

REFORMED

Volume 26 Number 5 March 2007

Perspective

A MAGAZINE
FOR THE
CHRISTIAN
FAMILY



Calvin and...

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... Arminius

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... Infant Baptism

... Mainstream

Media

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Losing God in the
preamble

Faint heart never
won fair maiden

A valuable life



Editorial

by Jon Dykstra



FAINT HEART NEVER WON FAIR MAIDEN

ON DATING, EPHESIANS 5, AND BEING A MAN

A serious conversation is best held in a place that has chairs large enough to curl up in, to get comfortably planted, but also has reasons enough to get up and walk about for a bit, to let thoughts settle. So when Tom phoned up George needing to talk about “girl problems” it was a fortunate thing indeed that the Corner Coffee House had leather chairs just right for prolonged sitting and coffee that was so good it required a trip or two back to the counter for refills.

“We’ve had this conversation before you know.”

Tom’s coffee was gone and he was staring blankly into the bottom of his espresso cup. “What do you mean. . . when?”

“The last time you had girl problems. A couple of months back when you were trying to figure out if you wanted to ask Amy out. We were even sitting in the very same spots. You wanted to ask her out, but you were too scared. And now you’re scared again.”

“I wasn’t *scared* George. I was just. . . .”

“You were just trying to figure out a way to ask her out without *really* asking her out. You even tried to get me to ask her to the hockey game the group was going to. And do you remember how I responded to that idea?”

Tom looked up from his empty cup: “You told me to be a man and ask her myself.”

“And?”

“And I did. . . it took me a few more days to work up to it, but I asked her out. And she said yes and it went great and we’ve been going out two months now. But three days ago we had a bit of an argument and since then Amy hasn’t called. She used to call me every day but now she isn’t calling at all.”

“Slow down for a second Tom. I told you to be a man *and* I told you to read Ephesians 5. Did you read it? I don’t think you did.”

“I’ve read it before – that’s the section that tells women they have to be submissive to their husbands.

But I don’t know what that has to do with me and Amy.”

George stood up and grabbed his coffee mug: “Tom, no offense, but you’re a goof – you read the part of the chapter that’s addressed to *women*. Here’s my Bible. I’m going to go grab another mocha and while I’m away how about you read the part of the chapter that’s addressed to us *men*, verses 25-32.”

Two minutes later George returned with his mug full. “Okay, what did you find out Tom?”

“Basically those verses just tell a husband to love his wife.”

“Sure, but they also say much more. Take another look at verse 22 and read it out loud to me.”

“It says, ‘Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.’”

“That’s the key. Do you understand what this verse is saying? Men have to love their wives as *Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*. Men are supposed to love sacrificially, to put the needs of their wives first, to protect them and guard them and sacrifice for them, just as Christ offered himself up for the church.”

“Okay. . . but what does this have to do with me and Amy?”

“Well, if this is the way a husband should love his wife, doesn’t it make sense a single guy like you should think about acting this same way towards any lady you hope to make your wife? So when it comes to dating and making that first move, if someone has to sacrifice their pride, or at least risk it, doesn’t it make sense it should be the guy? Doesn’t it seem like it’s the guy’s job to stick his neck out?”

“But what if the guy sticks his neck out and the girl lops off his head?”

“That would hurt. And hopefully a Christian woman would never turn a guy down quite that harshly. But even if a guy gets his head handed to him every time he asks a girl out, he can at least take some comfort in knowing he’s doing his part the right way.

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A MAGAZINE
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www.reformedperspective.ca

Published monthly by the Foundation for the publication of a Reformed Social-Political Magazine (Reformed Perspective Foundation).

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Annual Subscription Rates:
Canada \$49.00*
(2 years \$90.00, 3 years \$133.00)*
Canada Airmail \$68.00*
U.S. (U.S. Funds) \$48.00
(2 years \$89.00, 3 years \$130.00)
U.S. Airmail (U.S. Funds) \$71.00
International Surface Mail \$66.00
(2 years \$120.00, 3 years \$177.00)
International Airmail \$97.00

* including 6% G.S.T.
- G.S.T. No. R118929272RT

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publication Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

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Registration: ISSN 0714-8208
Charitable Organization under
Canada Income Tax Act
Registration No. 18929272RR0001

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It is a sacrifice to open your heart up to someone and risk getting hurt. But God says guys are supposed to love sacrificially."

Tom put the Bible down slowly, and reached over for his coffee cup. "That's an interesting idea George, but I need a refill. Let me think about that for a second while I grab another coffee."

* * * * *

Tom returned with his coffee and a question: "You definitely have an interesting way of looking at Ephesians 5. But I've already asked Amy out, so what does this have to do with my situation now?"

"Well, you told me you're back to wondering how Amy feels about you. . . and you're scared to call her and hoping that maybe she'll call you. But if you're willing to love her with a sacrificial love, isn't it clear what you should do?"

"You're saying I should make the first move."

"Right. Phone her up and let her know how you feel about her, that you want to see her some time very soon. This sacrificial love isn't a one-shot thing. You're going to have to stick your neck out again. And again and again."

"And if she lops off my head. . . ."

"Then you'll still know you did things the right way, and that you acted like a real man should, like a godly man should."

Tom was once again staring into his empty cup. "That's a strangely comforting thought."

"Isn't it?"

"But it also seems like men have an almost impossible task – to imitate Christ's love. Can we really manage that?"

"No, not perfectly. But we can try, and we can ask God for help. And then we can trust the outcome to Him. God gives us men a pretty weighty task in Ephesians 5, but it is wonderful knowing what He wants us to do. And right now I think He wants you to call Amy. What do you think?"

"I think I'll do that. . . right after I polish off one last espresso."



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LOSING GOD IN THE PREAMBLE

*The Canadian constitution
acknowledges God –
how'd that ever happen?*

by Michael Wagner

In 1981, when Canada's new constitution was being debated, Conservative Christians seemed to score a significant victory. As a direct result of their efforts, it was agreed that the constitution's Charter of Rights would contain a preamble beginning, "Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God. . . ."

This indeed was a victory of a kind, but over time it became apparent that it had been a rather hollow victory. Courts in Canada have dismissed that recognition of God – it has no bearing on their decisions.

Effective evangelical efforts

The successful efforts of Christians during the constitutional negotiations are described by historian George Egerton in an article entitled "Trudeau, God, and the Canadian Constitution" (from the book *Rethinking Church, State, and Modernity: Canada Between Europe and America*). In 1981 a parliamentary committee held hearings on the Trudeau government's proposals for a new constitution. The Conservative Party's constitutional critic, Jake Epp, supported the desire of evangelical Christians to have God mentioned in the preamble to the constitution. Other Conservative MPs were also sympathetic. When Epp proposed an amendment to include a reference to God, the Liberals and NDP opposed it.

At this point the evangelicals became particularly active. Egerton writes, "David Mainse of [the Christian TV show] *Huntley*

Street appealed to his television followers to join with other evangelicals in writing their MPs and government leaders to press for the reference to God, while [Baptist evangelist] Ken Campbell mounted a major newspaper campaign, taking out full-page ads in leading dailies. Leaders of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada directly petitioned the prime minister, making explicit their reasons for wanting a constitutional reference to God." This, of course, amounted to a significant effort by conservative Christians to influence an important political decision.

An influential Ontario Liberal MP (and now a Senator), David Smith, also strongly supported the reference to God, and personally worked to convince Prime Minister Trudeau to include it. In part due to Smith's efforts, and the support of some other Liberal MPs, the government finally agreed to insert a reference to God. Thus the evangelical campaign to include a mention of God in the constitution was successful.

Indeed, without the efforts of the activist evangelicals that reference would not exist. The "inclusion of the reference to God represented a signal success for the evangelical Christian lobbyists, working effectively through sympathetic parliamentarians, especially David Smith and Jake Epp, and demonstrating an ability to mobilize impressive public support. [Justice Minister at the time] Jean Chrétien would claim that the government received more mail on this issue than any other."

Victory denied

Egerton is quick to point out, however, that the success of the evangelicals was largely symbolic. The de-Christianization and secularization of Canada has proceeded as quickly as ever.

In fact, rulings in Canadian courts have been quick to dismiss the relevance



Canada's constitution acknowledges God... but the courts don't

of the reference to God. They certainly do not consider it to be a constitutional recognition of the God of the Bible. For example, in a lower court ruling in 1983 striking down the Lord's Day Act (a law which mandated that shops close on Sunday), Alberta provincial court judge Stevenson wrote, "If one now turns to the preamble



They have become a dead letter. . .



of the Charter we see that, 'Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God.' Bearing in mind that the preamble may not carry the force of law, it still shows that the Charter does not recognize any particular denomination, and (noticeable by its absence) it does not refer to a *Christian* God. The preamble surely is intended to reflect the multicultural and multi-denominational make-up of Canada."

The case he made this ruling on, *R. v. Big M Drug Mart*, ended up going all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada by 1985. The Supreme Court agreed to the striking down of the Lord's Day Act. In its decision the Supreme Court noted, "The evolution of Canada as a pluralistic, multicultural society, as well as the reference to 'God' rather than to an identifiably Christian conception of God can have no bearing either on the characterization of laws aimed at enforcing specifically Christian observances nor on the classification of such legislation as being within Parliament's criminal law power."

This line of thought has continued in Canadian judicial rulings. For example, in 1999 the British Columbia Court of Appeal dealt with a case in which one side argued a point based on the recognition of God in the preamble of the Charter. The court rejected that argument stating, "I know of no case on the Charter in which any court of this country has relied on the words [recognizing the supremacy of God]. They have become a dead letter and while I might have wished the contrary, this Court has no authority to breathe life into them for the purpose of interpreting the various provisions of the Charter."

The silver lining

The inclusion of a reference to God in the preamble of the Charter of Rights was a genuine victory for conservative Christians. Unfortunately, that reference has been nullified by the courts. As far as constitutional law is concerned in this country, the reference to God has no bearing when interpreting the meaning of the Charter. This is, of course, a big disappointment. Nevertheless, the existence of that reference does testify to the impact that conservative Christians in Canada can have on the political process at times, as they apparently did in 1981.





An Old Ewe Tale *A Fictional Story of Truth*

by Jane deGlint

It is very difficult to believe that I am already in my eighties. Where has the time gone? I can honestly say that some of the time I do not feel old. Sometimes I do not even know how old I am. But I can figure it out as long as I remember what the current year is. They say you are only as old as you feel. That would mean that my age goes up and down quite a bit, because sometimes I feel so worn-out that I am ready for my new body, but a few hours later I can be as cheerful as I was in my high school years.

When I look back at my life, I see how I was always connected to a group. It proves that man is not in any way created to be alone. The one group prepared me for the next. It was an ongoing and mutual process of growth and of helping to grow. God used other people to make me the woman that I have become.

My first group was my birth family, of course, consisting of my father and my mother and my brothers and sisters. I was the youngest of this large and bustling family. They called me "Dessert." I was often reassured by my mother that this was not because I came after a seven year pause, but because I was undeserved and sweet.

My parents were devoted to each other. My Dad was always positive, optimistic and full of humor. My mom was the more serious type, often giving it the appearance that she toned my Dad down, but secretly loving every minute of his exuberance.

My siblings always said that I was terribly spoiled, and now that I look back I know it is true. I was the only child who ever received an allowance. My father took time to read books to me, while my

mother looked after me as if I were a queen. My sisters did not pass up any opportunity to point out that they had to do more work around the house in one day than I did in a year. Of course, there was more housework in those olden days.

But the diminished size of our family did not mean that life in our home had become boring. Not at all. My Dad especially spiced our lives with countless quips of wisdom. He had the decisive gift to wrap spiritual truths in brightly colored paper. "Dear," he once said to my mom, "in God's flock you are the sexiest ewe." Modestly grateful for his original compliment, she threw him an ever so slight eye-twinkled smile.

.....
***Some of my brothers had
earned degrees, but
none of my sisters.***
.....

Being the only one home became an unexpected privilege when my father became terminally ill. I was in my early twenties. At the time I did not see it as such. But looking back I understand that having been part of his final preparations for the life eternal taught me two very basic truths at an early age. I learned that eternity begins in time and that God Himself makes the transition easy by lifting the burden of sin.

At the time we did not realize that we were learning anything at all. We were hurting in the core of our souls when we noticed that my Dad's strong spirit was waning. Often he cried silently. At first he was unable to tell us the reason. He would look at us with dull eyes that almost seemed to apologize. We did not understand. Did he think he was too demanding of us? Did he want us to shake his pillow in a different way, but he did not want to burden us with his question?

One day he beckoned us to come close. "My sins, I am crying about my sins," he confessed softly. "I have grossly sinned against God and man." He grabbed my mother's hand tightly. It was heart-rending. My mom tried to reassure him, but he brushed her off.

These crying spells lasted for several weeks. Then one day the burden was lifted from his soul. He smiled, and smiled, and smiled. He radiated deepened bliss. From then on he started to sing psalms. Because his rapidly decreased lung capacity had diminished the strength of his voice, he whispered more than he sang. When we would add our voices, he smiled gratefully. We were actually not sure if he looked somewhat mischievous again once in a while, as he did in all those years when his flow of humor spouted in all directions.

One day he asked all my siblings and their spouses to come. We crowded into his room. "Please, sing for me. Psalm 95."

We sang with trembling voices and wet eyes.

*Come, let us worship and bow down
Before this God of great renown.
Our Maker, Him our thanks we render.
He led us by his mighty hand
To pastures in a verdant land.
He is our Shepherd and Defender.*

My mother sat closest to him, tenderly resting both her caring hands on his right arm.

"I hear my Shepherd's voice," he uttered almost inaudibly.

And he surrendered his spirit into God's hands.

The moment of my father's death became a beacon for me. Our Shepherd guides and defends us, even if we do not see it or temporarily forget it.

At my parental home I had of course become part of several other groups through church, school and university. Yes, I did go to university, in the age when girls were tolerated rather than welcomed at those esteemed places of higher learning. Some of my brothers had earned degrees, but none of my sisters. Initially my mother was very vocal in her opposition to my desire for further studies, but my dad convinced her with the simple words, "If God moves her, you can't stop her."

Because I lived at home when I became part of the academic world, my university group blended with my family group. My father was always very interested in my studies, while my mother spoiled my fellow students.

My circle of friends and my family became a healthy symbiosis. They received comfort and care. In turn I learned from my friends how to give of my person. I had always been interested in people, but through my friends I learned how to reach out to others. I learned to take social risks. I learned how to recuperate when my extended hand of friendship was rejected. It is better to feel rejected for a while than to ignore a person whom the Lord places on your path.

To the utter amazement of many people I became a lawyer. Possibly people were even more amazed when in my mid-thirties I married. There were people who



thought that educated women were unsuitable for marriage. But my profession and my marriage meant that I became part of two more groups: my law colleagues, and my in-laws. On the one hand I learned the value of professional relationships and on the other I learned how to build relationships of love and trust with those who by law had become my family.

My husband, a geologist, and I received a son and two daughters. All the personal skills we had ever acquired were put to the test in the raising of these youngsters. We learned all over what it means to place yourself in the service of others.

It became quite clear that my youngest daughter had a very strong social conscience. As a toddler it was her greatest joy to hand out treats. She would organize parties for the children of the neighborhood to teach them about Jesus. At Christmas time she gift-wrapped chocolate bars for the paper boy and the garbage collectors.

When she was about eight years old she asked me, "What does it mean, Mom, 'Feed my sheep.'"

Before I could embark on a theological explanation on the reinstatement of Peter's office, she continued, "I don't mean for Peter, but for me."

And again, before I could get my mind around the application from an instruction for a special office bearer to the task of an eight year old girl, she proposed, "I think it means that we have to feed poor people."

There was no changing her mind. I suppose, "If God moves her, you can't stop her." Through her neighborhood friends she located the sick and the lonely. Every Saturday we made the rounds to these homes. We shared of our abundance of food and material goods with these people, whom we would never have met if it were not for my daughter. And, naturally, she seasoned her gifts with the words of the gospel. "Why don't you love Jesus? Even if He does not make you better, He can still make you happy." She had a word for me as well. "Mom, I am so glad I can do this for the Lord. I love you too, Mommy, for helping me."

My youngest daughter became terminally ill. It was so much like the death of my father. I was devastated. Was I such a stubborn student, that the Lord had to teach me the same lesson twice? Why did He take away those people who so ably expressed ultimate truths in words that everyone understood? My father and my daughter were living words of truth!

My daughter spent much time in the hospital. Many new techniques and medicines were applied by the best in the medical profession. But we cannot stop what God starts.

He called her home. At her grave we sang from the hundredth Psalm, "Know that the Lord is God alone, He made us and we are his own, His people who extol his ways, The sheep that in his pastures graze."

Through the process of grief it became clear to me. I must go on in the footsteps of my father and my daughter. I must speak words of healing and I must show works of mercy. I must actively be a light in this dark world, in all the groups of which I am a part: my family, my church, my neighborhood, my friends, my profession.

Life is not about me. We live for God and the neighbor.

The life of every child of God will become a "you" tale.

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love"
Romans 12:10.



A valuable life

Why was Kevin Tremblay — why are we — of value?

by Rev. Larry Westerveld

Introduced by Sharon L. Bratcher

Kevin Tremblay was a 23 year old profoundly disabled man with the mental ability of a six month old child. We saw him on Sundays, as he sat in his wheelchair in the church nursery, or in the congregation. For 23 years his mother faithfully loved and cared for him, with aid from his stepfather and stepsisters during the last 10 of those years. He didn't know when he received new sneakers or a cool-looking denim jacket. But there's no doubt that this covenant child knew that he was loved, fed, and cared for every day of his life.

There were people who wondered why God would allow such a handicapped person to live as a "burden" to the family for such a long time. At a recent memorial service for Kevin, the Rev. Larry Westerveld of Trinity Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Hatboro, PA put Kevin's life as a covenant child into wonderful Biblical perspective with his message. What follows are his words, only slightly altered for clarification. This message may help others understand how God viewed Kevin, and how we should view others like Kevin. — SLB

Memorial services have a way of making us focus on the most basic and important lessons of life and death. Let me stitch together several texts to remind us of three such lessons that are clearly taught on the pages of Scripture and illustrated for us in the life and death of our dear friend Kevin Tremblay.

The first lesson: Every life has value and purpose

When Kevin's obituary ran in the newspaper, he shared the page with some notable people. The obituaries of a well-known weatherman, a world-renowned cardiologist, and a metallurgical scientist were among them.



Life is painful and frustrating and we are not the way we were supposed to be.



A quick read of the obituaries reveals not only that death comes to all of us but that if we were to judge merely by the standards of this world, Kevin's life had little of which to boast. And yet we know differently. Kevin's life was of immense value in God's eyes and Kevin's life had immense value in the eyes of all of us who see and judge from God's perspective as He gives us eyes to see by faith and understanding.

We know that Kevin was made in the image of God and he was a child of the covenant. He was one about whom Jesus said, "of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19:14). And he was one about whom Jesus said, in comparing his people with the birds of the air, "Are you not much more valuable than they?" (Matt 6:25-26).

All life has value intrinsically, because we're made in the image of God. But our lives also have value and meaning because God places us in communities and we are part of a great matrix of relationships in which we ourselves are living lessons to others.

I'm reminded of the story recorded for us in John 9:2-3. Jesus was walking along with his disciples one day, when they came across a man who was blind from birth. Jesus' disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered them, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but this happened so that the work of God might be displayed in his life."

Here's a question for you to reflect on: How has the work of God been displayed in Kevin's life? It is certainly true that he was not healed as this blind man was. But didn't he demonstrate, more than most, a dependence on, and an implicit

trust in, those who gave him care? He was not always aware of it, but he was surrounded by people who loved him and who sacrificed greatly to make his life as comfortable as it could be.

Kevin's family and caretakers were used by God in ways in which they may not even be aware to demonstrate to others the kind of constant care and gracious provision and protection that all who belong to God enjoy from His benevolent and fatherly hand, even when we aren't looking for it and even when we close our eyes to it.

We are as helpless as Kevin, so Kevin's family served as an example of God's merciful care. It took Kevin's life to give them those opportunities, and to shape their own response to the gospel.

Every life has value and every life has purpose and in every life there is a lesson to be learned.

The second lesson: Every life is subjected to the frustrations of the effects of sin

Romans 8 teaches us that the entire creation longs for deliverance from the bondage to decay. Paul describes the world as if it were in the pangs of childbirth: pains that overwhelm all the other senses, but also pains that are hopeful and filled with longing because of the confidence that something far greater and better than this present situation is about to be born.

Paul goes on to write that we who have the Spirit of Christ within us groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, and the redemption of our bodies. Paul was writing from the perspective of life as it is because of the Fall of Adam and because of our own complicity in sin. Life is painful and frustrating and we and the world are not the way we were supposed to be.



This second basic principle was also a characteristic of Kevin's life. It was a life marked in so many ways by frustration. He was unable to do and say the things he saw others do and say, sensing perhaps that in some way he was different from those around him and recognizing perhaps that this was not the way things were supposed to be for him. The frustrations imposed on him by the effects of the Fall imprisoned him and subjected him to a Romans 8 bondage to decay.

It is when we sense this frustration ourselves and sense it in the ones we love that we begin to cry out, "How long, O Lord?" and, "Come quickly, Lord Jesus."

It's this frustration with the distortions sin has introduced into the world that also contributes to the certain sense of relief that accompanies many deaths. On the one hand we're not ready to let him go, and at the same time we realize with Paul that it is far better to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

Lest we allow this sense of relief to lead to feelings of guilt, let us realize that in Romans 8 this relief finds its ground in the biblical truth that all life is subject to the frustrations of the effects of sin. Our longings to be free from these frustrations are a significant part of the life of the believer in Christ.

Most of us will be spared the kinds of physical suffering that Kevin endured but none of us is immune from the effects of the Fall of Adam, compounded by our own contributions in this regard. Even the most healthy among us feel the effects of aging and bodily decay, never mind the sense of frustration we are aware of in our own hearts that comes when we are attentive to our own spiritual condition.

**The third lesson:
We look forward to the return of
Christ and the resurrection
of the body**

And so, when we begin to grasp that all life has value and purpose and that we are subjected to the bondage of decay that frustrates our ability to realize that purpose, we do well to be reminded, in the third place, that all life is moving forward to the return of Christ and the resurrection of the body.

We may do our very best to offer well-intentioned condolences to those who grieve. We say, for example, that time will heal your wounds, but that really is an empty promise. We may say that Kevin no longer feels any pain, and as true as that might be, it only goes so far. We may even express the hope and belief that Kevin is with the Lord even as we speak, but that too is not enough.

*Is there value in the life
of the disabled?*



As Christians our hope is not for a happy and pain-free life, nor is it for a quick and quiet and easy death, for that too is not the way we were meant to be. Rather we look for and find our greatest comfort in the words of Jesus, who said, “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25-26). We also find them in the words of the apostle Peter, who grounded our hope for the future in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, telling us that our value and purpose in life is to give praise to God through Jesus Christ our Lord who came to set everything right (1 Peter 1:3-6). And we will praise Him particularly when we recognize that He came to bring us from death into life.

Read what Peter says: “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus

Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade – kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God’s power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time.” This is our greatest hope, and it is in this that our lives fulfill their meaning and in which we are finally and ultimately released from the frustrations that sin has brought upon us. We have, in Christ, been born into a living hope, a birth we otherwise could never have into a hope we could never otherwise imagine, except and only as we gaze into the love of God demonstrated in Jesus Christ his Son.

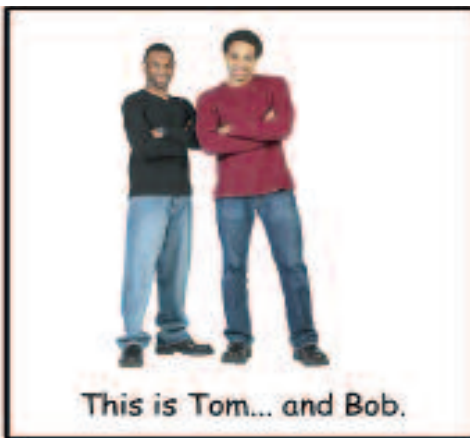
Let the reminders of Kevin’s life drive you to, and remind you of these three basic truths contained in God’s Word:

- 1) His life, like every other, had value and purpose.
- 2) His life highlighted for us the terrible effects of the Fall on the body.
- 3) His life serves as a reminder, even as an impetus and a motivation to long for the return of Christ and the resurrection of the body. Then all things will be made new and all tears will be wiped away, and we will sing praise to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit into all eternity.

To Him be the glory, forever. Amen.



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Bob is confused, so he shouldn't shoot. Before he kills whatever is in the bush he has to be certain it's not Tom, or some other human being. As long as he's confused, he can't kill, otherwise he might make a terrible mistake!

Abortion supporters say it isn't clear when human life begins. Even if that were true, would it justify abortion? If we don't know when human personhood begins, can we abort the unborn? If we're confused, can we kill? Don't we have to be certain? Otherwise we might make a terrible mistake!



Slowing but still going

Planning for those after retirement years

by Rene Vermeulen

Some time ago I read that Australian life expectancy has changed quite a bit in the last 100 years. A century ago life expectancy in Australia was around 55 years for men and 58 years for women. Very few people needed to ever think about retirement in those days as most people died before they reached what today is regarded as retirement age.

At age 60, Australian men at the beginning of the 21st century have a life expectancy of 20 more years and Australian women at the same age can expect another 24 years. That is considerably longer than that of their ancestors only a century ago.

Think ahead

When you are young and healthy, say 25 years old, married and starting a family, retirement seems *cons* away. As Christians we are regularly reminded of the frailty of life, both in the worship services and in the Bible readings at home, and yet it all seems to apply to other people, not to me and my family. But life goes on, our children mature, we turn 35, then 45, life flies past and before we know it we are 65 years of age.

(Here I must make an aside – it is vitally important that younger couples make sure that they spend quality time together during the years that their children are growing up. Far too often one hears of couples who have become strangers to each other during the time their children kept mum occupied 24/7, and dad was kept busy building a business or attending to his occupation.)

Then on New Year's Eve one of the family reads the 90th Psalm and we suddenly realize that our life is fast entering the stage Moses spoke about: "The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years" Time goes by so fast.

A big change

I started this article by recalling the life expectancy of early in the 20th century. In those days people had little need to prepare for retirement. The likelihood of reaching this time in life was very small and therefore of little consequence. Remember it was the time before antibiotics

and other modern medicines. People lived entirely different lives from today.

Today, if we are granted health, we can expect to live to age 80 and even beyond. The question is how do we prepare for retirement? How do we prepare for that "late in our working life" redundancy? These questions are important, for a proper answer to these questions will determine if our life out of the workforce is one of fulfillment or not. It will determine how we spend our days. Some of us will be able to travel, others will be more limited financially. But somewhere along the line we will want to slow down. And yet everyone wants to feel that he/she still counts.

OTHER VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

by Jon Dykstra

Bibles for Missions thrift stores

In 29 locations across Canada volunteers operate thrift stores which help the local community by providing quality second hand goods, and help the world by earning money which goes to buying Bibles to be sent out around the globe. These stores are always in need of volunteers so check out www.bfmthriftstores.ca to see if there is a location near you.

Gleaners

Groups in Ontario and BC are taking fruit and vegetables that growers would otherwise discard and dehydrating it and using it to make soups for people in hungry nations around the world. For more information see www.glean.notlong.com.

Some 20 years ago a former Premier of Western Australia, Sir Charles Court, addressed this issue in a speech. He argued that far too many men do not prepare for retirement. As he pointed out, for the women things do not change very much. They still have to do their work in the home – sure they may get a little extra help from their husband who now no longer works, but that is all. No, as Sir Charles pointed out, men who are moving toward retirement age need to consider what they are going to do with their time. Is it going to be a time of fulfillment or a slow narrowing of one's vision where everything centers around the self?

Sir Charles, who is about 93 years of age today, is still involved in various activities and still remarkably fit. Yes, men ought to prepare for retirement. But how? That is the question.

Become a volunteer

Of course one does not need to retire to become a volunteer. For more than 20 years I had the pleasure of being involved in the Fire Brigade as a volunteer. And having owned up to my age I must admit that this is no longer a possibility for me. Many younger people are involved in a voluntary capacity in organizations that need people to help out.

And sometimes one realizes that the work that is done has benefit to the very people volunteering. I recall an evening when the captain of the brigade of which I was a member mentioned to me – I was one of his officers – that a younger member had lit a fire while the area had been under a fire ban – it was during the summer months when conditions are so dry and dangerous one is not allowed to light fires without permission from the local authority. This man had violated the ban and, if reported to the police, would undoubtedly be charged with a crime.

The captain said he was going to deal with it that evening during our brigade's monthly meeting. During the meeting he



Be sure to spend quality alone time with your spouse even while the kids are growing up, otherwise you might end up retiring with someone you hardly even know anymore.

recalled the fire and also that he knew who had lit the fire. He warned the young man not to do so again or he would be charged. Besides me, only he knew who the guilty person was. And that was the end of the story.

.....
Today, if we are granted health, we can expect to live to age 80 and even beyond.
.....

Many years later when we were watching the news there was a report of a fire in one of our country towns and the officer in charge spoke of the severity of the fire. Guess who the officer was? Indeed, you guessed it. It was our young man from quite a number of years ago, now a professional fireman who had made good use of his second chance.

Opportunities

In our communities, and I guess it is the same in Canada as it is in Australia, there is often a crying need for volunteers. In the town where I live the local Red Cross, Meals on Wheels and other organizations are always looking for people to help out. Within the church community there may also be opportunities for service. If you are unaware of any needs speak to your deacon and he might well have some work for you to do.

It is worth saying again that there is a crying need for volunteers. One only has to speak with people in these organizations to realize how true this is. Many people are unwilling to do anything for anyone else. We ought not to be like that. As Christians we are taught to do good to all people, especially to those within the household of faith.

So what are a couple of these organizations and the help they need?

The Red Cross

The Red Cross in Australia is involved in all sorts of work:

1. Drivers are needed to ferry people from home to hospital or to the doctor. For this purpose the Red Cross has special vans with provisions for people in wheelchairs etc. Volunteer drivers might be required to be available once a week, fortnight or on an on call basis.
2. Visitors. A lot of people in retirement homes and nursing homes do not have family relations. Or, their relations live far away. For this purpose the Red Cross organizes visitors, which are properly vetted and appointed to visit these lonely people.
3. The Red Cross Shop. This shop provides second hand clothing to needy people. If you have worked in retail this is an opportunity to still have contact with people without committing to full time work.

Meals on Wheels

This is an opportunity to deliver meals to people who cannot prepare a meal for themselves. But it is also an opportunity to brighten up their day by being cheery and pleasant when delivering the meal. There is also the work of cooking, driving and various other jobs that need to be done within the organization. One of our church members has a fairly full job acting as manager for the local organization.

Reading

There are also other activities that readily come to mind. Many of our people are good readers; they have to be to keep up with all the material that they receive. And they have to be for they daily read the Bible at the table. Every community has a group that seeks to help those who cannot read or write. Often these are people who did not do well at school but later in life realize the great handicap they have in not being able to read and write. Become a volunteer to help those people. It might also give you

an opportunity to speak of the most important part of your life.

Get a hobby

After a lifetime of work, often working long hours, and doing other activities for the church community, many of our people finish their working life with little or no skills apart from their daily work. One of the suggestions made by the former Premier, Sir Charles, was that one should develop a hobby, be it stamp-collecting, woodwork, bird-spotting or what have you. During one's working life attention should be given to developing such a hobby. If skills are required, they can often be developed at a local vocational college. These schools often run courses specifically aimed at the hobby market. After a lifetime of doing books and preparing financial statements the accountant may become a skilled woodworker. It opens up a whole new area of interest.

So what now?

If you are shortly to retire you should start planning now. Discuss your retirement with your spouse. Discuss with her how you plan to fill your time and, where possible, involve her in your activities. Take over some of her jobs so she can also develop some interests outside the home. Learn to cook. She might really appreciate help in the kitchen. On the other hand she might not; that will be different in every marriage. The point is, talk these things over and come to some agreement.

.....
Far too many men do not prepare for retirement.
.....

Having done all that look forward to your retirement. Also in retirement we should seek to serve God and our neighbor. There are some wonderful opportunities. Make use of them.





Tidbits relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

Vive la difference

As sports fans know, pre-game warm-up music is a standard part of any basketball game, and the louder it is the better the kids like it. Public schools usually feature standards by self-absorbed, sex-obsessed heavy metal bands (AC/DC, KISS) and hard rock groups (Def Leppard, Color Me Badd). Christian schools, on the other hand. . . usually feature standards by self-absorbed, sex-obsessed heavy metal bands and hard rock groups. It's not at all unusual to walk into a Christian school gym and hear sexually explicit demands blasted out at 100+ decibels.

Christian school basketball games do often begin on a good note: a recent tournament here in BC began with a short devotional on how students can glorify God in how they play sports; prayer is a regular part of Christian competitions; and it seems almost every Christian school features Biblical verses written in large block letters across their gym walls. The Christian character of these events shines out brightly. . . until the warm-up music begins.

Make a fashion statement

T-shirts aren't always the most fashionable, but some of them sure do make a statement. This one, *Pillars of Naturalism*, is available for purchase at www.arn.org.



FRONT

Message of mercy

A church in Abbotsford, BC puts up a new message on their outdoor sign each week. This bit of advertising tells people who drive by about the sermon topic for that Sunday, or sometimes about a Saturday activity that the public is invited to.

But the messages on this outdoor sign do not always go unmolested – recently a bit of unwanted letter shuffling occurred. The church's response? The next week their message read: "Jesus forgives sign vandals and so do we. Come inside to find out more."

Brilliant books

Ray Comfort has to be the most productive writer ever – the popular evangelist has in the last year published 8 books! And to make this feat even more impressive, a quick look at his books' titles shows the topics cover an incredibly diverse range. Some of the titles include: *What science can do to stop the aging process*; *What man has learned from history*; *Evidence for atheism*; *How to be rich beyond your wildest dreams. . . and what you can do to make sure you will always have it*; *Scientific proof for evolution*; and *Everything man has learned about women*.

As you might have guessed already (the last title pretty much gives it away) the insides of each book are completely blank. Comfort then follows up this cute gag with a gospel message on the back of each book that is relevant to that particular book's title. These are attention-getting tracts that are likely to get passed on and on.

Best of the blogs

More and more Reformed folk are creating their own online journals – blogs – so if you don't know what a blog is, and want to find out, here are a few interesting entries from the past weeks:


www.pgb.notlong.com

Rev. Wes Bredenhof, of the Langley Canadian Reformed Church, notes that poker, gambling and bingo are problematic even when you win.

www.statscanref.notlong.com

Compiled here are the growth statistics of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches over the last 35 years.

www.befuddled.notlong.com

Teacher James Dykstra thinks kids can be taught about perspective by showing them Escher drawings brought to life in LEGO. 

A Monk and a Minister

Calvin and Luther had their differences but they never lost their appreciation for one another

by Johan D. Tangelder

Martin Luther and John Calvin, the two key leaders of the 16th century Reformation, were men of like faith, totally committed to God and His Word. Although Luther and Calvin were well known, they never met or spoke a word to each other, neither was there a regular correspondence between them.

Both leaders' influence is still felt throughout the world, yet the general interest has been more on Luther than Calvin. Luther is seen as the lone warrior heroically standing against the arrayed forces of the Roman Catholic Church and the Holy Roman Empire and Luther gained a more sympathetic image than Calvin because of his personal characteristics. Of all the leaders of the Reformation Calvin's reputation has often been maligned and his views misrepresented.

Luther the man

Martin Luther was born in 1483 in Eisleben in Upper Thuringa (Germany), the son of a tough and industrious farmer-turned-miner. He has been portrayed as an outgoing man, living, praying, preaching, eating and drinking with zest and enthusiasm. He was quick to anger as well as to laugh. This perception is based on carefully kept contemporary records compiled in the book *Table Talk* of his informal conversations at mealtimes with students, guests, and friends. Frequently he said or wrote what he came later to regret, but once said he refused to retract or retreat.

At the same time, he was a sensitive man, moved by beauty of God's creation.

He was also a prolific author. His booklets, tracts, and writings for special occasions and issues can fill a library. But the criticisms that have been consistently voiced against Luther came as a result of his own writings. For instance, in 1525, he wrote a fierce tract against the German peasants, who had fused his religious message with their own economic, political, and social demands and had risen up in rebellion. He did not mince words. With sharp language and boldness Luther's attacked the invasion of theology by philosophy. Some of the philosophers were referred to as "those grubs the philosophers," and he called Aristotle the "rancid philosopher." And his 1543 work *On the Jews and Their Lies* has been blamed for either inaugurating or exacerbating German anti-Semitism. Henri Rondet says about Luther: "The father of the Reformation is not a systematizer. He [thinks] intuitively, he is a 'prophet,' a tumultuous torrent, he loves crude images, he works his thought in paradoxes, and one commits a serious error by taking what he writes always literally."

Luther had a difficult time in his youth. There are repeated references, throughout his later writings, to his sufferings and deep soul agonies. He also had bouts of severe depression. He was searching for spiritual peace, but didn't find it until after a long study and struggle he came to understand that salvation



Calvin differed with, but greatly respected, Luther



Luther frequently said or wrote what he came later to regret

came not through works, but through grace and by faith (Rom. 1:17). His rediscovery of Pauline/Augustinian theology became the foundation of the Reformation as he declared that salvation was not something bought or earned but the free gift of a just and merciful God. In 1519 Luther underwent what he called his "tower experience," when he suddenly became convinced of the truth of the certainty of the gospel – the unforgettable experience of switching from despair and uncertainty to true faith and conviction. This experience was decisive in his life, and dramatically symbolizes his discovery of the Gospel.

Although his "tower experience" planted the seed for the Reformation, the event that brought him into open conflict

with the prelates and later the pope was the scandalous sale of indulgences. The latter were used to obtain funds for the rebuilding of Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome.

In matters of faith, Luther built on the foundation of Scripture. Yet he also put stress on personal experience. He leaves the impression that he ordered his summary of Christian doctrine in accordance with the despair-faith patterns of his own personal experience. In other words, a theologian is one who doesn't only use Scripture, but also teaches from what he has experienced in life.

Calvin the man

To understand John Calvin's works we must recognize the time and the place in which he lived. He was of the 16th century and not of the twenty-first. He was a second-generation Reformer, born in 1509 in Noyon, in northern France, twenty-five years after Luther (1483). He did not leave France until he was twenty-five. He considered himself a Frenchman and maintained a deep interest and concern for the welfare of his compatriots until the end of his life.

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When Luther nailed his theses to the door of the Wittenberg in 1517, Calvin was only eight years old.

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When Calvin came on the scene, the Middle Ages were nearing their end. Consequently, he straddled the border of an old and a new age. His struggles against the church of Rome were not new. He has been called the "Genevan Reformer." But, in fact, Calvin did not even bring the Reformation to Geneva; it had accepted the

Reformation even before he had arrived. By the time he published his *Institutes* in 1536, he was only one of the many who advocated reform. This accounts for the way he dealt with the questions he faced. In an impressive manner he confronted society with the message of Scripture for every area life.

He had no intention of founding a new church and a new organization; he claimed to be doing no more than restoring the face of the early church, just as one cleans and restores an old painting. Calvin sought passionately for the restoration of the Church Catholic of the Apostles and the Fathers, and he sought to realize this in the unity of the Church of Europe, other than that one which held allegiance to Rome. During his ministry in Geneva for more than thirty years, he developed a reputation as a systematic and organized leader both in practical terms (as in how to set up a church and a consistory), and theologically because his famous *Institutes for the Christian Religion* provided a framework for readers to understand the Scriptures from the Calvinist perspective.

Many think of Calvin as a cold, judgmental, and inflexible theocrat. The 19th century historian John Fiske described Calvin as "the constitutional lawyer of the Reformation, with vision as clear, with head as cool, with soul as dry, as any old solicitor in rusty black...His sternness was that of the judge who dooms a criminal to the gallows." But historical evidence shows that Calvin attracted many, varied, and warmly attached friends who spoke of the sensitiveness and the charm that were beneath his shy and withdrawn manner in public life. And judging by his correspondence, he was a caring man. If one thing stands out especially from Calvin's letters, it is his concern for people and their salvation. He aimed to revive believers who were in a fallen state. He could not share in their failure, but he urged them to leave the past to God, who would wipe clean the soiled page with His forgiveness, and

to face the future with confidence, asking God for His strength. He corresponded with kings, princes and potentates of the world. "It is a great matter to be a king," Calvin writes to the young King of England, Edward VI, "but I am sure you count it far greater to be a Christian." And there was no religious leader of any importance in the whole of Europe with whom Calvin didn't correspond. He also wrote to prisoners and martyrs. His letters encouraged them, gave answers to the false charges of their adversaries, opened a perspective of the heavenly kingdom, and assured them that no drop of blood would be shed in vain.

As a second generation Reformer, Calvin had not only to make a sharp distinction between his theological outlook and the church of Rome, but he also had to distinguish his view of Protestantism from preexisting ones. Calvin did not call himself a lawgiver nor a prophet nor an apostle. He wanted to lead to the way to Christ, a preacher, a pastor. His great learning was combined with an intense love for God. He wrote, "There is no religion without faith, and no true piety without the love for God" (*Institutes* ch. I, 2,1). The strength of Calvin's theology is in its Scriptural approach. His aim was the pure interpretation of the Word of God. Fresh and profound were his insights, given with lucid precision evident in all his writings. Predestination was a cornerstone of his theology, but it also became a huge stumbling block. During his lifetime this doctrine was resisted and the resistance never ceased. But the more his view was criticized, the more determined Calvin was ready to defend it. For Calvin predestination was the realization that salvation cannot be made dependent on human decisions. Unlike Luther, Calvin advocated the separation of church. He did not recognize any right of the state to interfere with the affairs of the church. Luther, on the other hand, recognized the ruler of a state as the supreme bishop.

Ever since his death in 1564, and indeed even before it, the name and theology of John Calvin have aroused intense

feelings and emotions. To some he is a great hero. To others he is anathema. The very fact that Calvin has been much studied and attracted so much attention speaks of the significance of his place in theology and Church history. Calvin is still known and discussed today precisely because his ideas took root and spread, first throughout Europe, and then worldwide. The polemical passages in his *Institutes* and other writings have abiding value because Calvin always based his arguments on the Holy Scriptures. His concern was the exposition and true meaning of the Word of the Lord (cf. ch. II, 5,19).

Calvin and Luther

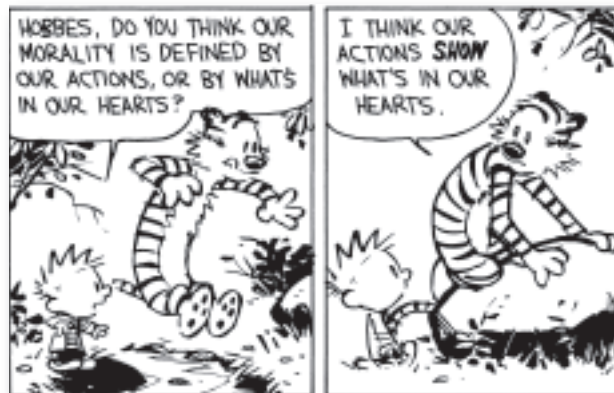
Calvin and Luther may have been contemporaries, but that does not obliterate the fact that there was a great difference in age of more than 25 years. When Luther nailed his well-known theses against the selling of indulgences to the door of the Wittenberg in 1517, Calvin was only eight years old. When Calvin's *Institutes* were published in Basle in 1536, and he began to make a name for himself, Luther was already past the age of 50 with only one decade ahead of him. And in 1546, the year of Luther's death, Calvin was in the heat of the struggle at Geneva

while the period of his triumph and spreading influence was only beginning.

Calvin was indebted to Luther. He repeatedly showed his deep respect for Luther without feeling duty-bound to withhold criticism of some of the teachings of Luther in which he was in disagreement. He recognized Luther as a special servant of God. He called him "An excellent ambassador for Christ." The two Reformers were of different nationalities. Luther was every inch a German, while Calvin on the other hand was French. Both of them had mastered Latin, yet neither of them used Latin exclusively. Each one of them composed an important part of his writing in his mother tongue. Consequently, to both men a large percentage of the writings remained mutually inaccessible. Calvin broke with Rome and joined the movement which already had been in existence for more than fifteen years, and had already made Europe feel its ground swell. Luther did not break away from Rome, he was rather driven out. He was excommunicated after being called to retract. Calvin, who began writing nearly twenty years after, did not have to face the question of separation. The breach was a fact. He simply knew that Rome persecuted "Lutherans," that she handed them over to the state to be

CALVIN AND...

...HOBBS



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burned, and that she accused them falsely of subversion.

Luther and Calvin appreciated each other's work. In a letter to fellow reformer Martin Bucer in Strasbourg in 1539, Luther sent his regards to Calvin. He mentioned that he had learned of a few of Calvin's writings. The *Institutes* was probably one of them. It is true to say that in many respects there is no difference between Calvin's ideas and that of Luther, but it is not true that he is only a duplicate of Luther. Calvin had Luther as a starting point, and without difficulty, he remained loyal to his great predecessor. But at the same time, he also surpassed him, especially in his view of the Lord's Supper and church organization. In the history of church and culture, he has an independent place next to Luther.

For Calvin, Luther was the first, the pioneer of the Reformation. He defended Luther, describing his work as the work of God. When Calvin addressed the diet of Speier in 1543, demonstrating the necessity of a reformation, he declared that it was not the work of human beings: "God roused Luther and the others, who carried the torch ahead, in order to recover the way of salvation; and by whose service our churches were founded and established."

For Luther, justification of faith was the shibboleth of the Reformation, but for Calvin it was the fear of the Lord, living in the presence of God in every area of life. He opposed the privatization of the faith, and refused to compromise with Rome.

What then was the key difference between Luther and Calvin? It was not the doctrine of predestination. There was little difference between Luther and Calvin here. In fact, it was also taught by other Reformers. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was a key difference between him and Luther.

The Lord's Supper controversy

Against Calvin, Luther taught the real presence of Christ's body in the Lord's Supper. Luther did not agree with the Roman Catholic dogma of transubstantia-

tion, which teaches that: "In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantiality contained. . . . It is by the conversion of the bread and wine into Christ's body and blood that Christ becomes present in this sacrament" (p.383f. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*). Luther taught instead the doctrine of consubstantiation. In his *Small Catechism*, he defined the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper as "The true body and blood of our Jesus Christ under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink." Its purpose, he continued, "is shown us by these



The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was a key difference between him and Luther.



words, 'Given and shed for you for the remission of sins.' For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation." Luther stated that, "Even though a knave takes or distributes the Sacrament, he receives the true body and blood of Christ, just as truly as he who [receives or] administers it in the most worthy manner. For it is not founded upon the holiness of men, but upon the Word of God."

Calvin criticized Luther's view because it involves a localization of Christ's presence. In a letter to Martin Bucer in 1538 he wrote regarding Luther, "How foolishly he erred when he stated that the bread is the body itself." He also wrote to the Council of Geneva stating that he could not change his mind about Luther's view as he didn't want to betray the truth.

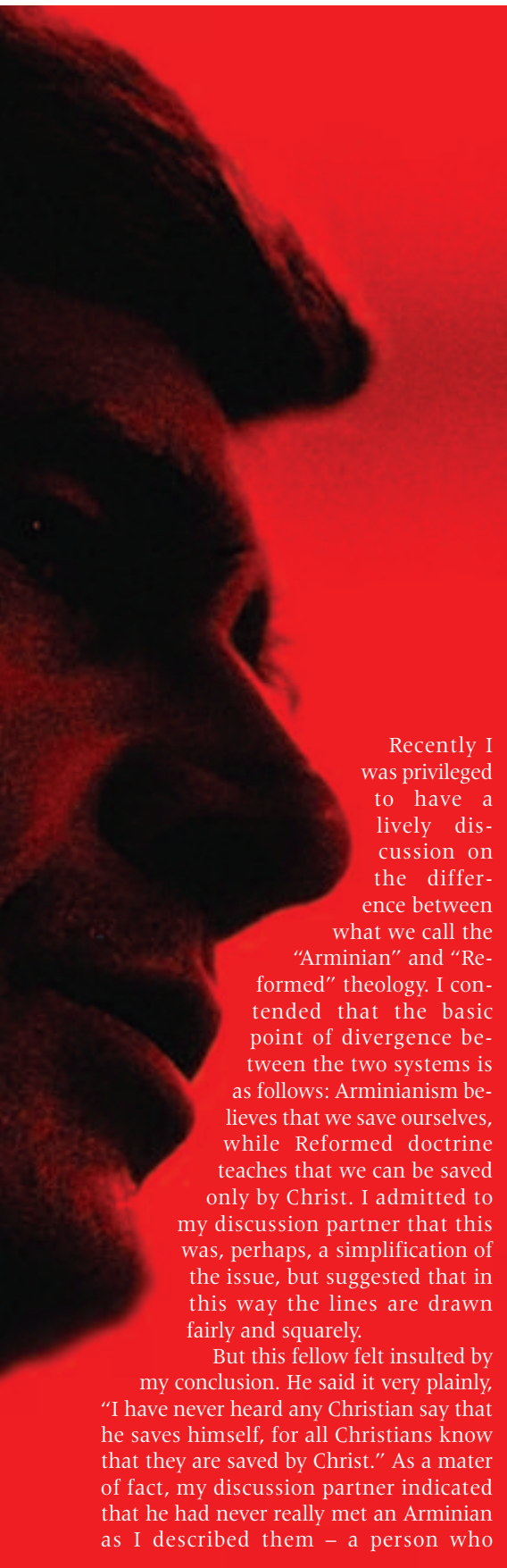
Calvin affirmed the presence of the living Christ in the sacrament of the Lord's

Supper by the action of the Holy Spirit. Despite the vast distance of space between us and the ascended Christ, we are united with Him through the hidden power of the Holy Spirit. Calvin believed that Christ was "truly and efficaciously present in the Lord's Supper, but in a spiritual sense, and through the mysterious intervention of the Holy Spirit, the communicant partakes spiritually of Christ's body" (cf. *Institutes* IV, 17,18). He said at the Synod of Berne (1537): "Thus we must recognize that His Spirit is the bond of our participation with Him, in such a way that He truly feeds us on the substance of our Lord's flesh and blood, to give us by sharing in them life and immortality. This communion of His flesh and blood Christ offers in His holy supper under the symbols of bread and wine, and He presents this to all who celebrate it duly in accordance with His lawful institution." Neither Luther nor Calvin changed their minds. For sound Scriptural reasons Calvin could not accept Luther's view. This break with the Lutherans deeply hurt Calvin.

Conclusion

Luther and Calvin were not perfect Reformation heroes – they were not without major flaws and faults. They were human and subject to errors, wrong-doing and sin, as we are. They had their differences, but never lost their appreciation for each other. In a letter which Calvin wrote to Luther, but which Luther never received or read – Luther's friend Melachton did not think it advisable to deliver it to him – Calvin asked Luther's opinion about a certain matter which gave him much trouble. Beautiful and magnificent is the ending of this letter: "For I would preferably converse with you personally, not only on this matter, but also on other matters. But that which is not granted to us on earth, will presently, I hope, be imparted to us in the Kingdom of God. Hail to you, most excellent man, servant of Christ, and honored father. May God bless you always through his Spirit until the end, to the mutual well being of his church."





“I consider looseness with words no less of a defect than looseness of the bowels.”

John Calvin

Understanding Terminology

by Clarence Stam

Recently I was privileged to have a lively discussion on the difference between what we call the “Arminian” and “Reformed” theology. I contended that the basic point of divergence between the two systems is as follows: Arminianism believes that we save ourselves, while Reformed doctrine teaches that we can be saved only by Christ. I admitted to my discussion partner that this was, perhaps, a simplification of the issue, but suggested that in this way the lines are drawn fairly and squarely.

But this fellow felt insulted by my conclusion. He said it very plainly, “I have never heard any Christian say that he saves himself, for all Christians know that they are saved by Christ.” As a matter of fact, my discussion partner indicated that he had never really met an Arminian as I described them – a person who

claimed to be Christian and yet claimed to save himself. All Christians, he said, believe that they are saved by Christ!

If this man was right, are there really any Arminians? Is there at bottom a real difference between the Reformed faith and Arminianism or are they just different ways of looking at the same thing?



The same words do not always mean the same thing.



We may even go a step farther in our questions: was the Reformation in the sixteenth century and the subsequent struggle in the seventeenth century between the Calvinists and Arminians worth the trouble? Do we not all, Roman Catholics, Reformed, Arminian, Baptists, etc. believe in the same Lord Jesus Christ, the Savior of all? We may differ on certain points, but is the essence of faith not the same? Where’s the problem, really? Is it not just a matter of semantics, of *terminology*?

Using the same words

When I was still a young student at seminary I took a course in ancient philosophy. I will never forget one of the first things which our professor, C. Veenhof, taught us. He said, “You must always ask people precisely what they mean when they use certain terms.” For even though we may use the same words, this does not mean that we are saying the same thing. Therefore it is so very important to ask someone what he means when he employs a common concept. You must investigate someone’s terminology or you may be misled into thinking that you both espouse the same beliefs while you really do not!

Take, for example, the *political* scene. In the past both communists and capitalists ardently defended the concept of *democracy* and even call themselves “democrats” but they definitely didn’t have the same political system. History shows us that communist former East Germany, which for many years called itself the German Democratic Republic, was anything but “democratic.” And yet they used the word *democracy* nonetheless.

“Testing the spirits” means we must diligently investigate and accurately

understand someone's terminology. Otherwise we will be terribly misled.

It was precisely the tactic of the Arminians in the early 1600s in the Netherlands to use common biblical concepts and to give these concepts subtly unbiblical content. The Arminians made a caricature of the true Reformed doctrine and then attacked the caricature with the crafty use of biblical concepts adapted to their own views. Those who did not discern this were led astray.

Is this not a much used tactic or a standard method of operation? The lesson is clear; the same words do not always mean the same thing.

Saying the same thing?

Let me get back to the example of the difference between Arminian and Reformed thinking. It may seem that sometimes both are saying the same thing.

The Reformed churches teach that God in his sovereign good pleasure elects whomever He wills. We speak, then, of the doctrine of *election*, which states, "[God] has, according to the sovereign good pleasure of his will, out of mere grace, chosen in Christ to salvation a definite number of persons. . ." (Canons of Dort I, 7).

Arminians also employ the term "election," for it is a scriptural concept. Except Arminianism means by election only that God sets various conditions (faith and repentance) and elects those who *meet* these conditions! In effect, then, we save ourselves by our own choice for God upon which God is obliged to elect us. God's election is "sovereign" only in that He sets the conditions, but secondary in that He *must* choose all that meet these conditions.

The same holds true with the idea of *faith*. The Reformed churches teach that faith is a *gift of God* which He works in us through the Holy Spirit by the preaching

of the Gospel. Indeed, we confess that faith is not merely *offered* by God to the free will of man, but is "actually conferred on man, instilled and infused in him" (Canons of Dort III/IV, 14). Conferred, instilled, and infused – these are powerful verbs!

Arminianism, however, which also uses the term "faith" means by faith the decisive *act of man* by which he appropriates the salvation offered by God unto himself. God may gently persuade people to believe, but the final decision is up to every individual and not to God! In effect, then, we save ourselves by our voluntary and decisive act of believing.



We must learn to inquire further, and to discern truth from un-truth.



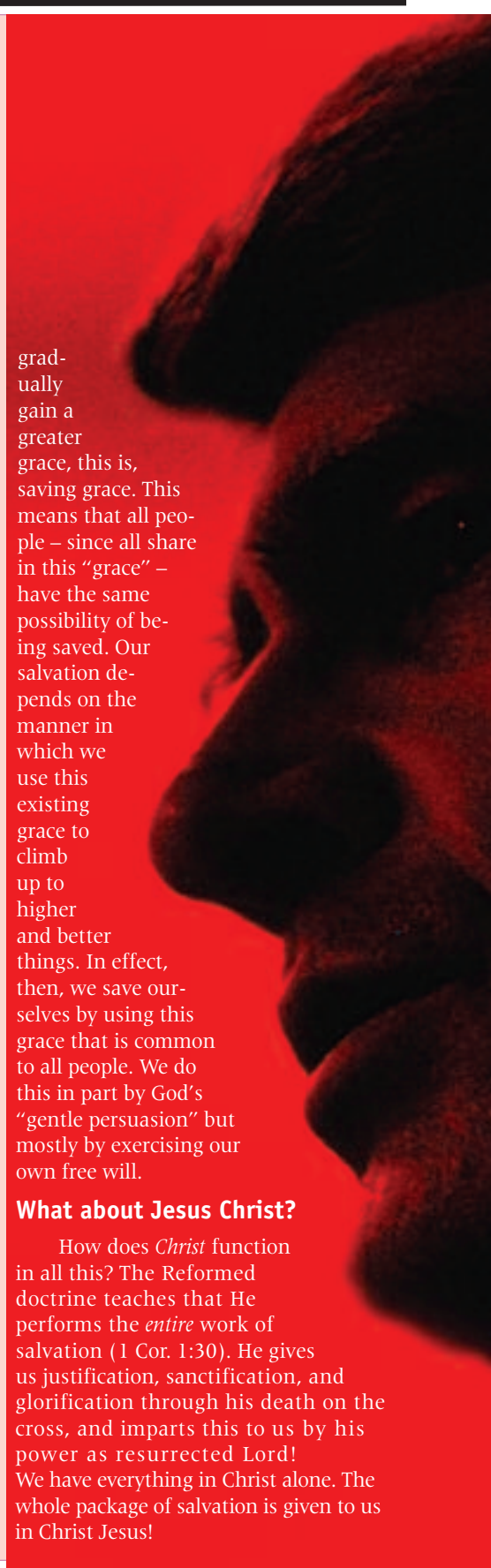
All this becomes very acute when we look at the term *grace*. The Reformed churches understand "grace" to mean the free gift of God by which He enables us to be born again and come to faith. God gives this "saving grace" only to those whom He has chosen in Christ. He does not owe this grace to anyone and gives it to whom He pleases (Canons of Dort, III/IV, 15). The grace of God is *invincible*, which means that we may try to resist it, but God in his almighty power causes his perfect will to prevail over our sinful will.

Arminianism also uses the term "grace." But again, Arminianism means something quite different with this word. Grace is at best the *common* grace which God has given to all people. It is this common grace, this "light of nature" left in man after the fall, by which he can

gradually gain a greater grace, this is, saving grace. This means that all people – since all share in this "grace" – have the same possibility of being saved. Our salvation depends on the manner in which we use this existing grace to climb up to higher and better things. In effect, then, we save ourselves by using this grace that is common to all people. We do this in part by God's "gentle persuasion" but mostly by exercising our own free will.

What about Jesus Christ?

How does *Christ* function in all this? The Reformed doctrine teaches that He performs the *entire* work of salvation (1 Cor. 1:30). He gives us justification, sanctification, and glorification through his death on the cross, and imparts this to us by his power as resurrected Lord! We have everything in Christ alone. The whole package of salvation is given to us in Christ Jesus!



Blast from the past

To celebrate the completion of our 25th year of publication, *Reformed Perspective* is taking a look back at the more than 3000 articles we've published over the past 275 issues. In the next few issues we'll be reprinting a half dozen "blasts from the past" like this article by Rev. Stam, which was first featured in *RP* 17 years ago, back in April 1990.

By contrast Arminianism states that Christ's death has only changed the conditions by which we are saved. Through Christ it is now *possible* for all people to be saved. But the acquiring of this salvation depends on whether we exercise our free will to use God's grace and accept the benefits acquired by the death of Christ. Christ has by his death only *opened* the door; we have to slip through the open door on our own accord!

There are many who regularly use concepts such as election, faith, and grace, and ascribe their salvation to Jesus Christ, but, in fact, their whole system of thought places the human act in the center as being decisive. God only gives the opportunity in Christ, but ultimately we save ourselves. Many people do not even discern the flaw in this system of thought for they do not bother to question the terminology used.

Do all Christians *really* believe that they are saved only in Christ?

Carefully discerning the truth

Despite all the humble words, Arminianism is at bottom a self-glorifying system which does not fully base assurance on God's perfect work but in part on our imperfect deeds. Therefore in Arminianist thinking, one can never be really sure

of salvation! John Wesley, the consummate English Arminian, even taught that we can fall out of the state of perfection back into sin! There is no certainty of salvation until we hear the Judge's own words on the great day.

I'm not bashing any religious group; I never do. And I am not called to make judgment on anyone's salvation. I have only contrasted two different systems of thought on the basis of some key words used by both.

My point is to demonstrate that not everyone who uses the same words means the same thing. We must learn to distinguish carefully, to inquire further, and to discern truth from un-truth. Otherwise we may be taken in by something which we hold for truth but is really a subtle distortion of the truth.

It is the task of Reformed journalism to help promote the proper understanding of key concepts, not just in social political and economic matters, but also in matters of true faith.




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John Calvin has never read an issue he didn't like

Calvin Quotes

...SPEAKING UP

"A dog barks when his master is attacked. I would be a coward if I saw that God's truth is attacked and yet would remain silent."

... INFANT BAPTISM

"Everyone must now see that infant baptism, which receives such strong support from Scripture, is by no means a human invention. Nor is it a plausible objection that we nowhere read of even one infant having been baptized by the hands of the apostles. For although this is not expressly narrated by the Evangelists, they are also not expressly excluded when mention is made of any baptized family (Acts 16:15, 32) so what man of sense will argue from this that they were not baptized? If such kinds of argument were good, it would be necessary, in like manner, to keep women from the Lord's Supper, since we do not read that they were ever admitted to it in the days of the apostles."

...PENTECOSTAL EXCESSES

"The Fanaticism which discards the Scripture, under the pretense of resorting to immediate revelations is subversive of every principle of Christianity. For when they boast extravagantly of the Spirit, the tendency is always to bury the Word of God so they may make room for their own falsehoods."

...PUTTING FAITH IN THE POPE

"Is it faith to understand nothing, and merely submit your convictions implicitly to the Church?"

... MODERN JOURNALISM?

"I consider looseness with words no less of a defect than looseness of the bowels."

...MODERATION

"The evil in our desires typically does not lie in what we want, but that we want it too much."

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

Have a slice of old Geneva

by Christine Farenhorst



Often Christians are seen as intolerant folk; as those who have no respect for the views of others; as those who condemn or look down their nose at fellow citizens. Or they are seen as hypocrites who follow one set of rules on Sunday and have an entirely different set of rules the rest of the week. Although much could be written about such viewpoints, the truth is that rules and standards set by Christians for every day life in the 20th and 21st centuries compared to those set by Reformers back in the days of Geneva, might be seen as relatively slack or easy-going.

Of course Geneva, at the time of Reformation, was a unique city – one whose citizens sent ambassadors to Calvin inviting him to live among them and to help them live good and moral lives. Calvin drafted, for their acceptance, a constitution whereby the morals, (which included manners), of every Genevan citizen were placed under ecclesiastical supervision.

Imagine if such a delegation of citizens today from city councils of say, Toronto, Hamilton, Los Angeles, Philadelphia or Seattle would approach pastors to ask for help in drafting laws to aid citizens to live moral lives. Or, a little easier to imagine, what if local church consistories were to approach Calvin, (were he still alive today), asking him to lay down rules and regulations for their congregations.

Some of the laws and statutes, (put into contemporary language), which were enacted in Geneva, read thus:

Item: That none shall play or run idly in the streets during the time of Sermons on Sundays.

There were, by the way, three services, something our ministers themselves might balk at. And what would Calvin have thought of the present adherence to sports, often taking place during church hours in a local park? Or of Christians watching sports on TV on Sunday? Such a

law would probably cut out all Sunday football, hockey and basketball games!

Item: That no citizen, Burger, or Inhabitant of this City dareth be so hardy to go from henceforth to eat or drink in any Tavern.

In other words, bars would be forbidden terrain to Christians, on Sunday, at any rate. And what about the alcohol so readily available in many homes? – the six-packs tucked away with the groceries in the refrigerators? The very real danger Calvin perceived when he penned this item is still there and it would be a step forward if parents would lay down the law to their children regarding such beverage intake both in word and deed.

Item: That none be so hardy to walk by night in the Town after nine of the clock, without candle-light and also a lawful cause.

An encouragement and warning for families to stay home more after work hours. Gallivanting around in the evening for no reason would be forbidden. The night was, and still is, a time when most crimes are committed.

Item: That no manner of person, of what estate, quality or condition soever they be, shall wear any chains of gold or silver, but those which have been accustomed to wear them shall put them off, and wear them no more upon pain of three shillings for every time.

Item: That no women, of what quality or condition soever they be, shall wear any verdingales (these are likely farthingales, that is hoop skirts), gold upon her head, quoises of gold, (likely rings), billiments or such like, (not certain what billiments are), neither any manner of embroidery upon her sleeves.

Perhaps these items seem a bit harsh, but considering the great show of rich clothes and ornaments people could (and do) display, there is merit in thinking about the simplicity Peter speaks of when we dress. Conversely, it is good to take into consideration the danger today of people under-dressing, of being too casual to the point of ridiculous and showing no respect for the body created in the image of God. In church especially, pants for women seem to be the mode and often too much lower neck and upper legs are in full view. It is also becoming increasingly obvious that young men are vain enough to spend time styling their hair. Where are the parents of these fashion-setters? Or are they the role models?

Item: That no manner of person, whatsoever they be, making bride-ales, banquets or feasts shall have above three

courses or servings to the said feasts, and to every course or service not above four dishes, and yet not excessive, upon pain of three score shillings and for every time, fruit excepted.

Now there's an item for us!! Reformed Geneva was obviously concerned about gluttony. Today we have more than our share of obese people and moderation in food is an example which should be set by all Christians. We have, to a great extent, forgotten how to have "clean" weddings. Weddings today frequently boast an open bar – a cause of much stumbling. And when was the last time the common vice of overeating was preached about? Imagine having to pay a few dollars into a collection plate for every overweight pound which the Reformed scale indicated? Ridiculous thought!? To be sure – but one worth thinking about personally.

Item: That no manner of men shall go to the baths appointed for women, and also women not to go to those appointed for men.

With sections of beaches today permitting topless and even nude bathing, this stricture would certainly demand change in where we permit ourselves to go during the summer. And it also might be wise to take stock of the bathing apparel worn by both young men and women when they go to beaches. Are these articles of clothing appropriate? Are they chaste? Fathers and mothers do you speak to your children about these clothes and are you an example of modest clothing yourself? Should young men see young women with almost uncovered bosoms and hips? And should young girls see young men in tight bathing pants?

Calvin teaching from his bed in Geneva



Item: That no manner of person do sing any vain, dishonest or ribald songs, neither do dance, nor make masques, mummeries, or any disguisings in no manner or sort whatsoever it be, upon pain to be put three days in prison with bread and water.

In this item, the radio or the common headphones which adorn the ears of every other person, should be checked for Scriptural compatibility. Are we satisfied that if our children, or we ourselves, sing Psalms on Sunday, and Genevan Psalms at that, the rest of the week can be filled with any other songs? Do we know to what our children are listening and have we the courage of conviction to forbid them and given them godly alternatives?

Item: That all Hosts and others shall make their prayer to God, and give thanks before meat and after upon pain of forty shillings and for every time being found and proved, and if the Hosts or Hostesses be found negligent and not doing it, to be punished further as the case requires.

In others words, the head of the house, the father, (and in his absence the mothers), should pray before and after breakfast, lunch and supper. Devotions with family are mandatory. And how many “Christian” families are negligent in this? And how many, if this item were enforced, would be fined?

Granted, many of the Genevan laws enforced seem to our “enlightened” ears and eyes to be far-fetched and overbearing, taking away personal responsibilities so that one’s conscience seems to be dictated to rather than tended with love.

It is a fact that citizens in Geneva were punished for their failure to meet the requirements in the laws put forth. One man was punished for wearing baggy knickerbockers in the street, (punishment for such a peccadillo would certainly fill jails today); and another was taken to task for offering his snuff-box to a friend during a sermon. (Is that compatible to offering a roll of King or Wilhelmina peppermints down your aisle?) Another was reprimanded for talking business with a neighbor while walking out of church, (this would certainly fill the consistory room with a number of farmers talking hay and beef prices), and a fourth was spoken to because he had irreligiously named his cow Rebecca. Then there was the child who was put into the pillory and publicly whipped because he had thrown a stone at his mother, (and how often do our children get away with no discipline when they bad-mouth, throw tantrums, and act disrespectfully?); and there was a mother who was imprisoned

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Reformed Geneva was obviously concerned about gluttony.


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because she had come short in the proper care for her baby, (and what would Calvin have said about mothers who voluntarily work outside the home and bring their children to daycare?); and lastly, there was a young woman who was arraigned because she looked at a pastor in a less than decorous way.

We may smile and even laugh at some of these rules; we may consider the fact that times were different and that David without any inhibition danced before the ark of God without being fined a set number of coins; and we may think ourselves liberated and at liberty to do what we please because we attend sermons twice a Sunday.

The question is: are the rules and regulations set down by Calvin back in the 1500s conducive to righteousness? To a certain degree any good rule is conducive to righteousness. But we all know that it is not keeping a succession of commandments, whether set to Genevan tunes or not, which is pleasing to God. What is pleasing to Him is an inward desire to do what He delights in. Jesus cares about behavior, that is true, but not about behavior on its own. External behavior which counts with Him is that behavior which comes from a transformed heart. Righteousness which pleases God is an inward righteousness – a righteousness which controls mind and motive – and this righteousness will have visible expression in all of life. And it only shows up if a person is born again. In other words, if you are in Christ, this will show in a visible expression in all you do. There has to be evidence of the new birth. Christ demands these evidences. These are not flawless evidences, but they are evidences all the same. What God will require at judgment is not perfection, but sufficient fruit to show that you are alive in Christ.

Regardless of the times and seasons and the different ways of dressing and living that the people of Geneva exhibited or were told to exhibit, we must also try as they did, to stand apart from the secular. We should know the Word of God better than lyrics to modern tunes; we should be acquainted with Bible verses rather than sports statistics; we should get more satisfaction from purity than popularity and multi-dating; we should revel in chastity rather than popular fashion; we should strive for self-effacement rather than for self-satisfaction; we should spend more time in devotion than in playing computer games and watching TV; and... *ad infinitum*. A list to be made and hung up on the refrigerator.

Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven (Matthew 5:16). 

Beware the events of November 2006

Think evolution and Christianity can co-exist?
Not if these evolutionists have anything to do with it.

by Margaret Helder

Most people have heard of at least a few of the big name atheistic scientists. Perhaps the most prominent today is evolutionary biologist Sir Richard Dawkins, who holds the Chair for Public Understanding of Science at Oxford University. Because of his prominent position in academia, he commands lots of attention in his campaign against Christianity. . . or as he calls it, the “malignant influence of organized religion in society.”

It is easy enough to dismiss Richard Dawkins as extremist. Certainly his views are extreme, but the astonishing thing is that they are becoming mainstream in powerful scientific circles. Militant atheistic scientists are seeking to force religion underground. It isn't enough to support evolution, they declare, one must reject all religious faith.

This raises the question how long it will be before Christians become pariahs, pushed to the fringes of society and disqualified from participating in public office. One has only to observe the number of recent articles critical of “religion” to understand that public attitudes are changing. Two events in November 2006 are illustrative of this trend.

Beyond belief

The first was a conference – “Beyond Belief: Science, Religion, Reason and Sur-

vival” – at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies in La Jolla, California. The reason for the conference, as it was stated in the promotional material, was a fear that the gains of the Enlightenment (of the eighteenth century) might be lost in the face of increasing support for religious faith.

As alternatives, evolutionary biology, anthropology and neuroscience might help us create a new story of origins and a reason for being. The title “Beyond Belief” meant that religious faith was to be left behind and a glorious new evolutionary and atheistic future was to be embraced.



This man was written a number of books hostile to Christian faith.



A variety of people were invited to the conference, but the ones who attended exhibited a profound interest in evolution and an intense dislike of religion, particularly Christian faith. The conference venue, the Salk Institute, has itself long been associated with atheism and support for evolution.

A who's who of hostility

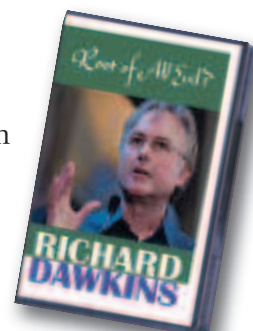
Along with Jonas Salk, the founding consultants were Jacob Bronowski and Francis Crick. Bronowski, an English mathematician of Polish descent, was best known for the BBC TV series *The Ascent of Man*. The evolutionary theme in his series was a strong inspiration for Carl Sagan's atheistic television series *Cosmos* in the United States.

Francis Crick, the other founding consultant, was co-discoverer of the DNA helix along with James Watson. Crick was an outspoken atheist who spent his final years at the Salk Institute seeking an evolutionary explanation for human consciousness.

Two participants in the “Beyond Belief” conference – Patricia Churchland and Terrence Sejnowski – have continued the Crick tradition of research into consciousness at the Salk Institute. Others (Stuart Hameroff, V.S. Ramachandran and Roger Bingham) conduct similar work at other institutions. Evolutionists are very interested in finding a naturalistic, evolutionary explanation for human consciousness so that no one will be tempted to look to God for its source. Thus far they have found no answers to the conundrum. Another scientist at the conference was William H. Calvin, a theoretical neurophysicist specializing in brains, evolution and climate.

Truth in advertising?

by Jon Dykstra



Richard Dawkins, one of the world's best known atheists and evolutionists, hates all religions, but especially Christianity. So when Dawkins decided to put out a DVD blaming religion for the world's woes, it was hardly surprising. What was surprising was the DVD's self-deprecating title: *The Root of All Evil?* Richard Dawkins.

Also on the program was Sam Harris, an author with an interest in consciousness and disbelief. Sam Harris' book *The End of Faith* was favorably reviewed in the *Edmonton Journal* (Feb. 18/06). The title of the review was "Religions haven't earned our respect, says author: It's dangerous for humanity to cling to irrationality." You only had to read the review title to get the message. A similar favorable review of this book was penned by Jerry Adler, senior editor at *Newsweek*. The interesting thing about this review, according to a commentator on the Internet, was that Mr. Adler seemed to see nothing wrong with the book's message.

Besides the people interested in human consciousness, there were astronomers. Among these was Carolyn Porco, leader of the Cassini Imaging Science Team at Boulder, Colorado. She declared at the conference that "if anyone has a replacement for God, then scientists do." Indeed she indicated that science provides all the benefits of religion: "The answers to why we are here, if they exist at all, will be found in astronomy and evolution. . ." (*New Scientist* Nov. 18/06).

Astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, director of the Hayden Planetarium in New York outdid Porco in his passionate promotion of atheism. In his presentation he displayed heartbreaking photographs of newborn babies with prominent birth defects. This, he said, was testimony that blind nature rather than God, was in control. Later Dr. deGrasse Tyson spluttered over the results of a recent poll of members of the prestigious US National Academy of Sciences. Apparently 85% of members declared that they do not believe in a personal God. He rhetorically asked why it is that any members believe in a personal God. What can be done to change that 15% to zero, he asked?

There were two anthropologists present whose fields of study deal with human origins. One was Melvin Konner, who is the Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor of Anthropology at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. This man's claim to fame

is that he is on a "celebrity atheist list." Sir Harold Kroto, winner of the 1996 Nobel Prize in chemistry, professes to be an atheist and humanist. Formerly from University of Sussex, he is presently at Florida State University.

Others present included, Michael Shermer, a well known "skeptic" or unbeliever. He is founding publisher of *Skeptical Magazine*, director of the Skeptics Society, monthly columnist for *Scientific American*, and a firm supporter of Darwinism and the joys of living without God. Loyal Rue, a professor of religion, was also there – he insists that religion is not about God, but about biology. He is completing an epic on evolution. Lastly there was Mazarin Banaji who occupies the Richard Clarke Cabot chair of social ethics at Harvard.

ern Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio and another participant in the "Beyond Belief" conference, reviewed Dawkins' book in the journal *Nature*. Dr. Krauss declared that Dawkins views on childhood and religion are "precisely accurate." According to Krauss, "We do our children a great disservice (which Dawkins goes so far as to call abuse) by forcing religion upon them. . . In doing so, we encourage them to rely on potentially destructive emotions rather than to use their brains" (Oct. 26/06).

Another American physicist and astronomer at the same conference, Nobel Laureate Steven Weinberg of the University of Texas, also approved of the Dawkins book. He began his remarks by stating "Of all the scientific discoveries that have disturbed the religious mind, none has had the impact of Darwin's theory of evolution by natural selection." Dr. Weinberg points out that Dawkins describes God with long lists of insulting adjectives. This reviewer remarks that in doing so, Dawkins exhibits "a constructive purpose. By attacking the God of sacred Scripture, he is trying to weaken the authority of that God's commands. . ." Dr. Weinberg sees nothing wrong with this tactic. (tls.timesonline.co.uk/article/0,,25349-2552017,00.html)

Not only fellow scientists, but also some freelance journalists have commented approvingly on Dawkins' latest book. A reviewer in the *Edmonton Journal* (January 7/07) declared: "Richard Dawkins deconstructs religions that have

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Dawkins describes God with long lists of insulting adjectives.

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There was no more dedicated evolutionist and atheist present than Sir Richard Dawkins. This man has written a number of books hostile to Christian faith, but the recently released *The God Delusion*, is the most bitter yet. It is interesting how many reviewers support the pronouncements in the book. Lawrence Krauss, a physicist and cosmologist from Case West-

as their central tenet a supernatural being as creator of the universe." This review further suggests that, after reading this book, it would be nearly impossible to think as favorably about religion ever again.

Getting meaner

This then was the cast of characters at the Beyond Belief conference. The opening salvo was made by Steven Weinberg who declared that "The world needs to wake up from the long nightmare of religion." He further opined "Anything we scientists can do to weaken the hold of religion should be done, and may in fact be our greatest contribution to civilization." (*New Scientist* Nov. 18/06). Later Dawkins and others declared that Weinberg was too conciliatory to religion! Several commentators mentioned the revivalist fervor of the sessions.

The participants apparently see themselves in a fight of titanic and global proportions. Nobel Laureate Sir Harold Kroto declared that scientists must launch a coordinated global effort of education and media outreach. Such programs have worked in the past, he said, and they can again. Furthermore he insisted that faith schooling must be overcome and subdued as well. Later in a question and answer session, the scientists pondered what they would do if they were given half the Bill Gates Foundation's endowment (\$30 billion) to promote evolution and atheism. Would propaganda machines and public relations firms be effective to convert large groups of people? Nobody said it would be unethical to spend so much money on this project rather than on human health and welfare. Instead they argued about what would or would not work.

Thus prominent scientists at the Beyond Belief conference pondered mass conversion of people to evolution and atheism. One of their number said that parents should not be allowed to instruct their children in religious doctrine, and nobody quibbled with this point of view. Another declared that Christian schools must be forced to promote evolution and atheism.

Banning belief

Later in November, the newly established Washington, D.C. office of the Center for Inquiry released the text of a *Declaration in Defense of Science and Secularism*. The document, signed by more than fifty prominent scholars, began by declaring that public disdain for science is "aggravated by the excessive influence of religious doctrine on our public policies." In order to "correct" this situation, the document advocates extending the separation of church and state to include ensuring that public policies are based on secular principles rather than religious doctrine. This would affect embryonic stem cell legislation and access to abortion, among other ethical issues.

In the area of international relations, the document declares:

"We cannot hope to convince others of the follies of sectarianism when we give preferential treatment to religious institutions and practices. A mindset fixed in the Middle Ages cannot possibly hope to meet the challenges of our times."

Upon the assumption that "science and secularism are inextricably linked and both are indispensable if we are to have sound public policies," the document urges that society "not permit legislation or executive action to be influenced by religious beliefs."

Thus far scientists in the United States are merely at the talking stage. However in a country where the teaching of creation and intelligent design are not allowed in the public schools – even though most of the public supports these measures – can these other initiatives be far behind?

Nevertheless Christians will survive. They always have. The underground church in Iron Curtain countries is an excellent example of this. It is the atheists who should be discouraged, not us.

In the meantime theistic evolutionists and other Christians who think they can coexist with evolution might want to re-evaluate. Richard Dawkins has made it very clear that he and his evolutionist friends don't want to co-exist with Christianity or any other religion.

Need a Speaker?



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Soup & Buns

Hope in the Hospital

Spreading hope by spreading Scripture

by Sharon L. Bratcher

Two years ago, our 12-year-old daughter Amy spent two weeks in a Lewiston, New York hospital due to an emergency appendectomy and further complications. Since we were seven hours from home, I moved into her hospital room and the staff was kind enough to provide a cot, and three meals a day.

Emotionally, it was a very difficult time. We were traveling to a Christian camp, and initially felt great disappointment at missing that experience. But after a while, the pain and frustrations of illness greatly overshadowed that loss.

Friends and the minister of our local church did everything possible to care for us. There were loans of equipment and gifts of treats and cards, and friends visited and even did my laundry. Amazingly, the Lord also provided a Christian roommate for half of the time.

Each day I sat there racking my brain, trying to think of ways to cheer up Amy. Making her stuffed animals talk and telling her jokes was helpful, and when three friends and I did the “wave” we even got her to grin. But it’s hard for anyone to keep her spirit up in such a painful situation.

Well-chosen Word

Becky, the roommate’s mother, had the best idea. As cards poured in, she copied out one of the Bible verses in large letters on construction paper and put it up on the bulletin board. Since neither of

the girls felt like reading books right then, this put the verse front and center, easily read by all four of us at any moment. The first verse she posted said, “Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer” (Romans 12:12). As more cards brought more verses, we copied them out until the board was full.

There were times when Amy was very discouraged. She wondered if she was ever going to get well, run, laugh, or enjoy life again. She cried, and asked what to do. My response was: “When it’s hard, read the verses, Amy. Just keep reading them, and praying them. And next time it feels too hard, read and pray them again, and God will give you strength and comfort.” I said this to myself as well. This became our plan throughout each miserable day. Those who had sent the cards had chosen Bible texts thoughtfully, but I wonder if they ever realized how extremely valuable those particular verses had become! Each one became our blessed assignment for the days ahead.

At nighttime Becky and I took turns reading the Bible aloud, singing songs of praise and encouragement, and praying together. We called it “camp” but we all knew that the rest of the experience basically stank in comparison to the real one.


Encouragement

As the days wore on, I remembered that Edith Schaeffer had suggested in one of her books that it was important to make

a hospital room as “homey” as possible. So, off I went to the local Staples office supply store.

I took all of the family photos out of my wallet and made 8x10 enlargements of them on a color copier for about 59 cents apiece. Then I bought plastic “sheet protectors.” I put humorous captions on Amy’s siblings’ photos, inserted them into the plastic covers, and taped them together in one long vertical line of smiling pictures. Then, since the bulletin board was full and I assumed the hospital wouldn’t allow tape on the walls, I stood on a chair and taped the top picture to the edge of the drop ceiling. When Amy awakened, she was happily surprised to see her five siblings staring right at her!

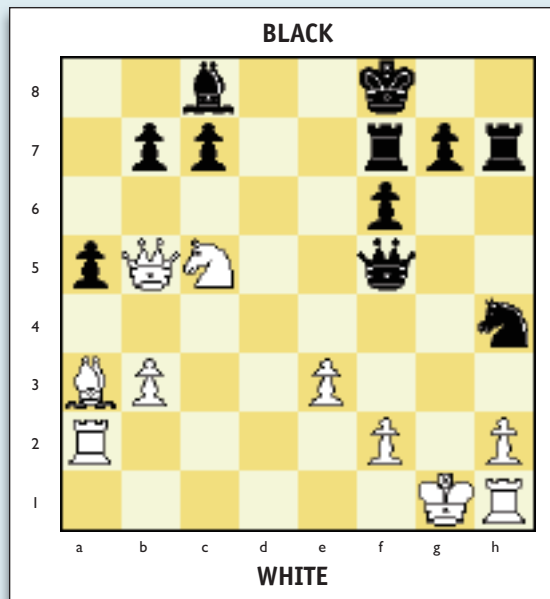
The minister of the church helped put things into perspective when he said, “who knows but that God might want to teach Amy something through this experience that she would not have learned at camp?” Amy learned to take comfort directly from God’s Word. She learned that sometimes we have to do things that are very hard. She learned compassion for those who have to endure CAT scans and surgery, and she learned that there were a lot of people who loved her very much.

Proverbs 17:22 states that “A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones.” Encouragement is so valuable. Perhaps we can encourage someone in the hospital today by sending along Romans 12:12. 

PUZZLE PAGE ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Send Puzzles, Solutions, Ideas to PUZZLE PAGE, 43 Summerhill Place, Winnipeg, MB R2C 4V4 [OR robgleach@gmail.com](mailto:robgleach@gmail.com)

Chess Puzzle # 131



WHITE to Mate in 3

Or, If it is BLACK's Move, **BLACK to Mate in 2**

NEW PUZZLES

Riddles for Punsters #131

Why did the electrician look startled when he read the newspaper?

He was sh_____ to learn that the army had re_____ against the government of Ohmland and met little re_____ because many citizens approved of the sw_____ in government.

Problem to Ponder #131 – “Planely a Problem – Continued”

You are again a mathematician on a plane that has 4 jet engines. The pilot has just found out that the plane was not properly refuelled and has only 8600 litres of fuel left. The plane is 1200 km from the nearest airport. Using 4 jet engines, the plane travels at 1000 km/hour and uses 7200 L of fuel per hour. Using 3 jet engines, the speed is 750 km/h and uses 5100 L per hour. Using 2 jet engines, the speed is 500 km/h and uses 3100 L per hour. Using 1 jet engine, control of the plane is lost.

- What advice should you give the pilot (who wants to finish the flight as safely as possible) if the plane is to land at the nearest airport but due to time needed to put foam on the runway **the landing process will take 20 minutes** after reaching the airport?
- What advice should you give the pilot if the plane is to land at the nearest airport **within 2 1/4 hours** (ahead of an approaching hurricane) and the pilot is sure that it will take **at most 15 minutes to land** the plane once the airport is reached?

SOLUTIONS TO THE PREVIOUS (FEBRUARY) PUZZLE PAGE

Answers to Riddles for Punsters and Geneticists #130

With what 3 initials did the chromosome sign legal documents? **DNA**

Name a teenage chromosome's favourite article of clothing? **genes**

What do you call a really smart chromosome? A **genius**

A chromosome good at inventing things shows a lot of **ingenuity**

What is a friendly, charming chromosome called? **congenial**

Solution to Problem to Ponder #130- “Planely a Problem”

You are a mathematician on a plane that has 4 jet engines. The pilot has just found out that the plane was not properly refuelled and has only 8600 litres of fuel left. The plane is 1200 km from the nearest airport. Using 4 jet engines, the plane travels at 1000 km/hour and uses 7200 L of fuel per hour. Using 3 jet engines, the speed is 750 km/h and uses 5100 L per hour. Using 2 jet engines, the speed is 500 km/h and uses 3100 L per hour. Using 1 jet engine, control of the plane is lost. What advice should you give the pilot if the plane must land at the nearest airport as soon as possible due to a medical emergency and the pilot is sure that it will only takes 5 minutes to land the plane?

There are 8600 L of fuel. Time = distance/speed or $t=d/v$.

If all 4 jet engines are used to maximize speed,

Flight time $t = d/v = 1200/1000 = 1.2$ hours

so fuel used is $(7200 \text{ L/h})(1.2 \text{ h}) = 8640 \text{ L}$ and the plane runs out of fuel even before reaching the airport.

If only 3 jet engines are used,

Flight time $t = d/v = 1200/750 = 1.6$ hours (1 h 36 minutes)

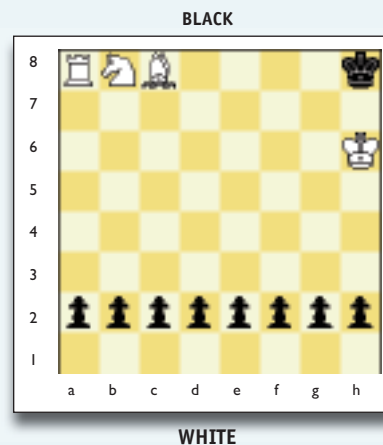
Add 5 minutes for landing and the total time is $1.6 + 5/60 = .683333 \text{ h}$ so fuel used is $(5100 \text{ L/h})(1.683333 \text{ h}) = 8584.8 \text{ L}$

Thus the plane is able to land safely in a total of 1 hour 41 minutes but with a mere 15.2 L of fuel left!

[If the landing takes 6 minutes instead of 5, the total time is 1.7 h and the fuel used is $(5100 \text{ L/h})(1.7 \text{ h}) = 8670 \text{ L}$, so 70 L short!]

SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 130

“8 Potential Queens – To NO Avail”



GENERAL SOLUTION

- N-B6 (Nb8-C6) any pawn move
- B moves to block any queened pawn from checking white's king and block any promoted pawn from (as a queen) moving up to block white's rook's attack on the black king. Therefore, the bishop move produces **discovered check and mate**.

Descriptive Notation

For example,

- N-B6 KRp-R8(Q) ch
- B-KR3 dis.ch. & mate

Or else,

- N-B6 KNp-N8(Q)
- B-KN4 dis.ch. & mate

Algebraic Notation

For example,

- Nb8-c6 h2-h1(Q) +
- Bc8-h3 ++

Or else,

- Nb8-c6 g2-g1(Q)
- Bc8-g4 ++

Crossword Puzzle

Series 14 No 8

Last month's solution
Series 14 No 7

1		2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10	11		
		12					13							14
15	16						17							
18					19						20	21		
22			23		24				25	26		27		
28					29							30		
					31				32		33			
34	35	36		37				38						
39							40							
41				42		43					44	45	46	47
48				49							50			
51						52				53		54		
		55	56	57	58				59		60			
		61								62				
		63								64				

1	C		2	E	3	L	4	E	5	P	6	H	7	A	8	N	9	T		10	R	11	S	12	V
13	M		14	A		15	L		16	I		17	R		18	A		19	N		20	U		21	M
22			23	C		24	A		25	L		26	M		27	A		28	T		29	T		30	R
31						32	P		33	E		34	I		35	T		36	R		37	E		38	S
39						40	D		41	T		42	A		43	A		44	E		45	Y		46	E
47						48	I		49	C		50	E		51	T		52	L		53	C		54	R
55						56	C		57	H		58	A		59	S		60	T		61	E		62	K
63						64	T		65	O		66	R		67	E		68	S		69	E		70	R
71						72	I		73	R		74	E		75	A		76	M		77	D		78	E
79						80	O		81	P		82	H		83	E		84	L		85	I		86	A
87						88	N		89	E		90	A		91	U		92	R		93	N		94	E
95						96	A		97	L		98	L		99	L		100	D		101	E		102	A
103						104	R		105	E		106	I		107	N		108	N		109	A		110	C
111						112	Y		113	U		114	T		115	E		116	F		117	R		118	A
119						120	S		121	E		122	T		123	B		124	A		125	R		126	I

ACROSS:

1. Collect in a pile
6. Caribbean hotspot
12. Competition
13. Artist's friend
15. Detest
17. Unit of measurement about 1000 square meters
18. Gave food to
19. A transgression
20. Every one
22. To eat, in Holland
24. Bike parts
27. Small child
28. Long black gowns worn by Greek clergy
29. Lowers in esteem
30. Employ
31. Interjection of disgust
32. One who gazes fixedly
34. Wall cupboard
38. Siblings
39. An unpaid and overdue debt
40. Political movement in Palestine
41. Start of a song refrain
42. Situated in the middle
44. One who mimics
48. Total organic carbon (abbr.)
49. Decrees
50. S. American country
51. Overwhelming reverence
52. Remote Keyless Entry (abbr.)
54. Cover
55. The king in Proverbs 31
59. Having a tail
61. Dish of leftover meat, sliced thin
62. Sea eagle
63. Spiritual advisors of the Eastern Orthodox Church
64. Sweet liquid

DOWN:

1. One who can be seen on the greens
2. Barter
3. Head covering
4. Repeated sound
5. Sift, or separate, as with grain
6. Good King Josiah's mother
7. Sporting places
8. Waterproof raincoat
9. King of Judah
10. Independent Eval. Review
11. An animal
14. These are needed to percolate coffee
16. Operational Test & Eval. Agency (Army abbr.)
19. Eleventh month of the Hebrew year
21. The one who finishes last
23. A group of people in a particular country, in Dutch
24. Put up wallpaper
25. Injuries
26. Fast jets
33. Alliance for Transportation Research (abbr.)
34. Marsh plant
35. Bow's accompaniment
36. Fashion accessory
37. Personal 'calling'
38. Fine-grained rock
40. Transformed cucumbers
43. Manage a movie
45. Small bullet
46. A Great Lake
47. Boat part
53. Feel concern about
56. Emerg. Medicine Assembly
57. Russian space station
58. A French one
59. Number
60. Business abbr.

