reverse order.

In the first place, when we fear the Lord, we do not have to fear the wellbeing of our soul. David concludes the Psalm with the words, "The Lord redeems the life of his servants; none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned." As rich as those words were when David first penned them, they are all the richer for us who know Jesus Christ. We know God sent his Son to redeem

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

Another new year – and we have a choice, writes Rev. Eric Kampen. Do we fear the Lord, or will we be immobilized by fears that we cannot face with our own strength? Our meditation is also appropriate to the new year, looking both backwards and forwards.

Speaking of "new" . . .this issue brings readers an article that was originally published in *West Highland Free Press:* "The New Calvinists" by Rev. Dr. Donald Macleod. We also have a new series beginning, "Good News For Women," by Sarah Vandergugten.

Issue 1 of our new volume contains the a league day report, the Clippings on Politics and Religion column, a book review, a press release, and several questions in the You Asked column. There is also a Mission News insert.

Laura Veenendaal

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us from our sins. In Jesus Christ, we are reconciled to God. In Romans 5:1 we read, "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." In Romans 8:1 we read, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." As those who fear the Lord God, we need not fear for our soul.

The truth that those who fear God are at peace with him is a truth that calls for constant reflection. The miserable reality of life in this broken world is that we may not always feel this sense of peace with God in our hearts, but we may be assured that for those who fear the Lord, all is well. These feelings of doubt may come knocking at the door of everyone's heart in some way or another, while some may even experience long periods of doubt and uncertainty. It is not that they don't fear God, but the sense of assurance is missing. Our feelings may not always line up with our faith, but thankfully, we live by faith, not by feelings. It is God's promise that everyone who believes in him and in his Son has forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Our feelings may not always line up with our faith, but thankfully, we live by faith, not by feelings

It might seem that this is not very helpful for dealing with the fears of life because this speaks about spiritual aspects of life. We need to remind ourselves, however, that the spiritual aspect is fundamental for the physical aspect of life. When we know that our relationship with God has been straightened out by the death of Jesus Christ, then we have a foundation to face the fears that come because of the uncertainty of life in this world. The same God who has reconciled us to himself in Christ will take away all our fears and troubles. This does not mean that life will always be easy. When David wrote Psalm 34, he had just escaped from Abimelech, one of the rulers of the Philistines. David would face many more troubles after that incident. David was certain, however, that the Lord would continue to deliver him.

Here we are reminded of the providence of God. He is in control in prosperity and adversity. In the Form for Baptism, we are reminded that God adopts us for his children and heirs, "and promises to provide us with all good and avert all evil or turn it to our benefit." That part about God turning evil to our benefit is particularly important. This is based on Paul's words in Romans 8, where he writes about the golden chain of salvation, from predestination to glorification. Paul concluded that section by confessing his certainty that nothing could separate him from the love of God in Christ Jesus. Again, we see how fear of the Lord dispels fears that come our way because of the challenges of daily life.

Finally, there are the fears that can arise because of what is happening in the world. Mention was made of the Muslim menace and secular seduction, both ultimately threats to the church. Once again, such fears are dispelled by fear of the Lord. This is so because the same God who has redeemed us from our sin through the gift of his Son, who provides for us in our daily life, is the sovereign God, who rules supreme over all of history. We can think of Psalm 34:16, "The face of the Lord is against those who do evil, to cut off the memory of them from the earth." Further, in verse 21, we read, "Affliction will slay the wicked, and those who hate the righteous will be condemned." A similar fearlessness of those who fear the Lord is expressed in the words of Psalm 46:1-3, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth give way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its water roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling." We can think of our Lord's words to Peter that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the kingdom of God (Matt 16:18). In addition, we can think of the visions in the Book of Revelation that repeatedly show the defeat of all those who oppose the rule of Christ.

Fear God

What it all comes down to, therefore, is that no matter how we look at it, we are at the beginning of another year of fear. As is clear, however, we have a choice. We can head into a year of multiple fears, and be immobilized, or we can head into a year where our focus is the fear of the Lord, our gracious God and be mobilized to face all the challenges of life. David's words in Psalm 34 bring out both the call and the promise of the gospel: Fear the Lord, and he will deliver you from all your fears. Fear the Lord, for those who fear him have no lack. If we make the fear of the Lord our focus, we will feel the urge many a time to take up David's words of this Psalm and bless and praise the name of the Lord. C

Looking Forward

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"But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness."
(2 Peter 3:13)

It is January, the month named after the Roman god Janus. Maybe you have seen images of Janus. He is the god with two human heads that face in opposite directions. One face looks to the past, the other to the future. This is what we do as we transition from one year to the next. This image of looking backwards and forwards at the very same time is reflected in the words of 2 Peter 3:13, "But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness."

With these words the Holy Spirit has us turn our heads around. We look backwards. And what do we look backwards to? We look backwards to God's ancient promise that he will come to this world (see verse 4). The Old Testament prophets referred to God's coming to the world as the day of the Lord. Peter picks up this teaching in verse 10: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare."

But with thousands of years of human history in the books, doubts arise about this promise. Questions are asked. Already in Peter's day there was the question, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?" Do you ever experience such doubts? For thousands of years the world has continued in its present broken state. One year turns into another. Here it is January. Again. Where is this coming of the Lord? Frustrating, isn't it?

But there is a reason the Lord is "slow" to keep his ancient promise. The Spirit of God teaches you that the Lord's "slowness" is a result of being patient with sinners like you and me. His "slowness" allows time for sinners to come to repentance. Once the day of the Lord comes, the time for repentance will be over. Time itself will be over as the sun and moon melt in the heat of God's fire. And on that day those who have not repented will perish eternally. So from the Lord's perspective his "slowness" is a good thing.

Yet this does not mean that he will not keep his promise. Sometimes children will equate the slowness of parents to keep their promise as meaning that they have no intention to keep their promise at all. We are tempted to do this as the children of God. But Father will keep his promise: "In keeping with his promise," this verse says. The Spirit of God assures you that the day of the Lord will come. And so having looked back at God's ancient promise, we find our heads turning and looking forward.

We are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. Here we see why it is we are looking forward to the coming of the Lord. It is because the Lord will make all things new when he comes. This too, is in keeping with his promise. For through the prophet Isaiah the Lord said long ago, "Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind" (65:17).

The Lord will create a new heaven after the old heavens disappear with fire. The Lord will create a new earth after the old earth and everything in it has been laid bare. This will be the last transition. Once and for all we will leave behind this age in which we presently live. We will remember it no more. We will never look backward again, neither will we look forward. Because there will be nothing left to look forward to. God's ancient promise will have been completely fulfilled. We will have arrived at our forever home.

As Christians we look forward to living in our forever home. Why? Because it is the home where righteousness dwells. It means God will dwell with you, and you with him, in a perfect relationship. No more will we sin against God. No more will we sin against each other. No more will we hurt each other. Wickedness will be nowhere while righteousness will be everywhere.

This is the home God has promised us in and through Jesus Christ. And because God will keep his promise, no matter how many years come and go, we continually look forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. C

The New Calvinists

Donald Macleod
Emeritus professor of systematic theology at the Free Church College, Edinburgh, Scotland

This article was first published in the West Highland Free Press. *It is reprinted with the author's permission.*

Most of our readers now sleep soundly, secure in the knowledge that Calvinists are extinct. After all, you never see one on telly, and it's a good seven years since the last stamping on fiddles or smashing of bagpipes.

But being, as it were, possessed of inside knowledge, I knew there were still some Calvinists around. I had even seen one or two, though much harder to spot than of yore, since they no longer wore black hats.

Now the really bad news. Not only are there still a few Calvinists around, but another closely related species has suddenly appeared: New Calvinists, the same but different.

I had long suspected it, more or less for the same reason as led scientists to suspect the existence of the planet Pluto. Even though no telescope could see it, there were odd deviations in the skies, and these deviations strongly suggested the existence of a hitherto unknown planet. Precisely the same thing was happening in the theological skies: strange deviations from Calvinism pointing to some hitherto unknown phenomenon.

Then, a couple of months ago a book arrived by post, written by a Dr. E.S. Williams asking to be reviewed, and offering the lowdown on a group labelled "The New Calvinists": a species allegedly represented in America by such organisations as Acts 29, the Gospel Coalition, and Desiring God Ministries; and in this country by the Porterbrook Network.

I found the book's broad-brush denunciations of fellow Christians hard to take. Too many good men and first-rate scholars were being held up to disdain. Yet the book instantly solved my version of the Pluto-problem: the curious movements in the theological skies now had a label; and the label immediately put me on the alert, sensing danger.

The New Calvinists are all Calvinists, but only in the limited sense that they believe in the so-called Five Points, summarised in the mnemonic TULIP (Total Depravity, Unconditional Election, Limited Atonement, Invincible Grace, Perseverance of the Saints). I love all tulips, except this one, to which I am profoundly allergic. John Calvin's unique contribution to human thought cannot be reduced to this simplistic teaching-aid, thought up only in the twentieth century. Nor can Calvinism be reduced to "points." It is a whole world-view, embracing not only religion, but art, science, education, economics, politics, and much more.

But if they hold to the Five Points, why should I worry? I should worry because just as the grey squirrel threatens our native reds with extinction, so this brash New Calvinism threatens our historic Scottish Calvinism. It will eat us up, just as American signal-crayfish eat up our native species.

The biggest threat is to our native form of worship, the key-note of which has been a sense of awe in the presence of the infinite and the holy; and linked to this, in turn, an insistence on order. This was something that the Reformers inherited from the early church fathers and from the medieval Catholic Church and, Reformation or no Reformation, they refused to let it go. This is why many of us today would feel far more at home in a High Church service than in a modern Evangelical one; and this is why every Reformed church, including the Church of Scotland, had its Book of Common Order, reflecting the conviction that public worship was far too important to be left to the whim of the individual minister. They could preach and pray as the Spirit moved them, but they would have to sing from an authorised psalm-book, follow a common order for Baptism and Communion, and incorporate the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed into their weekly services.

Beside this lay another fundamental principle: it was God's prerogative to tell us how he wished to be worshipped. Hence the much-derided "simplicity" of Calvinist worship: no vestments, no incense, no altar, no images of the saints, no pictures of the Virgin, no kneeling

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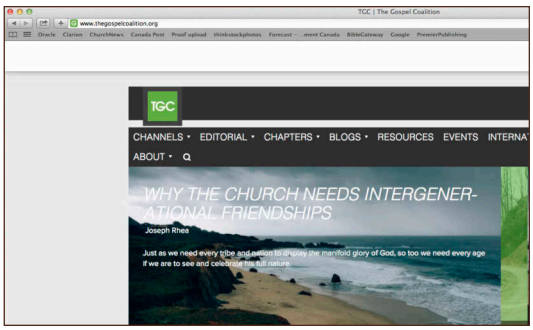

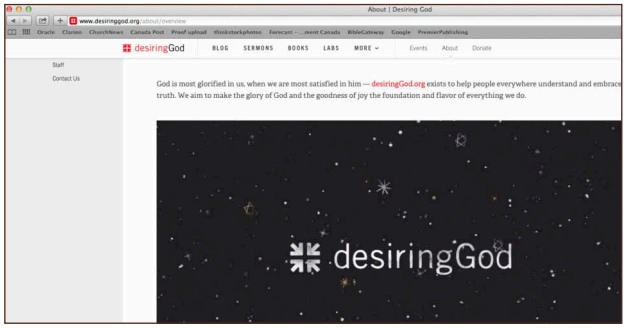

at Communion, all excluded because we had no reason to believe that God "enjoyed" them. That was the only relevant consideration.

With the New Calvinism, the dynamics change and Calvin becomes but a dim shadow. Instead, there is a curious mixture of the Five Points, sixteenth century Anabaptism, eighteenth century revivalism, twentieth century Pentecostalism, sophisticated marketing, the latest technology, and high-decibel music.

The details will vary, of course, depending on the whims of the leader. At its worst, he will be a brilliant stand-up comedian, dressed down to a T-shirt, his tattooed arms and biceps proclaiming his masculinity, the music hip-hop (rap). At its best, the leader will be a Harvard postgraduate, the band will be a professional orchestra, and the sermon will be an argument to prove the existence of God (something Calvin never thought was his job, seeing as how God had already sown the seed of religion in every heart).

With all this comes "messy" church: not as a disaster, but as something devoutly to be wished, since traditional churches are all "stuffy" and need to be "shook-up," giving us what the late Cardinal Winning called "the liturgy of scruff," sermons which impart much information about the preacher's wife and family, imperious leaders, and a contempt for rigorous full-time theological education.

And music, the modern opiate. Can we really accept that in church music anything goes? Luther took his hymn-tunes from the pubs and General Booth claimed to have stolen his from the Devil. Calvin, by contrast, had his specially composed for his Psalms, insisting that the music serve the words. If that is the case, then hip-hop (the music to which Afro-American protest sings its narrative) can never find a place in Christian worship. Nor can the oratorio. Church music is community music, and the high notes of the soprano and the low notes of the bass are equally beyond us. We could listen to an oratorio, of course, but worship doesn't consist in being sung to, but in singing.

But finally, isn't this New Calvinism "missional." Possibly, but while it may have invented the word it certainly didn't invent the thing. The Old Calvinism succeeded not only in providing Scotland with blanket gospel-coverage, but also in sending overseas some of the greatest missionaries the world has ever seen.

Let us take our cue from them, and move on to develop an expansionist Old Calvinism, based on Calvin's encyclopaedic theology, reverent worship, and comprehensive church organisation.

And please assure me that I'm not the last of a threatened species. C

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Good News for Women

Created in God's Image (Part 1)

"Mrs. V., you teach like a woman!" I looked at the young man and smiled, "Why, thank you," I replied, although I'm not sure he meant it as a compliment. "What makes you say that?" He responded, "I think you mention things about women in the Bible a lot more often than other Bible teachers we've had." I think he was right. Although initially taken aback, I appreciated his comment. It caused me to reflect on my teaching and some of my emphases. Being a woman does mean that I read and teach the Bible like a woman. That's unavoidable. But a man reads and teaches like a man, and no one takes that ill of him. If I was guilty of noticing the women in Scripture more than the young man's previous teachers, I make no apology. In fact, I would suggest that it might well be an enriching and even eye-opening experience for any student of Scripture to follow the story of women from the early pages of Genesis through to the letters of Paul and Peter.

Tracing such a line through Scripture will help us respond to any confusion about the role and place of women in the family, in the church, and in the world. Is it all right for a woman to be the leader in the family? Why or why not? Can she expect her husband to help her with raising the children, or is that her job? What if she wants to have a career outside of the home? And what about in the church? Why shouldn't a woman be a preacher or elder? What is she "permitted" to do? May she vote, or must her silence be enforced there? Before we can begin to answer those types of questions we need to look to Scripture to give foundation and a framework to our thinking.

What follows, God willing, is a series of articles that will offer an overview of the story and place of women as revealed in Scripture. It will start in Genesis with the creation of Adam and Eve and their subsequent fall into sin. It will explore the role of women in Old Testament times. Reviewing these fundamentals will lay the groundwork to determine whether the accomplished work of Jesus Christ and the subsequent pouring out of the Holy Spirit actually made a difference to the place of women in family, church, and world. It will be only a brief survey, because to really cover the topic would require a book!

In the image of God

We start at the beginning. The creation story as related in Genesis 1 and 2 highlights several things. In Genesis 1 we learn that both Adam and Eve are created in God's image to work for God within his creation as man and woman. In Chapter 2 the emphasis is on Eve's creation as a helper suitable for Adam. In both chapters we learn that Adam and Eve are equal in status and value, but they are not identical.

When God had completed most of his creation – the seas and the dry land, the sun, moon and stars, the fish, birds and animals – the time had come to create someone who would act as his regent over creation, someone who would care for and develop everything he had made. God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness and let them rule. . . . So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen 1:26-27). We see that the man and the woman are both created in the image of God.

God's image in human beings is only alluded to in the Old Testament (Gen 5:1-2, 9:6). The New Testament makes several direct references to the image of God and

its relationship to humanity, with the emphasis that the divine image must be renewed in men and women through faith in Christ. Humans are like God in our moral, rational, and relational capacities as described by the Apostle Paul: "And put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph 4:24); "Put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator" (Col 3:10). This is true of both men and women; both are equal before God. Both are responsible to be his image bearers reflecting God into his creation. Both are given the command to "be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground" (Gen 1:28). Equality and cooperation are the norm.[1]

Why is it important to make this point? If we don't, our view of men, women, and their relationship will be skewed. There have been those who maintain that woman does not equally bear the image of God with man, but rather images God indirectly through imaging man. Augustine (350 – 430 AD) suggested the following: "The woman together with her husband is the image of God, so that the whole substance is one image. But when she is assigned as a help-mate, a function that pertains to her alone, then she is not the image of God. But as far as the man is concerned, he is by himself alone the image of God, just as fully and completely as when he and the woman are joined together into one."[2]

Of course, Augustine lived a long time ago, and we might protest that we've moved beyond such thinking. But lest we be too smug, we leap forward 1500 years to someone of our own heritage and background, the venerable Abraham Kuyper. He states about Eve, "She is the woman who embodied potentially all that is female. . . . Adam represented more. He embodied not only all that is male, but also all that is human."[3] This suggests that the man is primarily a human being while the woman is a sexual being who is best defined in terms of her relationship to a man. That could lead to ideas that a woman is less than she could be apart from her association with a man through marriage. Although we might not agree with either Augustine or Kuyper, I wonder if their sentiments still resonate in the background of our thinking about the role and relationship between men and women. So, to reiterate, both man and woman equally bear the image of God.

A suitable helper

Genesis 2 highlights another aspect of the creation of Adam and Eve, telling the story from another angle. By the sixth day, God had almost completed his work. Adam had been given the task of naming animals, and it became evident that there was no counterpart for him among the creatures. Even though after each creation day, Genesis 1 tells us "God saw that it was good," in Genesis 2:18 God states, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable [*ezer kenegdo*] for him." Something in that beautiful, good world was lacking. So God creates Eve to be a helper [*ezer*] who would complement [*kenegdo*] Adam, and together they would fulfill the task God had given them.

Together they would fulfill the task God had given them

The word "help(er)" (*ezer*) used to describe Eve is used twenty-one times in the Old Testament; sixteen times in reference to God, five times to people.[4] This does not suggest that being helper makes woman superior, assisting someone less able as a teacher or parent might. Neither does being called "helper" mean that the woman is inferior in being (ontologically) to the man. There is a mutual dependence, and *ezer* signifies the woman's essential contribution; she is made because she is needed. "She is not extraneous or a luxury, but a necessity for the welfare of the man. The man is not self-sufficient; he needs the woman's help."[5]

Adam was excited to see Eve when God brought her to him. He recognized her as both similar and different – bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh, yet unique, so he called her "woman." One of the reasons Eve will be able to help Adam is because in some way she *is* differ-

ent from him. God did not create a second man, but a woman. The intimacy and harmony that should support the marriage relationship is captured perfectly in that Eve was created from one of Adam's ribs. In the famous words of Matthew Henry,[6] the woman is "not made out of his head to top him, not out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved."[7] Another commentator states, "Just as the rib is found at the side of the man and is attached to him, even so the good wife, the *rib* of her husband, stands at his side to be his helper-counterpart, and her soul is bound up with his."[8]

Of course, not all men and women get married, but Genesis 2:24 outlines the God-given pattern that forms the basis for marriage: "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh." One short verse tells us a lot about marriage. The concepts of male initiative/leadership, independence, permanence, heterosexuality, monogamy, and consummation are all touched upon. The man, taking leadership, publicly leaves his parental home and sets up a permanent, independent household with one (not more) woman (not another man) and that relationship is sealed in an initial act of sexual intimacy – intimacy which continues throughout the marriage.

Both man and woman equally bear the image of God

As some have said, marriage is about leaving, cleaving and weaving; two are woven together to form one sturdy, beautiful fabric. Of course, Genesis 2:24 does not tell us everything about being married. The apostles Paul and Peter give more specific instruction to husbands and wives in their letters, but Genesis 2:24 is a crucial verse. It is quoted several times in the New Testament, by both Jesus and Paul, so we do well to take it as foundational for the biblical view of marriage.

Fruitful dominion

To sum up, Genesis 1 and 2 do more than tell the same story twice. I wonder if it is fair to say that Genesis 1 talks more about Adam and Eve's roles as man and woman and Genesis 2 more about Adam and Eve as husband and wife. True, Genesis 1 refers to being fruitful which presumes a marriage relationship. Fruitful in the Old Testament almost always means physical fruit – either offspring or the produce of a harvest. However, in some passages it means more, as in some Psalms and Proverbs (Ps 92:14; Prov 8:19; 11:30; 14:14) and certainly in the New Testament (a sampling of texts, Matt 7:15-20; 21:43; Mark 4:1-20; Luke 3:8; John 15:1-17; Rom 7:4; Gal 5:22). Fruitfulness extends and expands to include the results of living in the wisdom of God's ways and of faith in Jesus Christ. Such a conception of fruitfulness would give room to explore how men and women – as men and women and not only as husbands and wives – relate and function as they together have dominion over creation as God's regents. That could lead to some interesting discussions on the mutual dependence and interaction between men and women in families, in churches, in the workplace, and everywhere else in our broader communities.

[1] James Montgomery Boice, *Genesis: An Expositional Commentary,* vol. 1 (Grand Rapids, MI: Ministry Resources Library, 1982), 77-79.
[2] Augustine, *The Trinity,* trans. Stephen McKenna, *The Fathers of the Church,* vol. 45 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press), 352.
[3] Abraham Kuyper, *Women in the Old Testament,* 2d ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1961), 5.
[4] Bible references accessed at http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/nas/ezer-2.html : God as *ezer*: Exod 18:4; Deut 33:7, 26, 29; Ps 20:2; 33:20; 70:5; 89:19; 115: 9, 10, 11; 121: 1, 2; 124:8; 146:5; Hos 13:9. Human ezer: Gen 2: 18; 2:20; Isa 30:5; Ezek 12:14; Dan 11:34.
[5] Susan Foh, *Women and the Word of God: A response to biblical feminism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1979), 60.
[6] A famous English commentator on the Bible and Presbyterian minister (1662 - 1714).
[7] Bruce Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 89.
[8] Ibid., 89.

C

Out of the Mouth of Children

Cornelis Van Dam
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In Psalm 8, David praises God with the words: "O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger." God can use children to praise him and to silence the enemy. This truth is being graphically illustrated as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) continues its brutal campaign of exterminating Christians from their ancestral homes in these counties.

Several Christian media outlets reported on the moving testimony that children recently gave to their Islamic captors. What follows is from christiannews.net.

> Four Iraqi children firmly declared their love for Jesus in the face of death when Muslims in the country recently demanded that they convert to Islam.
>
> Andrew White, chaplain of St. George's Anglican Church in Baghdad, relayed the story in a recent video as he shared both about the persecution that Christians face in the country and the bravery of the children in standing up for their faith despite the consequences.
>
> "ISIS turned up and said to the children, 'You say the words that you will follow Mohammad,'" White explained. "The children, all under 15, four of them, said, 'No, we love Yesua (the Iraqi name for Jesus). We have always loved Yesua. We have always followed Yesua. Yesua has always been with us.'"
>
> The Muslims then again demanded the children to say that they will follow Mohammad. "They said, 'Say the words!' [The children] said, "No, we can't," he recalled. The men then decapitated the children. "They chopped all their heads off," White said, visibly moved and holding back tears. "How do you respond to that?" he asked. "You just cry. They are my children (being from my country). That is what we have been going through. That is what we are going through."
>
> During the video, White also told other stories of how Christians are being persecuted in Iraq, especially in cities like Baghdad and Nineveh. He said that matters became especially dire when ISIS began its insurgency and drove Christians from their homes. "[ISIS] hounded all of them out – not some – all of them," he said. "And they killed huge numbers. They chopped their children in half. They chopped their heads off. And they moved north, and it was just so terrible what happened."
>
> White said that approximately 250,000 Christians remain displaced in a country where there used to be an estimated 1 million Christians and Catholics.
>
> "[ISIS] said to one man, an adult, 'Either you say the words of converting to Islam or we will kill all of your children,'" he remembered. "He was desperate. He said the words. Then he phoned me and said, '...I said the words, does that mean Yasua doesn't love me anymore? I have always loved Yasua. I said those words because I couldn't see my children be killed,'" White recalled. "I said, 'Eliaz, no, Jesus still loves you. He will always love you.'"
>
> He said that Muslims have likewise sought to kill him, so he was advised by a former colleague to flee the country. White opined that it is not possible for Christians to live under the rule of ISIS. "All of them have had to flee," he said.

It is obvious that these people need our continued prayers. And the persecution is not just in areas controlled by ISIS. Islamic oppression, attacks, and killing of Christians is also going on in places like Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and in several African countries including Somalia, Kenya, Nigeria, and Uganda. But the testimony of the martyrs, including the children, endures to God's eternal praise and in the end silences the enemies. All their vicious attacks against God's children are ultimately in vain. C

Sonya Post

Fifty-third Annual Women's League Day

Morning speaker: Rev. VanWoudenberg

On Wednesday, October 22, 342 ladies made the trip on a cool, sunny, fall day to enjoy the Fifty-third Annual Women's League Day, hosted by the ladies of the Dunnville Canadian Reformed Church.

After opening with singing, Scripture reading, and prayer, the League President, Wendy Koster, introduced all board members and thanked our previous president, Jane Oostehoff, for her five years of service! Dianne Westrik was thanked for her five years of service on the League and ILPB as League Board Vice President. We then had roll call and noted with thankfulness that there were also some URC ladies present. What a blessing it is to have so many women come together to worship our God and Saviour!

The speaker for the morning, Rev. VanWoudenberg gave us a beautiful speech on The Christian Family and the Matter of Rebirth. He walked us through five points, based on John 3:1-21. He reminded us that we all need rebirth in order to enter the kingdom of God, also children of the covenant, and we should not be oblivious to this fact. We need to detest ourselves and seek our cleansing and salvation outside of ourselves. When the Lord takes Nicodemus to task, he is essentially taking us to task. We need to know what the greatest need for our children is, and what our greatest need is to raise our children. We all need washing with the Spirit. We need the Spirit to understand the work of God, for without the Spirit we will not see the special saving work of God. It was also stressed that we need to reflect our Father in his love for the world. We can only know the truth and reflect our Father if the Spirit opens our hearts. We need to cry out for the Spirit to open our eyes and give us understanding! Let us never forget how substandard we are. Not one of us is up to the task of raising our children in our own strength. We need to seek our salvation outside of ourselves. This also means that we seek our energy, and stamina, and methods of raising our children outside of ourselves. We cannot give our children faith so we must pray regularly and often for the working of the Holy Spirit in them. Rev. VanWoudenberg mentioned that we have to remember that it isn't a method of parenting that saves our children. Only the Spirit can bring faith. As we read in Deuteronomy 6 that faith must permeate our homes! We are tools in the hands of God.

He concluded his speech and we were then able to break into table discussions. To conclude the morning we sang Psalm 143:6 and Cindy Osterhoff led us in Scripture reading and prayer. After lunch we began the after-

Afternoon speaker: Anne deBoer

noon session by singing O Canada and Wendy led us in prayer. Two ladies from the Dunnville church led us in entertainment before we would settle in to listen to our afternoon speaker, Anne deBoer. Anne began by introducing us to a lady who is scared but wants to serve God. She knows that all she needs is the faith of a mustard seed. She knows that a small glimpse of God's glory would set our hearts blazing for Christ and that we could move mountains. Anne gave us two examples of men in the Bible who had wavering faith. The first was Moses who stood on holy ground and when God called him to speak to Pharaoh, fear gripped him and he had excuses as to why he couldn't be the one to lead the people out of Egypt. Then she spoke about Peter who dropped his occupation to follow Jesus showing us that he had no lack of trust but later he doubted when he walked on the water and he lost all confidence. We need to know that if we rely on our own ability we cannot do our task. We need to rely on the strength of God. When our inabilities weigh us down we need to see the ability of God. We need to look to Jesus through prayer and through God's Word. Remember that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us! Anne stressed that when life seems impossible we may give our cares over to God. After Anne concluded her speech we sang Psalm 25:2 and 4 and then had table discussions with questions that were provided.

Our League President then brought our day to a close with a few announcements. It was mentioned that we raised $1853.00 for CCRTC. The caterers were thanked for all their work though out the day and the ladies of Dunnville church were thanked for organizing and putting on an enjoyable day. The speakers were again thanked for giving us so much to think about and to carry with us through our daily lives.

We sang Hymn 39:1, 2, and 5. Dianne Westrik closed in prayer to end a beautiful day of praising God and being filled with his Word! What a blessing! C

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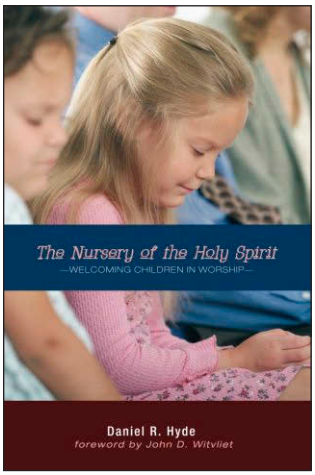
wbredenhof@bell.net

The Nursery of the Holy Spirit: Welcoming Children in Worship, Daniel R. Hyde, Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2014.

Additional Information: Paperback, 69 pages, $13.00 USD



There are heaps of Reformed books about children, but they typically hone in just one topic: infant baptism. However, this is the only book that I have encountered that speaks to the place of children in public worship. It's an important topic and one that is often discussed informally in Reformed churches. Some want to shuffle their children off to special programs, even when they are school age and can sit quietly in church. The argument is that children don't get anything out of the service anyway, so why should they be there only to distract their parents and others? Others become impatient with the children who are in church and are in the process of learning to sit quietly. We all talk about children in the worship service, but do we always do that with the right perspective? This book brings a much-needed biblical approach.

The author is a well-known author and Reformed pastor. He currently serves the Oceanside United Reformed Church in California. Moreover, as the father of four children, he has a vested interest in the topic. He understands the challenges that Christian parents face when it comes to worship.

Hyde's little book argues persuasively that children definitely have a place in the church's public worship. Since the church is "the nursery of the Holy Spirit," from their youngest years, the children of believers belong with God's people as they meet with him on the Lord's Day. The book not only argues this point, but also helpfully provides some practical advice on how to make it work. In the first chapter, Hyde lays out our contemporary situation and how we got to this point where many people (even in Reformed churches) assume that children don't belong in public worship. He looks at the history of this topic. The second chapter looks more closely at the relevant Scripture passages from the Old and New Testaments. The final chapter is where the author offers the answers to several practical questions.

As much as I appreciated it, I have one critical comment to make. In the first chapter, Hyde asks the question: "With whom does God make his covenant?" His answer is two-fold. He first says, "From the point of view of God and eternity, he made it with Christ and the elect." Then he quotes from the Westminster Larger Catechism QA 31. He goes on to add, "From our point of view in history, God made his covenant with believers and their children" (9). He supports that with a quote from Canons of Dort 1.17. This two-fold answer is unsatisfactory and regrettable. It leaves the impression that, from God's perspective, he does not truly covenant with *all* our children, but only with our elect children. Hyde has dealt with this question before. In his great little book on infant baptism, *Jesus Loves the Little Children,* he simply said that the covenant is made with believers and their children. I wish he would have just given the same answer here. Thankfully, I did not see any evidence that this problem impacted the arguments that follow.

Overall, this is a fantastic resource. I would highly recommend it, not only for parents, but also for office bearers. After all, office bearers need to provide leadership in encouraging families to worship together. They need to make decisions in the church that encourage the children to be present as soon as they can. For all of us, we need this valuable reminder that, when God calls his covenant people to worship, he also calls our little ones. He loves to hear them sing, watch them listen, participate in the offerings, and everything else. If Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me," who are we to stand in the way?

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Q *When travelling to The Netherlands, visiting my parents and the church they belong to, I witnessed the reading elder raise his arms in blessing at the beginning and end of the service. In the afternoon there was no elder reading the sermon, so a male member of the congregation did the service. He too raised his arms in blessing. It confused me, as I was under the impression that only a minister was allowed to raise his arms in blessing. My question is this: where did the raising of the arms originate. . . for a minister, elder, and male member, and why raising the arms in blessing? In our churches, reading elders do not raise their arms, yet we do get the blessing.*

A In The Netherlands the discussion of the matter of "the blessing elder" has taken a long time. At the General Synod of Kampen 1975 much discussion took place regarding the worship services, order of service, church book, etc. In the context of those discussions the "reading service" received attention as well, albeit as an *exception* to the regular worship services. At that time it was stated that the reading service was a complete worship service, though *conducted in a different manner.* Hence it was explained and accepted that therefore the salutation and benediction was given *in a different manner* as well; i.e. just *read* as a blessing or prayer instead of laying it upon the congregation as a blessing. In answer to the above question, I may add at this point that the lifting of the hands at the pronouncement of the blessing makes it visible that the blessing is laid upon the congregation, as the Scriptures shows us e.g, in Leviyicus 9:22; Numbers 6:22-27; Luke 24:50).

In subsequent general synods (from Arnhem 1981 till Leusden 1999) the matter came up and was discussed via overtures, reports by deputies, appeals, and requests for revision. After this protracted discussion it became an accepted phenomenon in the so-called "reading services" (especially after GS Ommen 1993 decided to give it in the freedom of the churches), even though it made reference to texts that speak about the blessings by priests, Christ Himself, and the apostles. In the course of the discussion from 1981-1999 a *shift* can be observed from the function of the blessing as inherent to the office of the minister (authorized to preach, administer the sacraments, and give the blessing) *to* the function of the blessing as just a liturgical matter. In the understanding of the *original* function the blessing was part and parcel of the ministry of reconciliation (as it was in the OT with priests authorized to give the blessing, Deut 10:8; 33:10), a fulfilled ministry inherited by the ministers of the Word (Rom 15:16; 2 Cor 5:18-20).

Upon the *shift* to the blessing being just *a liturgical matter,* it was included with the authorization of the elder by the consistory to conduct the worship service: he must read the law, lead in prayer, present the Word, and subsequently conclude the service with the blessing with uplifted hands. In the case of an authorization by the consistory, it can now happen as well that the blessing is given by someone, who is not an office bearer but a regular male member, asked to lead a reading service (perhaps of late even a sister with the gift of eloquence). Initially, such a service was opened and closed by an elder, which practice eventually was discontinued; again, on the basis of the fact that the reader was authorized by the consistory.

Although the shift to the functioning of the blessing as a liturgical matter had slowly but surely become an accepted practice, the warning has been voiced time and again that with the decision regarding "the blessing elder" the churches have broken with a 2000 year practice in the history of the church. Ever since the beginning of the NT

church the blessing had been reserved for the authorization of the minister of the Word to execute the ministry of reconciliation, which included the Word, the sacraments, and the blessing (Num 6:22-27; Heb 7)! The minister as the teaching elder (1 Tim 5:17) in his preaching and teaching continued the work of the OT priests, who taught, exhorted, and blessed. They are the ambassadors of God (2 Cor 5:18-20) who speak on God's behalf, called as they are by Christ as pastors and teachers (Eph 4:11). The (ruling) elders who read the sermons do not have this calling or authorization to preach the Word, neither may they administer the sacraments, and therefore should not give the blessing either. They may conclude the worship service by reading the blessing as a prayer with the congregation.

Q

What is the role of the law (any precept or instruction given by God in his Word) in my faith life? Why do we read the Ten Commandments every Sunday? Does referring to the Ten Commandments as the "Ten Words of the Covenant," or even as a "rule for thankfulness" cause us to forego ongoing faith in Christ? In Galatians 3:24-25 Paul says that the law's purpose was to lead us to Christ so that we could be justified by faith. He also says that now that faith has come, we are no longer under law's supervision. Considering texts like Romans 7:1-6 and Galatians 2:19-20, can we produce fruits of faith if we are made to think we still have to keep the Law?

A

The practice of reading the law of the Ten Commandments in the worship service dates back to the late Middle Ages, i.e. it had a place already in the Romish liturgy. The church of the Reformation has taken this over, so that the law was read (or sung: in Calvin's liturgy in Strassburg!) at the beginning of the morning worship service. The law functioned first of all as a *mirror* to show God's people their sins and guilt before the Lord, in order that they would confess their sins and seek their salvation in Christ. In Calvin's liturgy the latter was expressed when the singing of the two tables of the law (two stanzas representing them) was followed by the refrain "Kyrie-eleison," i.e. "Lord, have mercy!" At the same time the Law also functioned as the rule (norm) for a life of thankfulness for God's deliverance (in the OT expressed in the preamble of the law, which in the NT is fulfilled in Christ's deliverance from sin and death!). In the course of time the place of the reading of the law was followed by a prayer of confession and by the assurance of pardon, while in other liturgies the reading followed the proclamation of the gospel so that the law as rule of thankfulness stood out more.

That the Ten Commandments are special in the context of the Old and New Testament is clear from the name they had: the ten words of the covenant, or the words of the covenant (Exod 34:28), or just the covenant (Deut 4:13). They may rightly be called the "Constitution of the Covenant!" They are special also in that the Lord God himself wrote them on the two stone tablets by his own hand (finger; Exod 31:18). They were kept in a special place in the Ark of the Covenant. These Ten Words were the essence, the crux, of the covenant with the Lord, and as Moses shows so clearly in the book of Deuteronomy, the other decrees, precepts, and ordinances were an explanation and application of them! Hence the Ten Words supersede the statutes and ordinances when they are fulfilled by Christ! The NT teaches us that they continue to be the norm in a life of faith, in a life in Christ, a redeemed life (Matt 5:17f; 19:18f); as also Paul shows us in Romans 13:9 and James in 2:11. Christ instructed us not only regarding the continued use of the law but also showed us his fulfilment of the law in his perfect obedi-

ence. Thus Paul calls the Ten Words "the law of Christ" (1 Cor 9:21).

As those who are united with Christ and who by faith live in Christ, true believers obey *like* the Lord Jesus did (John 13:34; 15:10; 1 John 2:6). Christ is the *norm* (example) and by his Spirit also the *origin* (source) of our obedience, as we find our peace in the covenant in his blood (our worship service starts with that rich greeting: "Grace to you and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!"). Now the preamble of the law can read: "I am the LORD your God who *in Christ* delivered you from the bondage to sin and death." It's in Christ that we obtain our righteousness (obedience) according to the law (it's imputed to me); living in Christ and Christ living in me (Gal 2:20), he imparts this obedience to the law to me by faith in him, through his Spirit.

In the Heidelberg Catechism the twofold usage of the law is expressed in Lord's Day 2 and the Lord's Days 34-44: those who seek their life outside of themselves in Jesus Christ (Rom 7:24, 25) bring their sacrifice of thanksgiving in a life of gratitude according to God's will (Rom 12:1, 2). It is the work of the Holy Spirit to renew us in the image of Christ so that we, too, live a life of obedience (out of thankfulness!) (Rom 8:4; 1 Pet 1:2; Matt 7:21). What the law was unable to do Christ's Spirit does, showing that the law was good even if it was unable to bring us to this life of obedience and holiness (Rom 7:7f).

Now the Spirit writes this law on the tablets of our heart (Jer 31:33; Heb 8:10). Hence, it's not as if those who believe also "have to keep the law – still;" no, it's the fruit of the Spirit of him who delivers us who works this fruit in us! That's how he renews and sanctifies us, and the law on the tablets of our heart becomes second nature to us (we are no longer under the supervision of the law, Gal 3:24f). We do confess, however, that the holiest have only a small beginning of this obedience (HC, LD 44). Thus we learn to sing the praises of God's law with Psalm 119, because it shows us the holiness and righteousness of God in Christ reflected in our newness of life by faith (2 Cor 3:18)! C

Is there something you've been wanting to know?

An answer you've been looking for?

Ask us a question!

Please direct questions to Rev. W. denHollander

denhollanderw@gmail.com

23 Kinsman Drive, Binbrook, ON L0R 1C0

Press Release: Classis Northern Ontario, December 11, 2014 (convened in Elora)

On behalf of the convening church of Elora, Rev. C. J. VanderVelde welcomed the delegates and opened the meeting in a Christian fashion. The delegates of Owen Sound reported that the credentials were found to be in order. However, the delegates from Orangeville and Brampton could not attend due to inclement weather. The officers took their positions: Rev. D.G.J. Agema was chairman, Rev. C.J. VanderVelde was vice-chairman (in the absence of Rev. M.H. VanLuik), and Rev. T.A. Wierenga was the clerk. The agenda was adopted with some additions.

A church visitation report regarding the church at Fergus North was received with gratitude. Reports were received from the following churches and committees: from the church to inspect the classical archives, the treasurer of Classis Northern ON, the church to audit the books of the treasurer, and the Committee for Needy Churches. The chairman posed the questions of Article 44 of the Church Order to the delegates of each church. All churches answered positively to the first two questions, and no church requested advice.

After the required documents were reviewed, the call of Rev. P.G. Feenstra to the church at Guelph Emmanuel was approved by Classis. The church of Guelph informed Classis that the installation of Rev. Feenstra will take place, the Lord willing, on January 11, 2015. The church of Fergus North was appointed to represent Classis at the installation. At the request of Grand Valley, and with his agreement, Rev. C.J. VanderVelde was appointed as counsellor for the Grand Valley congregation.

Classis appointed the church at Fergus Maranatha as the convening church for the next classis to be convened on March 13, 2015 at 9:00 am (or the previous evening if there are few items on the agenda).

Fraternal delegates from the URCNA and the OPC had been invited to this assembly but sent their regrets for being unable to attend. The convening church will invite fraternal delegates to the next classis and send representatives to other church assemblies if invited.

Question period was not made use of and the chairman thanked the brothers for their brotherly cooperation. The acts of this classis were adopted and it was agreed that the clerk would draft a press release in consultation with the chairman and vice-chairman. The delegates sang a hymn and the chairman led in prayer of thanksgiving. He declared this assembly closed.

Rev. Theo A. Wierenga
(clerk at that time)

ADVERTISEMENTS

Announcements of Weddings, Anniversaries (especially those with an Open House) should be submitted six weeks in advance.

OBITUARIES

December 10, 1965 – November 26, 2014

I lift up my eyes to the mountains – where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1-2

On November 26, the Lord in His infinite wisdom called home

BERTHA CATHERINE (Cathy) PETERS

Beloved wife of Harry Peters

Loving mother of:

Neerlandia, AB: Joshua and Debra Peters
Alyssa
Ponoka, AB: Chad and Robyn Peters
Adelynn
Barrhead, AB: Travis Peters and Bonnie Vandermeulen
Neerlandia, AB: Stacey Peters

Also mourning are her parents, John and Helen Jissink, along with her brothers and sister, and her in-laws, Joe and Freddie Peters and their family

Box 180, Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0

December 4, 1960 – November 25, 2014

I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Psalm 121:1, 2

The Lord in His infinite wisdom, called home to Himself

RICHARD PHILIP FEENSTRA

in his 53rd year.

Beloved husband of Debbie (nee Jager) and devoted father of their six children and seven grandchildren.

We are greatly comforted and assured that he now dwells with our Heavenly Father in "A house, not made with hands."

Dear son of Harry and Jenny Feenstra of Smithville, ON.

And dear brother to:

Beamsville, ON: Peter and Margaret Feenstra
John Feenstra (with the Lord)
Millgrove, ON: James and Cathy Feenstra
Westover, ON: (Robert Feenstra with the Lord)
Wendy and Wayne Nicholson
Smithville, ON: Corinne and John Gelms

Cherished uncle to many nieces and nephews.

Correspondence to: Debbie Feenstra
124 Kinniburgh Blvd., Chestermere, AB T1X 0M1

August 15, 1995 – November 2, 2014

The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:18

At his appointed time (the result of a pedestrian accident), the Lord in his infinite wisdom called home our son, brother, grandson, nephew and cousin

MARSHALL REUBEN KAMPEN

Father of: Sibylla

Harrisburg: Jody and Flo Boehm
Mitchell
Lucas
Anna
Max
Fergus: Gary and Alice Veenman (Oma and Opa)
Guelph: Marcella and Andrew Mulder
Derek
Austin
Mercedes
Carter
Hawkesville: Mark and Janice Veenman
Elle
Garret
Madeline
Katja
Jillian
Freelton: Jocelyn and Nick Scholtens
Noah
Jonah
Elysse
Jude
Vivian
Olivia
Fergus: Natalie and Edgar vanDijk
Ariana
Adrian
Julius
Tys

We are thankful for the Lord's continued care over Marshall at all times during his life.

The funeral was held November 6, 2014 at the Zion United Reformed Church, Sheffield Ontario.
Rev. W. denHollander officiated.

Address: 88 Harrisburg Road, RR 1, Paris, Ontario N3L 3E1

OBITUARIES

April 27, 1938 – December 1, 2014

One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple. Psalm 27:4

At his appointed time the Lord has taken into glory his son

JOHANN (John) LUDWIG

Beloved husband of Willy Ludwig

Dear father to:

Smithville, ON: Veronica and Wolter Vis
Ancaster, ON: John and Esther Ludwig (VanderBrugghen)
Smithville, ON: Tammy and Pete Ravensbergen
Attercliffe, ON: Mark and Arlene Ludwig (Jansema)
Smithville, ON: Ed and Marge Ludwig (Kruyswijk)
Grimsby, ON: Mike and Aimee Ludwig (Jagt)

Loving Opa to 37 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:22, 23

Corresponding address: Willy Ludwig
3 Sunnydale Court, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

TEACHING POSITIONS

The Board of **Coaldale Christian School** invites **immediate** applications for positions at the

ELEMENTARY LEVEL

in High School English, and in High School Science.

Preference will be given to applicants with a Bachelor of Education degree who would be able to teach a variety of subjects and/or grade levels. We encourage students graduating in 2016 to submit letters of interest for future consideration.

Coaldale Christian School offers Kindergarten to Grade 12 education and currently has a student body of 161. We anticipate significant growth over the next several years resulting in an increased number of elementary classes. Planning has also started on a new addition to our school building.

To receive further information about our school or about our area, please contact the Board Chairman or the Principal, or visit our website at www.coaldalechristianschool.com.

Mr. Stuart Boeve, Board Chairman
Phone: 403-223-4916, E-mail: sdboeve@shockware.com

Mr. Joop Harthoorn, Principal
Phone: 403-345-4055(school) or 403-345-4891(home)
E-mail: joop.harthoorn@coaldalechristianschool.com

Applications may be sent to:
Mr. Stuart Boeve
Coaldale Christian School
2008-8 Street, Coaldale, AB T1M 1L1

TEACHING POSITIONS

Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School (ECRS)
is located in Smithers, BC.

The Board of ECRS is seeking applicants for a

KINDERGARTEN TEACHER (half time)
for a
POSSIBLE FULL-TIME PRIMARY TEACHER

As a result of increasing enrollment we are also inviting applications for

POSSIBLE FULL-TIME or PART-TIME TEACHING POSITIONS

for the 2015/2016 school year.

Applicants need to be certified teachers who are members in good standing of a Canadian Reformed Church, United Reformed Church, or sister church.

You are encouraged to contact us to find out more about ECRS if you:

- Love God and his covenant children.
- Value the importance of a covenantal Christian school.
- Are professional in your work and conduct.
- Understand the importance of the relationship between the home and school and the responsibility you are entrusted with as a teacher.

If you have questions please call or email the principal,
Derek Stoffels
at work: 250-847-3492; principal@ebenezerschool.com

To apply please email your application to the principal or mail it to: The Education Committee
Ebenezer Canadian Reformed School
Box 3700, Smithers, BC V0J 2N0

Check http://www.smithers.ca/ for information on the community the school is located in.

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST FOR TEACHING VACANCY IN NEW ZEALAND

The Reformed Christian School Association in Upper Hutt, New Zealand is seeking expressions of interest from teachers interested in teaching in our small Christian School which covers levels 1-11.

Our aim is to develop a biblically consistent world and life view in our students based on the Reformed faith. We believe this Reformed faith to be the most accurate expression of biblical Christianity.

Members of the Reformed Christian School Association are members of the Reformed Churches of New Zealand.

Applicants must be committed to the Reformed faith and to Christian education. This is an exciting opportunity to be part of a small covenant school, and we look forward to your application.

If you have any questions or would like more information please do not hesitate to contact us.

Please forward your C.V. or any questions you may have to: board@silverstreamchristian.school.nz

Dufferin Area Christian School in Orangeville Ontario,
is inviting applications for a

PRINCIPAL-TEACHER

DACS is an established K-8 school serving the Canadian Reformed congregations of Orangeville and Grand Valley, and is blessed with about 120 students, a pleasant atmosphere, and a great spirit of cooperation.

We are looking for a candidate who is excited about showing leadership in a Reformed school and has the qualifications to take it on. If you would like to inquire about using your talents in educating covenant children at DACS please contact

Mr. Jason Kottelenberg (Chairman of the Education Committee)
519-925-3698; jasonkott@live.ca , or
Mr. Steve Brouwer (Chairman of the Board)
Phone: 519-942-9918; stevejbrouwer@gmail.com

Please send your résumé with references, your statement of perspective on Reformed Education, and application to the DACS Hiring Committee c/o stevejbrouwer@gmail.com.

Duties are to commence for the 2015-2016 school year.
If invited for an interview, applicants are encouraged to bring their professional portfolio.
Applicants must be a communicant member of a Canadian/ American Reformed Church or a church with whom we have ecclesiastical fellowship.

Due to growth in student population, the Canadian Reformed School Society of Edmonton, operating **Parkland Immanuel Christian School,** invites applications for the 2015-2016 school year for the following potential positions:

FULL-TIME ELEMENTARY TEACHER
FULL-TIME HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER

Parkland Immanuel Christian School operates a reformed K-12 school that offers a supportive school community, competitive wages, and a collaborative and professional environment that encourages and supports excellence in teaching. The school has a population of 300 students and is experiencing a time of significant increase in enrollment.

Applicants must be a professed member in good standing of a Canadian Reformed, United Reformed, or sister church, and must have the necessary post-secondary qualifications to teach in Alberta. For further information please contact the Principal,
Mr. John Jagersma
Phone: 780-444-6443 (school); 780-489-6659 (home)
jjagersma@parklandimmanuel.ca

Applications should be directed in writing to the school:
Mr. Jonathan Smeding
Chair of Personnel Committee,
c/o **Parkland Immanuel Christian School**
21304 35 Avenue, NW, Edmonton, AB T6M 2P6

The Board of the Canadian Reformed School Society of Abbotsford, B.C.,
operating **John Calvin School**
invites applications to fill the following possible vacancies for the 2015-2016 school year,

PRIMARY TEACHER
and
INTERMEDIATE TEACHER

Successful applicants must:
- be a communicant member of a Canadian Reformed Church, URCNA or a sister church;
- be committed to Reformed Christian education;
- be able to obtain B.C. certification;
- be able to commence duties as of September 1, 2015;
- furnish two professional references;
- furnish a character reference from the applicant's pastor.

Applicants with French proficiency would be an asset.

For information contact the principal, **Mr. P.H. Torenvliet**
604-823-6814 (school), 604-854-5851 (home)
604-823-6791 (fax), principal@jcss.ca

Send résumés and applications to the Board:
Email: office@jcss.ca
Mail: c/o John Calvin School
4268 Stewart Road, Chilliwack, BC V2R 5G2

The board for the **Tyndale Christian School Society** of Calgary invites applications for the following positions

FULL-TIME PRIMARY and SECONDARY GRADES TEACHER

Tyndale Christian School is a Reformed K-12 school with an enrollment of 83 students. We offer a supportive school community, enthusiastic volunteer base, and competitive wages and benefits. We are seeking energetic individuals who are committed to the Reformed Faith and to Christian education. We are specifically looking for a high school teacher (all disciplines considered) as well as a teacher for a combined grade 1/2 class.

A Bachelor of Education is a requirement for these positions.

If you would like further information about the opportunities, school operations, or living in the beautiful Calgary area; please contact the board chairman:

Mr. Bart Ludwig
Home: 403-936-8616; bart.ludwig@gmail.com
Or the principal: **Mr. Ed Hoogerdyk**
Home: 403-285-4680; ed.hoogerdyk@gmail.com

Applications can be sent to:
Joey Schouten, Secretary of the Board
933 West Chestermere Drive, Chestermere, AB T1X 1B7
schoutenjoe@gmail.com

GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

PRINCIPAL POSITION

It is with joy, excitement, and much thankfulness that the Boards of the Canadian Reformed School Societies of Covenant Christian School (Flamborough) and John Calvin Christian School (Burlington) anticipate amalgamation in July 2015.

We hope to open our doors together under one roof in September 2015, DV, as

GRACE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL.

Our newly combined school, supported by robust and active local church communities, will be home to approximately 200 students from JK to Grade 8.

We also eagerly look forward to the completion of a new school building to house the combined student population in 2016, DV.

We acknowledge our Heavenly Father's continued guidance, care, and provision in the education of the covenant children entrusted to us, and to that end we are seeking applicants for the position of

PRINCIPAL

of Grace Christian School.

Come and join us as we begin this exciting new chapter in the history of Reformed education in Flamborough and Burlington!

The successful applicant will:

1. Be a visionary thinker, and be able to articulate the need for, defend, and develop Reformed Christian education in a changing culture and society.
2. Have obtained an undergraduate (or higher) degree and a recognized teaching diploma.
3. Have experience in teaching and administrative leadership. Experience at various educational levels is an asset.
4. Be a knowledgeable educator, possess a love of learning and demonstrate continued development at a personal and professional level.
5. Be a consensus builder, with excellent interpersonal skills and a good understanding of educational governance and management.
6. Possess excellent written and oral communication skills, and be a good listener, with a desire to foster and encourage healthy relationships within the school, the supporting church communities, as well as the broader communities in which the school is situated.

Interested applicants should submit a resume and statement of philosophy on Reformed Education to the following by January 31, 2015:

Ray Kampen, Interim Board chairperson
905-335-9139, rayalvik@gmail.com
Emily Beijes, Interim Board vice-chairperson
905-317-6346, emilybeijes@icloud.com

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Guido de Brès Christian High School
Hamilton, Ontario
invites applications for

POSSIBLE OPENINGS

in the coming school year. Full-time and part-time will be considered. Applicants must be members of the Canadian Reformed or United Reformed Churches.
All positions would commence September 1, 2015.

For further information, please contact the principal,

Mr. R. Vanoostveen
at school: telephone 905-574-4011, fax: 905-574-8662
E-mail: principal@guidodebres.org

Letters of application should include university and teaching qualifications, two letters of reference, a statement about your view of Christian education, and a recommendation from your church council or consistory.

Mail to: **Guido de Brès Christian High School**
Education Committee
420 Crerar Drive, Hamilton, ON L9A 5K3

John Calvin School Smithville
Expansion Fundraising

We have just celebrated fifty years of covenantal education here at John Calvin School, Smithville.

At recent celebrations, we were reminded of the tremendous blessings that the Lord has given to us as surrounding church communities.

Blessed again with increasing enrollment, the inclusion of Kindergarten and Special Needs, we have the need to expand!

We are looking to raise $1.44 million for the expansion of one special needs classroom with its own washroom facilities, four standard classrooms, and one new washroom (separate boys/girls), and one new mechanical room as required by the Ontario Building Code.

We will not start the project until we have at least 75% of the total. With $200,000.00 already earmarked for expansion we still need to raise $1.24 million.

We are asking the broader church community, former students, and former staff to give prayerful consideration to this effort and request financial support according to the financial blessings that you have received. It is evident that in the past fifty years of our school, the communion of saints has worked together with the Lord's blessing, in order to bring forth and teach the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord. Let us continue to invest in future generations!

320 Station Street, P.O. Box 280, Smithville, ON L0R 2A0

On behalf of the Fundraising Committee,
Ben Helder, bnhelder@gmail.com
Rodney Tenhage, rtenhage@hotmail.com
Jacqueline Groen, jgroenaloette@gmail.com
Albert Breukelman, appy3476@gmail.com
Malcolm Brouwer, malcolm.brouwer@sympatico.ca

TEACHING POSITIONS

Cornerstone Christian School,
located in beautiful Lynden, Washington
seeks candidates to fill potential

TEACHING OPENINGS

(elementary and high school)
for the 2015-16 school year.

Our school has approximately 120 students in grades 1-12, thirteen full or part time teachers, excellent staff relations, a beautiful and functional facility, and enjoys a high level of community support.

Lynden enjoys a thriving church and school community, and is nestled right between the Cascade Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. While rural in character, Lynden is also conveniently close to the thriving metropolitan areas of Seattle, WA and Vancouver, BC.

Interested parties who are committed to serving in the field of Reformed Christian Education and who submit to Scripture as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity are encouraged to contact the school principal for more information:

Mr. Darryn Kleyn
Email: dkleyn@cornerstoneschool.us
Phone: 360-318-0663

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Immanuel Christian School
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
invites applications for the position of

VICE PRINCIPAL
with TEACHING DUTIES
commencing August 1, 2015.

Immanuel Christian School is a K-12 school supported by members of the Canadian Reformed and United Reformed churches in Winnipeg.
At present we have 209 pupils, 15 teachers, and 7 Educational Assistants.

Interested persons requiring more information or wishing to apply can contact:

Mr. Rob Dewitt, Chairman of the Board
robkdewitt@gmail.com
204-997-1497

Mr. Peter Veenendaal, Principal
principal@immanuelchristian.ca
204-661-8937 (school) | 204-661-6351 (home)

Mailing address:
Immanuel Christian School
215 Rougeau Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2C 3Z9

"For living a life of Christian discipleship in contemporary society"

Dufferin Christian School
Carman, MB, Canada invites applications for openings in

HIGH SCHOOL
(all subject areas encouraged to apply)
and
ELEMENTARY
(all grade levels encouraged to apply)

Duties to commence August 1, 2015.

DCS is a *growing* K-12 Reformed school with 222 students with an anticipated increase in enrollment of 20% over the next four years.
It is located 45 minutes southwest of Winnipeg, MB, Canada and offers a highly supportive community, attractive facilities, competitive wages and a friendly atmosphere.

Applicants must be communicant members of a Canadian Reformed Church or a Church with whom these churches have ecclesiastical fellowship (URCNA, OPC, RCUS, FRCA, etc.), must be able or willing to obtain a Manitoba Professional Teacher's Certificate
and be committed to the school's mission statement.

Applications should be sent to
Dufferin Christian School
Box 1450, Carman, MB, Canada R0G 0J0
Attention: Mr. Chris deBoer
or emailed to: principal@dufferinchristian.ca

For more information, please contact
Principal: Mr. Chris deBoer
principal@dufferinchristian.ca / 204-745-2278
Chairman: Mr. Arie Veenendaal
chairman@dufferinchristian.ca / 204-899-8929
Website www.dufferinchristian.ca

The **Board of Credo Christian High School** invites applications for employment opportunities starting in September 2015.

QUALIFIED HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECT SPECIALISTS

are encouraged to inquire, since it is expected that various staffing portfolios will become available.

British Columbia affords teaching opportunities to those with Professional Certificates (B.ED) and undergraduate degrees (Subject Restricted).

For further details please contact
Mr. Harry Moes (Principal)
604-530-5396, H.Moes@Credochs.com

All correspondence should be directed to
Mr. Ken Linde, Chairman of the Board
Credo Christian High School
21846-52nd Avenue, Langley, BC V2Y 2M7
k110linde@gmail.com

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The vision of the Board of Covenant College is to be the definitive source for Reformed teacher training, and includes planning for succession, distance education, and inservice support. To this end, and in anticipation of pending retirement of current faculty members over the next several years, we are looking to expand the full-time instructional team for the **2015-2016** academic year and beyond.

If you are interested in joining the faculty as a

FULL-TIME FACULTY MEMBER

we invite you to contact us as soon as possible to discuss options and possibilities.

Persons interested in this position will, among other things, demonstrate a deep love for Reformed education, be willing to provide educational leadership at multiple levels, be interested in exploring curriculum theory, and display a healthy level of intellectual curiosity within biblical bounds (Prov. 1:5).

The candidate will be a communicant member of a Canadian Reformed Church, or of a Church with whom we maintain ecclesiastical fellowship, will hold at least a Masters Degree preferably in the area of education, and will have teaching experience in either, or both, elementary or secondary school settings.

For additional information, contact

Dr. Christine van Halen-Faber, Principal

at 905-385-0634 or at
cvanhalen@covenantteacherscollege.com
www.covenantteacherscollege.com

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"...tell the next generation..."

COVENANT Canadian Reformed Teachers College
HAMILTON, ON

ADMISSIONS SEPTEMBER 2015

The Board of Covenant College invites applications from prospective students for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Admission Requirements:
For the 1 - year Diploma of Education Program:
a suitable university degree
For the 3 - year Diploma of Teaching Program:
a grade 12 diploma with university entrance equivalence.

Prospective candidates are invited to contact the College for more information and/or to obtain an enrolment package. Students are encouraged to apply before March 31, 2015.

Those who plan to seek admission in the year 2016-2017 are also encouraged to contact the College as soon as possible.

Visit our website: www.covenantteacherscollege.com

Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College
Address: 410 Crerar Drive, Hamilton, ON L9A 5K3
Telephone: 905-385-0634 Fax: 905-385-8409
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As the Lord continues to bless us at **The Landmark Group** with growth and opportunity, we find ourselves seeking experienced individuals to fill the following positions for the 2015 season

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Please submit your cover letter and resume to

Gary Nordeman

at gary@thelandmarkgroup.ca or call me at 705-441-5447

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Applications for September 2015 admission should be in by March 15, 2015.

Students considering to apply in future years should consult the CRTS website.

www.canadianreformedseminary.ca

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Skill Requirements
Education: Master Degree in Theology, must be recognized by the Canadian Reformed Churches in North America; knowledge of world history, Chinese history or Chinese Literature would be a great asset.

Experience
Minimum 2 years in religious translation of theological books and/or Christian materials/literatures from English to Chinese (simplified version).
Languages: Speak, Read, Write English
Work Setting: Religious Charitable/Church organization
Language Pairs: English/Chinese, Mandarin/English

Translation Specialization:
Biblical, faith-based, Christian Reformed church theological terminology.
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Work Conditions and Physical Capabilities: Attention to detail
Work Location Information: Urban area
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Work Sample: Example of completed work
Other Language: Mandarin

Essential Skill:
Reading text, oral communication, problem solving, critical thinking, significant use of memory, computer use, writing, working with others, finding information.

Other:
As this job specializes in faith-based translation from English to Chinese, both fluency in English/Chinese as well as strong Biblical knowledge and understanding of the Reformed theology and denomination are necessary.

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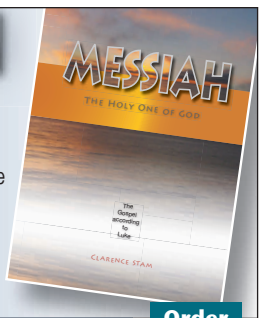

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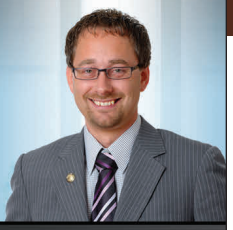

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- Registered Disability Savings Plans (RDSPs)
- Registered Education Savings Plans (RESPs)
- Tax Free Savings Accounts
- Financial / Estate / Succession Planning
- Retiring Allowances / Severances
- Health Plans and Travel Insurance

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