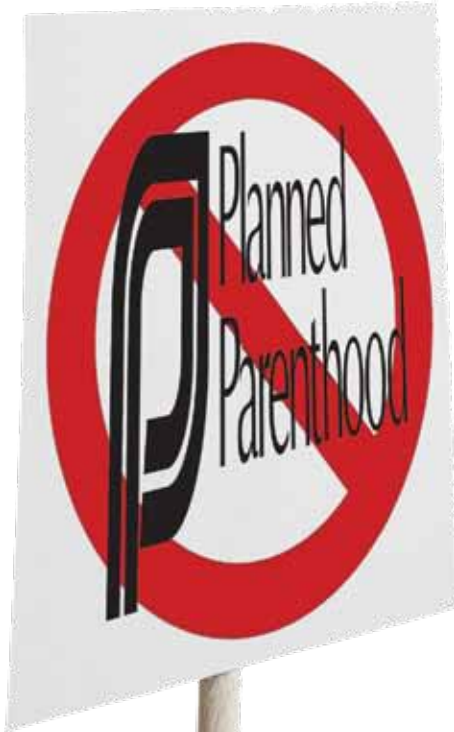


REFORMED
Perspective

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FAMILY**

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**WHAT WE
CAN DO**



Honesty: don't settle for less

Provocative book makes the case that honesty is the bare minimum we should demand from our politicians

by Jon Dykstra

In *How Do You Kill 11 Million People?* author Andy Andrews answers the title question this way: “lie to them.”

The 11-million figure is the total of people institutionally killed by the Nazis between the years 1933 and 1945. It does not include the more than 5 million German soldiers and civilians killed in the fighting, nor the 28 million Europeans killed by Hitler's governmental policies. What this figure does include is the 6 million Jews and 5 million others that, in general, walked to their deaths peaceably and in good order. This enormous number prompted Andrews to ask a question almost as provocative as his title: “What we need to understand is how 11 million people allow themselves to be killed?” He admits this is an oversimplification; many did resist and fought the Nazis. But most did not. Andrews asks:

So why, for month after month and year after year did millions of intelligent human beings, guarded by a relatively few Nazis soldiers, willingly load their families into tens of thousands of cattle cars to be transported by rail to one of the many death camps scattered across Europe?

The answer is that the Nazis used “an intricate web of lies” that was delivered to the Jews in stages. First they were told that the barbed wire fences going up, encircling their neighborhoods, were “temporary necessities of war” and that, as long as they cooperated, they would not be harmed.

The Germans also accepted bribes, which helped convince the Jews that they weren't in any great danger. If the Nazis intended to kill them, so the Jews reasoned, they wouldn't bother with accepting bribes since afterwards they could just take it all.

When the Nazis came to take the Jews to death camps they would often bring only a small number of soldiers. Adolf Eichmann, the man in charge of the Nazi genocide, would show up with “an entourage of no more than 30 local men and officers of his own – many unarmed.”

He would ask the fathers and husbands to help their families onto the waiting cattle cars, explaining that the Russian advances had necessitated moving them to another place, but that it was a wonderful place. They would have work, their wives would stay at home and their children would go to school. The lack of soldiers, and the calm manner of Eichmann's speech, reassured the listening Jews who would then proceed to the train cars where they were crammed into the cars with as many as 100 people in a car designed for just 8 cows. The

door was shut and quickly padlocked. It was now too late – the cars would only be opened once they had arrived at the death camps.

That's how you get 11 million people to walk to their own deaths. You lie to them. And the lies weren't limited to the Jews. The German people were lied to for more than a decade before this point. In his autobiography *Mein Kampf*, Hitler wrote: “The great masses of the people will more easily fall victim to the big lie than the small one.” Ten million copies of his book were distributed across Germany, and, as Andrews writes, “The masses believed him anyway.”

Andrews concludes, “The most dangerous thing any nation faces is a citizenry capable of trusting a liar to lead them.”

Is he arguing that if we allow our political leaders to lie to us we're going to be the site of the next Holocaust?

No, I'm not saying that it *will* happen. I am saying that it *could* happen.... History shows that any people who are sheeplike in following their leadership (so long as their personal self-interests are satisfied) may one day awaken to find that their nation has changed in dramatic ways.

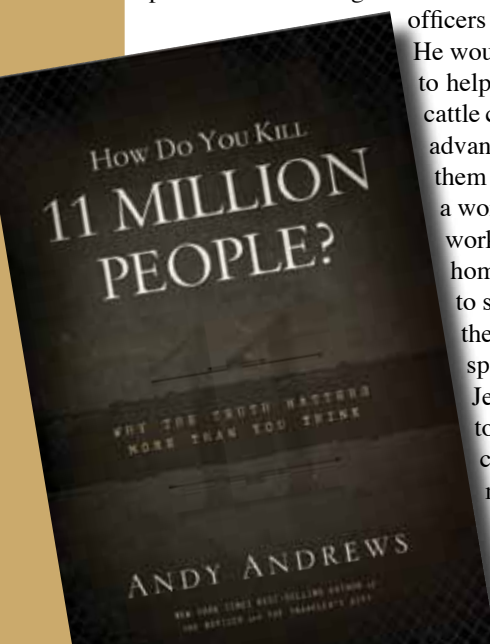
Honesty, then, must be the bare minimum we demand from our politicians.

Are we demanding it?

Honesty doesn't seem a lot to expect from our political leaders, and yet we aren't asking it of them.

This past month the Canadian government passed an omnibus budget bill – a massive piece of legislation that impacts more than 60 different laws. By bundling all this together the Conservatives have prevented serious debate from occurring on any of the individual sections. Back in 2005 when the Liberals presented their own omnibus budget, then opposition leader Stephen Harper objected, “How can members represent their constituents on these various areas when they are forced to vote on a block of such legislation?” It was a good point. Omnibus bills make it impossible to hold MPs accountable for any individual part because they can readily say they didn't necessarily support that particular part, but voted for the bill as a whole. But what he opposed in 2005, Harper is now doing himself. *Leader-Post* writer Bruce Johnstone noted that there was one difference between the two omnibus bills: “the Liberals' budget bill in 2005 was 120 pages, a record at the time, but ‘wafer thin’ compared with the 452-page leviathan [of] the Tories.”

In June pro-lifers learned that six months earlier the Ontario government amended the province's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act so that the act “does not apply to records relating to the provision of abortion services.” Ontario citizens can no longer find out how many abortions their tax dollars are paying



for each year. But it isn't just what the Ontario government did that's offensive; it's how they did it. The amendment was Part VIII of Bill 122: "An Act to increase the financial accountability of organizations in the broader public sector." They hid the amendment in a completely unrelated bill, which is why it took six months to discover what they had done.

Is this honest government?

In his book Andrews asks if we've ever considered why we have a massive and incomprehensible tax code. It's so complicated we have to either hire professional help to figure out how much we have to pay, or spend a week or two of our nighttime hours doing it ourselves. Yet this is an issue on which we could get near unanimous support from voters: make it simpler! So why don't we have it? Because an incomprehensible tax code is a wonderful tool for a government to hide the many different kickbacks and pay-offs they make to the groups they are really listening to.

When we think of dishonest politicians, we most often think of those that have been caught in a lie - Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton may come to mind. But there is another sort of dishonesty that is more prevalent. Our elected politicians are supposed to be accountable to us, so whenever they try to evade that accountability they are not being honest with us. The omnibus bill, Ontario's secret amendment, even the political candidate who tries to get through a campaign without making promises at all - these are the actions of politicians who don't want to be held accountable.

Conclusion

There have been many "bare minimums" proposed for what we absolutely must demand from our politicians. In the US right now some Christians are arguing that we can vote only for a candidate who professes God's name (and that, therefore, Christians should not vote for the Republican candidate Mitt Romney who is a Mormon). Another bare minimum, frequently proposed on both sides of the border, is support for a balanced budget. In our Reformed circles many argue (myself included) that we must not vote for a candidate who won't stand up for the unborn.

But Andrews' minimum is more vital than any other. After all, it doesn't matter what a politician says he stands for or what

What's Inside

The most important moral issue of our time is abortion, which makes the question "What can we do about it?" one of the most important questions. In this issue Maaïke Rosendal presents one answer: **boycott Planned Parenthood**.

Our second feature article gives a brief history of the **bioethics movement** which acts as a secular moral authority for medical research, end-of-life decisions, transplant protocols (who should get organs), and any other ethically problematic areas in medicine. So bio-ethicists have enormous influence. But they don't have real ethics - they've rejected God, and made up their own. A must-read if you or someone you love might ever be laid up in a hospital.

Another not to be missed contribution is Douglas Gregory's thought-provoking argument that **recycling** is often an irresponsible use of the resources God gives us.

promises he makes if he isn't honest.

If we are going to demand honesty, what does that involve? It means researching each candidate's positions, and going to them to get answers if they haven't addressed an important issue. And if they won't answer, they are telling us they don't want to be held accountable on that issue. It means checking on the incumbent's record: has he made promises and kept them? It means encouraging our elected representatives to demand to be held accountable, and congratulating them when they do. And, finally, it means not voting for candidates who aren't being upfront... even if that leaves us with no candidate to vote for.

The vital necessity of honesty is a point we can communicate even to co-workers, friends and neighbors who may not share our political convictions. They might oppose us on abortion, budgetary priorities and foreign policy, and we could still get them to come alongside us demanding accountable, honest politicians in all parties. Andy Andrews' book could be an effective tool towards that end. It has an attention-getting title, can be read in 45 minutes to an hour, is an affordable \$15, and its sturdy hardcover will stand up to repeated readings, making it the perfect lending book. Let Andrews convince your neighbors that next election we should not settle for anything less than open accountable honesty.



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Nota Bene

News worth noting



“Life is wasted without Jesus” T-shirt controversy in Nova Scotia

by Wes Bredenhof

Nova Scotia isn't known as a place where Christian schools flourish. Christians in little towns like Chester Basin have little choice: they can either home school or send their children to the local public school. John Swinimer and his family chose for the latter option.

Their son William ended up in the news recently for his insistence on wearing a T-shirt to school that proclaimed “Life is Wasted Without Jesus.” The Grade 12 student also reportedly attempted to share the gospel with his classmates. He was reported to the school administration. After some discussion, he was suspended for five days. The story caught the attention of media

across Canada. The point at issue: should a student be allowed to wear a shirt with such a dogmatic message about the lives of others?

On May 7, William Swinimer returned to Forest Heights Community School. However, he wasn't there long before his father appeared and pulled him out of the classroom. The school had allowed his son back and allowed him to wear the

T-shirt, but there was a condition. The school would have a “dialogue” about tolerance and teach students about how to express their beliefs without offending others. John Swinimer would not allow his son to have any part in it.

We can applaud the boldness of the Swinimer family. Living in a secular society that values “tolerance,” they've taken a courageous stand. Yet there is another side to this story. It has to do with motivations. Nowhere in the news reports

do we read that William Swinimer cares about the present and eternal welfare of his fellow students. Quite likely he does and perhaps the media has failed to report it. However, in an interview, William's

pastor, Varrick Day, portrayed the issue as one of human rights. Religious freedoms were being restricted, and William was being prevented from sharing his faith. That makes it sound as if this was all about making a point about freedom of speech, rather than genuinely caring about the lost. If we're going to make a statement, let's be sure it's the right one driven by the right motivations.



“Pro-Life Produced” brand launched

by Anna Nienhuis



Sound Choice Pharmaceutical Institute has developed a certification stamp for manufacturers to identify their products as being produced without the use of any aborted fetal material. This would especially apply to cosmetics, vaccines and food additives, as some are now manufactured using aborted fetal cells.

It is hoped this label will start conversations and get people thinking about what they are buying, and also give conscientious consumers a way of quickly recognizing “Pro-Life Produced” or “Fetal Free” products when they are doing their purchasing.

Show targeting Christians is axed

by Anna Nienhuis

ABC has cancelled its controversial show *GCB*, based on Kim Gaitlin's novel, *Good Christian Bitches*, after only a few months on the air, claiming it didn't take off as hoped.

The show's title made it controversial even before it aired. The network went ahead with it, but changed the name to the less obvious *GCB*. It featured a main character who had to “pay for her sins” when she returns to her home town to start her life over amidst all the other “good Christian belles” she knew from high school.

The show did not portray Christians in a good light, but some claimed Christians were only angered because they didn't like what they saw when they looked in the mirror. Others, including the show's star, a self-proclaimed Christian, used the Bible to support the show, arguing, “Christians aren't supposed to judge” so don't judge the show sight unseen. More disappointing than these comments is that this program made it to the air in the first place. It shows that Christians are seen as a group unlikely to fight back when they are ridiculed as hypocrites and their faith and morals are mocked.

Quebec students' protest turns lawless

by Neil Dykstra

In mid February Quebec university students started organizing class boycotts and mass protests to demonstrate against a proposed increase in university tuition fees. The province had announced that it would raise tuition by \$1,625, phased in over five years. That would put average tuition fees at roughly \$3,800 by 2017, but that would still be \$1,700 less than the average rate students across the rest of Canada paid during the 2009/2010 school year.

As the protests continued the student groups' tactics have become increasingly lawless. On several occasions, at the height of rush hour, they have blocked main thoroughfares, public transit systems, or bridges linking the island of Montreal to the mainland, and then defied police orders. Random acts of vandalism all over the province use red paint or dye to declare their support of the cause. The group's strategy includes economic warfare against the government. Crown-owned corporations have been blockaded, and employees have been physically barred from entering their workplaces.

Colleges and universities across the

province have seen groups of masked protesters occupy their premises, refusing to allow classes to continue even in the face of court injunctions. When police have arrived, they've been attacked by rock and bottle-throwing demonstrators, and in one instance an officer was savagely beaten when he became separated from his unit.

College administrators are not helping the situation, as they routinely cancel classes even at the hint of any possible protest action. And professors have, in several instances, even joined in the protests.

Though only one-third of the Quebec student body is participating in the "strike" the demonstrators claim that their demands are the "voice of the people." Quebec's premier, Jean Charest, has attempted to negotiate with the strikers and made concessions on two occasions thus far. However, this seems only to have encouraged the students to make additional demands. Some are now declaring that their movement is about much more than just the tuition increase. Unions, community organizations, and

other activist groups have joined with the movement to lend its support to their own causes. At the present time this has very little to do with student debt and everything to do with power.

In the era that Jesus walked this earth, there were young revolutionaries who wanted to use our Lord's message for their own ends – to overthrow the Romans. Jesus steadfastly rebuked any notion of a rebellion against earthly authority, even against authorities that did not acknowledge his Father. This was echoed by Peter (1 Pet 2:13) and Paul (Rom 13:2). Lawful protest is permitted and encouraged but not rebellion and lawlessness.

Mr. Charest and his government represent the lawful authority in the province of Quebec. But he is neglecting his role when he refuses to protect students, professors, motorists, and even the economy of the province, from the unlawful actions of these protesters. Even more, he fails his people when he legitimizes groups that use threats and intimidation to back their demands.



Students, and their supporters, take to the streets in Montreal on March 22.

photo by Yanik Crépeau www.flickr.com/photos/yanik

Dutchman has replica of Noah's Ark ready to sail

by Anna Nienhuis

Dutch builder Johan Huibers has completed a massive undertaking – building an ark based on the specifications in the Bible. The project took a mere three years, and Huibers spent \$1.6 million on the project, much of which was financed by charging people to ride the Dutch canals in the half-size ark he built back in 2004.

The full-size ark weighs in at close to 3,000 tons and is 450 feet long. Huibers says it is destined to become a “first-class tourist attraction” complete with faux animals, conference

rooms, and a few live chickens, with the possibility of more animals being added later on.

Despite its size and consequent registration as a building, the ark is

seaworthy and may even be floating down the Thames River as a highlight at the 2012 Summer Olympics.

SOURCE: Michael Inbar's "Meet the man who's re-creating Noah's ark"; today.msnbc.msn.com; June 22, 2011



Malthus taken down by NCIS

by Jon Dykstra

Thomas Robert Malthus (1766-1834) could be called the father of the overpopulation myth, the belief that we are, very soon, not going to be capable of producing enough to feed the world population. In a May episode of the TV show *NCIS: Los Angeles* the title team managed to stop a rogue scientist from releasing a deadly virus, and, in the process, also managed to show the flaw in Malthus' thinking. The following exchange happens after the scientist's arrest:

"The earth is dying, and we are the disease. I was just trying to give the planet a fighting chance."

"By killing millions of people?"

"It took tens of thousands of years for the planet's population to reach a billion. We've gone from six to seven billion in 12. You do the math."

"What happened if your pandemic killed the people who could one day solve our problem?...You didn't think about that one, did you? It's alright, you'll have plenty of time to think about that in

prison."

While there are very few real people who would back this fictional scientist's plan, there are many who would agree that the problem she was trying to fix – overpopulation – is a real one. But as the *NCIS* team shows, these overpopulationists look at people the

wrong way, as mere mouths to feed. But God has told us we are so much more... and He has given us work to do. So we aren't just consumers, but producers, with brains we can use to think through problems. Or to put it another way, we have one mouth, but two hands.

SOURCE: *NCIS: Los Angeles* "Touch of Death" Air Date: May 1, 2012



The *NCIS* crew catch their killer.

*...give me neither poverty nor riches;
feed me with the food that is needful for me,
lest I be full and deny You
and say, 'Who is the Lord?'
Or lest I be poor and steal
and profane the name of my God...*

Proverbs 30:8-9

The bicycle

by Christine Farenhorst

Today, headlines such as “Navy Sends Robot Helicopters to Find Pirates” and “Five-Hundred-Pound Teddy-Bear Robot Lifts Injured Soldier Off Battle Field,” are not uncommon. We live in an age of amazing technology – technology most of us don’t even come close to understanding. In the face of such feats, the ordinary bicycle seems a little “old hat.” There are, however, in this 21st century, more than 800 million pedal-driven bicycles in the world, of which 300 million are in China and several million in Holland as well. Globally, bicycles outnumber cars by three to one.

As a little child growing up in my native country of Holland, I vividly remember hoping against hope that a two-wheeler would be my birthday present when I turned nine years old. It was the custom in our family that birthday breakfast times were special. Usually “slingers,” that is to say, streamers, were hung suspended from the ceiling, and the entire family sang a Dutch version of “Happy Birthday” with gusto some time during the meal. After we ate, my father would read a birthday psalm, and in the year I’m referring to, it was the ninth Psalm. He adeptly interjected my name into various places of the Psalm. For example verses 1 and 2 would read: “Christine will give thanks to the Lord with her whole heart; she will recount all of Your wonderful deeds. She will be glad and exult in You; she will sing praise to Your name, O Most High.” The words impressed me.

But I know that I cast furtive glances around the room, and, not seeing anything that resembled a bicycle, I was sorely disappointed. Another year, I thought, would go by without me pedaling down the street, as many of my friends were doing and as all my brothers and sisters were doing as well. Perhaps, however, the hoped-for bike had been stored in the hall. My outlook on the day took an upward curve again. But they were dashed when, after Bible reading, my father held out his hand.

“Here,” he said solemnly, as the entire family watched, “here is your present, Christine, in my hand.”

I knew without a doubt that his hand, however big I had deemed it up to this time, could not contain a bicycle. Trying to smile, I looked up at him.

“Well,” he encouraged, “open my hand.”

It was a game between us. Sometimes his closed hand held a candy, a dropje (a licorice), and I had to try and wedge it out. So I began to try and open his hand. I could not do it and, taking pity on me, he slowly revealed what lay in his palm. It was a key. The miracle of that key did not come to me immediately, and I stood perplexed for a moment contemplating the small metal object. My brothers and sisters were all grinning and so was my mother. My father got up and told me to follow him. He walked through the diningroom door into the hall, ran down the stairs, opened the front door and strode

out into the street. Hard on his heels, I followed. Crossing the street, he made his way to the other side and opened yet another door which led to the bicycle stall where the whole family kept their bikes when they weren’t using them. The key in my father’s hand was used to unlock a small bicycle - a small bicycle with black mudguards and black handlebars. I do not remember any other birthday present (except when I was surprised with a dog on my sixteenth birthday) that made me as happy as this one.

Inventor of the bicycle

On September the second, of the year 1813, the technological genius of my bicycle happiness was born in the village of Keir, in Dumfriesshire, Scotland. A red, healthy-looking baby, he was laid into the arms of a thankful mother, Mary Macmillan, nee Auld. The small bundle was the fifth son of at least eight children, and he was baptized Kirkpatrick MacMillan sixteen days later in the Presbyterian Church of Keir. Because Kirkpatrick was a rather lengthy name to roll off the tongue, he was familiarly called Pate by his brothers and sisters and by the people of Keir.

Being part of a devout family, little Pate was taken to church each Sunday where he learned to sit quietly, listening to the minister preach. He sang psalms and leaned against his mother when the service became too long for him. Pate’s

father was the village blacksmith, as his father had been before him. Life at the smithy was busy – there were horses to be shod, metal repairs to be made, and a fire kept alive in the forge. It was a fascinating world for small Pate. Two of his brothers went off to school – to university to become teachers – and a third brother became an apprentice clerk in a Glasgow warehouse. Nevertheless, Pate became more and more convinced, as he grew older, that there was nothing more he wanted to do than work with his hands. He delighted in tinkering, in making things, in working the forge. His mother and father encouraged him, and told him it was both God’s will in his life and God’s gift for his life.

During his teenage years, Pate broke in young horses, trying them out on the road where ponies and the occasional stagecoach were the only traffic he encountered. As a young man, opportunity came his way. He received an invitation to be apprentice to the chief blacksmith at a nearby castle, Drumlanrig Castle, the seat of the Dukes of Buccleuch. Here young Pate learned to forge iron and fashion wood. Here he became a craftsman. As well, however, he loved animals, becoming the vet for farmers in the area, having a strange natural gift for helping their livestock. A jack-of-all trades, he pulled teeth for both horses and humans, and played the fiddle at weddings.

One day someone brought into the smithy what was then called a “hobby horse,” or dandy horse – a bicycle without pedals. You could place yourself on the horse’s back, propelling yourself

along by placing a foot on the road every few yards. Pate was intrigued by this rather slow mode of transportation, and built himself a copy. He saw clearly that it would work much better if he could figure out a way to turn the wheels of the hobby horse without putting a foot down on the street. Working at his father’s smithy in his spare time, Pate endlessly experimented with treadles, rods and cranks to supply power to the rear wheel, and was able to build a prototype of the first pedal-powered, rear-wheel-driven bicycle, some time in 1839.

He practiced driving his invention on the roads around his home, and this is when the local people first began calling him “daft Pate.” For several years they saw Pate and a fellow apprentice riding something strange with only two wheels instead of the four usually seen on wagons.

“Yon’s a hard way to travel,” a passing man shouted to them, “I doot four wheels is better than twa!”

A test and a trial

In 1842, after about three years of experimenting, Pate decided he was ready to travel all the way to Glasgow on his invention. His goal was to visit one of his brothers who was Rector of the Grammar School in that city. It was seventy miles away – seventy miles of rough, potholed road. His neighbors laughed at him. Only a train or a stagecoach, they thought, could travel that far, certainly not this strange machine weighing only sixty pounds. The young man’s ambition became news throughout the countryside and, on the day that Pate was to start out, the villages along the way had scores of people watching the road to see him pass.

The day was sunny and a fine one for traveling. These were superstitious times, however. Not everyone was allowed to watch Pate pass. There were mothers who took their children indoors when they heard he was approaching, rather than have the wee ones see perhaps the



A Macmillan-style bicycle

Auld De'il, the devil himself. As well, there were those plowing who muttered prayers when they saw Pate glide by on his wheels.

In Glasgow, which Pate reached without any problem, the streets were packed. People poured out of their dark tenements, to see the unusual. They'd never before seen or heard of a man who was able to move on two wheels without putting a foot on the ground. Hundreds of Irish immigrants, newly arrived from a Belfast boat, joined the Scots.

"The mon's around yon corner," someone shouted.

The crowd surged across the street to the corner, determined not to miss anything. And in the surge, a small child, a little girl, was pushed onto the road and grazed by Pate's bicycle when he passed. She was not hurt, but fell to the ground, crying as she did so.

A policeman was alerted to the fact that a child had been touched by the strange vehicle, and came quickly onto the scene. The upshot of the matter was that Pate, daft Pate, was arrested. He was horrified. What would his father and mother say? What would his neighbors think? How would his pastor react?

"You are charged," the policeman said, "with the obstruction of passage."

Pate was put in jail, but to his immense relief, his brother came and put up bail. Consequently, he did not have to spend the night in a cell, but could stay with his eldest brother until his appearance at the Glasgow court in the morning. His bicycle, however, did spend the night locked up.

The magistrate before whom Pate was brought was hard put to charge him. After all, such a thing had never happened in Glasgow before. In the long run, the charge was recorded as: "Riding along the pavement on a velocipede to the obstruction of the passage and the danger of the lieges; and in so doing, having overthrown a child."

"I have come all the way from Old Cumnock," Pate told him, "in five hours."

The magistrate shook his head in disbelief. "You are fined five shillings," he answered.

Pate, still embarrassed and very worried

about what the people in Keir would say when they heard that he had been arrested, took out his wallet and paid.

"Cud I inspect yon machine," the magistrate then said.

"Surely," Pate answered.

Outside the court, Pate proudly explained the pedaling. He showed the magistrate how he had fitted cranks connected by rods to the pedals suspended under the upturned handlebars. He pointed out the iron-rimmed wheels and the carving of a horse's head on the front of the machine. Then, at the magistrate's request, he gave a demonstration and rode the bicycle around the courtyard, doing some fine figure eights for the man's benefit who was, consequently, so impressed that he returned the fine to Pate.

Outside the courtyard, crowds of people awaited Pate. They cheered as he rode out of Glasgow. Children ran after him until he was out of their range. As well, a few men ran alongside him, shouting that they would like to speak with him, that they were interested in how he had made the machine, that they were interested in perhaps coming to an arrangement with him about selling such a machine. But Pate pedaled on, only thinking about going home, away from the embarrassment of having been arrested.

Back home in Keir, family and neighbors crowded into the smithy, eager to hear how things had gone in faraway Glasgow. But Pate had little to say – little to tell regarding his adventure. As a matter of fact, he confided only to his fellow apprentice the actual details of what had happened.

A giving generous man

Pate continued to work with his father in the Keir smithy. He continued to be the local vet, the happy fiddler, and the general helper to all who needed his special expertise. He was surprised one day in 1845 to receive an offer of work from the owner of the Vulcan Foundry who had seen him ride his bicycle into Glasgow. This very wealthy man offered Pate a job, as a consultant of sorts, in his Glasgow firm at a very generous salary. Pate traveled to Glasgow once again

and was introduced to many people who worked at the Foundry, but he did not feel at home in the city. He had made a number of velocipedes in the meantime, for friends and family, but had absolutely no thought of patenting his invention. His father was not getting any younger and needed his help back home, and so back home he went. Not at all stingy with the details of how he had made his bicycle, Pate freely passed on constructive information to any who asked.

In 1855, ten years later, Pate married at age 42. He was happy and content leading a quiet and serene life. His wife, who was twenty years younger, died after ten short but happy years of marriage. Of the six children she bore Pate, only two lived to reach adulthood. Pate's sister kept house for him after the death of his wife, and helped raise the children.

In later life, Pate also tried his hand at designing agricultural machines. He was delighted in his ability to make things, in his ability to use the gifts God had freely given him. He gradually lost interest in the velocipede he had designed, even though copies of his bicycle model were being sold in shops for seven pounds each, not a small amount. Pate did not care a whit about making more money than he needed. He was thankful to God for his life, for having been given a family of his own, for having enough to eat, and for being able to share his talents with others.

Pate Macmillan died in 1878 at the age of 65. Below his name, on the family tombstone in the cemetery at Keir Mill, are inscribed the words: *Inventor of the Bicycle. There is a plaque on his cottage at Courthill which reads:*

1939

The Centenary of the Bicycle
The National Committee on Cycling
Honours the Memory of
Kirkpatrick Macmillan
The Inventor of the Bicycle
He builded better than he knew

Indeed, Pate built well – but not by worldly standards. He built well because he built a life out of thankfulness.



Got a Secret?

Masons have their secrets. We don't.

by Jay Adams

There's nothing esoteric about the Christian faith. There is no secret mystery into which you must become initiated in order to be admitted. It's not like the Gnostic sects where one had to become an initiate for years before becoming a full member. Jesus spoke to this issue plainly when He said in John 18:20:

I have spoken openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues, or in the temple court, where all the Jews assemble, and I didn't teach anything secretly.

Christianity isn't Masonry where you take vows "never to reveal and always to conceal" rituals that you are required to perform in a Lodge meeting. It has always been completely aboveboard about its beliefs and practices.

Indeed, as Jesus said, He always spoke "openly."

If an organization – or pseudo church – has anything worthwhile to offer, let it be open to examination. How can anyone vow to never reveal something before he knows what it is? That is one form of what the Bible calls a rash vow. It is sinful to make a vow that one doesn't know whether or not he ought to keep before he knows what it is he is vowing to keep secret. Suppose, after taking a vow, one were to realize that he must expose the error or sinfulness of what he learns – he'd then find himself in an intolerable position. On the one hand, he'd be obligated to expose it; on the other hand he would have vowed not to do so. That is an unacceptable dilemma, one into which one must never allow himself to be inveigled.

One more thought – if a group of

any sort has something worth becoming a part of, it has no right to conceal it from anyone; but like our Lord said, it is something that should be proclaimed "openly to the world." If it's worthwhile, spread it abroad. Why would you selfishly cling to it as private truth? If it's not something worthwhile, then don't get into it in the first place.

On every score, then, no Christian should ever become involved in a secret society. A fundamental principle of our faith is to preach the message of salvation to all the world. We have nothing to hide.

Dr. Jay Adams is Dean of the Institute for Nouthetic Studies and the author of more than 100 books. This is from his blog which can be found at (www.nouthetic.org) and is reprinted here with permission.



The Economic Boycott

How to fight Planned Parenthood

by Maaike Rosendal

Imagine there is a knock at your door from a small boy who asks if you want to buy candy so he can go to camp this summer. You do not object, and while spotting your favorite candy you casually ask which camp he plans to attend. The boy answers, “The al-Qaeda Youth Program.”

Now that changes things, doesn't it? While you would love to make this child happy by buying his candy, you obviously cannot support the terrorist pursuits of al-Qaeda so you cannot buy the candy.

Now imagine that one of your favorite stores publicly announces its support for an organization that provides abortions. Does that change things for you? The company's goods may mean a lot to you, and it could be very inconvenient to do without them. However, remaining a loyal customer would imply consent for their decision and would actually help fund abortions.

It is very likely that the second scenario is true for at least some of the stores you shop at; they are just not telling you. Brands or stores such as Nike, Johnson & Johnson, Staples, and Red Lobster, to name a few, financially support Planned Parenthood, thereby directly paying for the decapitation, dismemberment and disembowelment of small children. Do we have an obligation to take action?

What is Planned Parenthood?

Let us first consider what the organization being funded actually stands

for. Planned Parenthood was founded in 1916 by Margaret Sanger, a woman who advocated for eugenics through birth control in order to limit the number of people she considered inferior. Today, Planned Parenthood still celebrates her legacy, even comparing her to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

It promotes the “sexual liberation” of children and youth in collaboration with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA),¹ aids and abets human sex traffickers² by performing abortions on their victims without offering help to these victims, or contacting police. It also condones rape and incest by failing to report when a woman comes in for an abortion after having been sexually abused.

As if it couldn't get worse, Planned Parenthood is also the single largest abortion provider in the world. In 2010, the so-called reproductive health care provider was responsible for nearly 330,000 abortions, each of which brutally ended the life of a small preborn child. Planned Parenthood reports having distributed approximately 1.5 million emergency birth control kits in the same year, and while birth control pills occasionally cause an abortion, emergency birth control (also known as the morning-after pill) *usually* does so. That makes no difference to Planned Parenthood since, in their own words, “everyone has the right to choose when or whether to have a child” regardless of how this comes about.

Annually Planned Parenthood reaches

1.1 million people with programs that encourage sexual experimentation, leave out abstinence education, and deny parental rights and responsibilities, thereby perpetuating a cycle of sexual immorality that leaves behind a trail of death and destruction among born and preborn people alike.

Public ignorance of Planned Parenthood's activities, goals and philosophy is its greatest ally because the greater the public education about the organization, the less support there is for it. In fact, the more knowledge people gain about Planned Parenthood's agenda and actions, the more likely they are to actively oppose them as well. It is therefore imperative that we educate ourselves and others, and follow up with appropriate action.

Funding and financial stewardship

Almost half of Planned Parenthood's revenue comes from government grants and reimbursements, and, particularly in the US, pro-life efforts are constantly made to curb this via legislation. At the same time, more than 20 per cent of the enterprise's annual income is derived from donations, largely from corporations that lend support and legitimacy to Planned Parenthood through their philanthropic programs.

That is precisely where we must take an honest look at our own involvement. After all, by buying from companies that support the biggest abortion provider in

the world, aren't we funding the slaughter of the innocents as well?

Proverbs 3:9-10 tells us to:

Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

Wise stewardship of the resources we receive means that we purposely seek God's glory and the advancement of His kingdom, also in our financial interactions. Is it possible to honor the Lord with the wealth He has given us if our purchases pay for an agenda and for activities that are harmful and ungodly?

It is true that the corporations' decision-makers who support the abortion industry are ultimately responsible for the funding of Planned Parenthood, but that is irrelevant for us. In order to refrain from participating in evil, we ought to withhold our financial support for these corporations as much as possible. This is also known as boycotting.

Economic boycott can be effective

The Albert Einstein Institute defines an economic boycott as:

the withdrawal or withholding of economic cooperation in the form of buying, selling, or handling of goods or services, often accompanied by efforts to induce others to do likewise.

Utilizing this tactic in the case of Planned Parenthood not only disassociates us from its agenda, it also exposes the group's evil deeds and brings about change.

How? By economically boycotting these companies, informed pro-lifers make a conscious choice to use an effective tactic that raises the issue to a level where it gets appropriate attention.

While some question their effectiveness, boycotts that are carefully planned and faithfully executed actually have a long tradition of bringing about the desired change. Just recently, Pepsi stopped using aborted fetal cell lines as flavor enhancers after months of pro-life protest and a boycott of the company's

products.³

A famous example from history is the boycott of sugar that was slave-grown, an effort that was organized by William Wilberforce in order to call attention to the inhumane treatment of African slaves. Combined with other efforts, this boycott successfully ended the 18th century slave trade in the British colonies.

Since that time, many have joined in effective boycott efforts at some point in history. Today, when we know about the evil of Planned Parenthood and the fact that our money is often used to fund it, shouldn't we do the same?

LDI's *The Boycott List*

One may wonder how to go about such a boycott but this has been made easy by Life Decisions International, an organization that "is dedicated to challenging the Culture of Death. LDI concentrates on exposing and opposing the agenda of Planned Parenthood." One of its projects educates companies about Planned Parenthood to convince them to stop their financial support.

LDI has also created a list of corporations that refuse to stop supporting Planned Parenthood, and encourages those who care about life and God's commandments to boycott these companies. This *Boycott List* includes corporate names, subsidiaries, products, services and how to contact each company. It can be ordered at www.fightpp.org.

Reproving

In Ephesians 5:11 the Lord instructs us to "have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them." In his commentary, Matthew Henry writes that having fellowship with the deeds of darkness is done not only by committing a sin but also by "commendation, counsel, consent, or concealment" of the sins of others.



He points out that the second part of the text shows we must not only refrain from but also reprove sin in order to not have fellowship with them, and this should be done by witnessing “seasonably and pertinently, in our words; but especially by the holiness of our lives, and a religious conversation.”

In the case of abortion, simply refraining from having one isn’t good enough. In the case of Planned Parenthood, not to use its services doesn’t quite meet biblical standards. We must neither engage in the organization’s works of darkness, nor give consent to them with our financial interactions. At the same time, we are called to reprove in love, in order to hinder the triumph of evil, to seek our neighbor’s welfare, and to bring glory to God’s great name. “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matthew 6:21).

Inconvenience

According to Life Decisions International, at least 283 corporations have already ceased their funding, resulting in a \$40 million loss for Planned Parenthood. Clearly, just as William Wilberforce engaged in a boycott to end the injustice of slavery in his time, those who boycott corporate supporters of Planned Parenthood are attempting to eliminate the greatest human rights abuse of our day.

People often ask what they can do to help make a difference for life. While there is no single way to restore respect for the sanctity of life in our society, one thing is true. The pro-life movement will only succeed to the extent that pro-life people are willing to be inconvenienced. After all, if we say abortion is a terrible

injustice but do not act accordingly to save precious children from being killed, why should anyone believe us?

Endnotes

¹ “Sexual ‘liberation’ of children and youth” by Maaiké Rosendal ARPACanada.ca/index.php/issuesresearch/sexuality/1210-sexual-liberation-of-children-and-youth

² Exposing Planned Parenthood’s cover-up of child sex trafficking liveaction.org/traffick

³ “Pepsi Stops Using Aborted Fetal Cell Lines to Test Flavors” by Steven Ertelt Lifenews.com/2012/04/30/pepsi-stops-using-aborted-fetal-cell-lines-to-test-flavors/



unPLANNED

Documentary
2011, 62 minutes

reviewed by Jon Dykstra

Abby Johnson was raised pro-life but became the head of one of the United States’ biggest Planned Parenthood abortion clinics. In 2009 she left her job and walked down the street into the offices of Coalition for Life, a pro-life group that regularly picketed outside her clinic. She wanted their help; she wanted out; she wanted forgiveness.

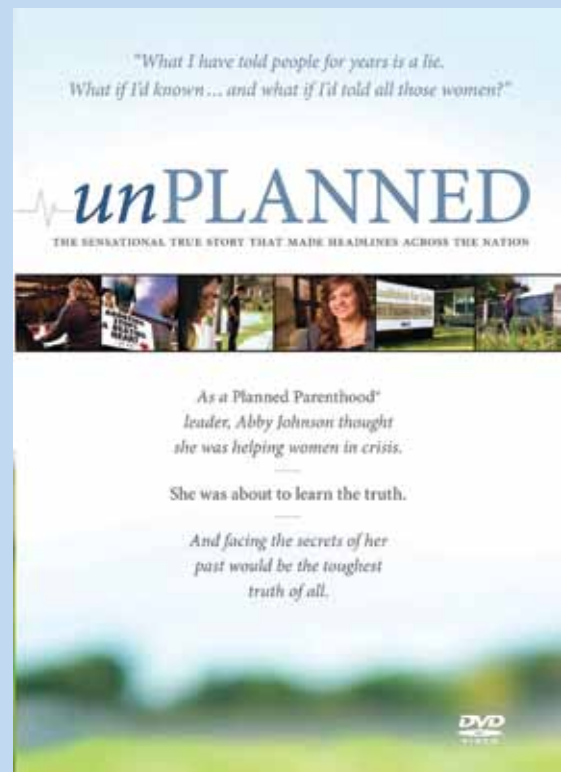
unPLANNED begins by showing us how a young woman can be pulled into the abortion movement: though she was raised by parents who believed and taught her that abortion was wrong, an unplanned pregnancy and an assertive boyfriend pushed Abby towards Planned Parenthood and the “solution” they offered. Then we get to watch as God uses some unlikely means, including a bouquet of flowers from one gracious pro-lifer, to rescue her, and pull her back out.

Her story hit the national airwaves when the Planned Parenthood clinic, in what seems an attempt at intimidating her, sued her. We don’t always understand the means by which God

furthered his plans, but in this instance what Planned Parenthood intended for evil, God very quickly and very clearly turned to good: the lawsuit gave Abby Johnson an opportunity to speak up for the unborn to the nation’s media, and to pull back the curtain at what was going on behind closed doors at Planned Parenthood clinics.

I would recommend this to anyone over 12 with one caution: this is a fantastic pro-life resource, but shouldn’t be used as a theological one. Many of the interviewees talk about God from a distinctly Arminian perspective, which isn’t surprising since many are undoubtedly Catholic (including Abby Johnson).

Abby’s deliverance makes this wonderful to watch, but what originally led her to have an abortion might be the most important part of the film. In our Reformed circles we all believe



abortion is wrong, but have we clearly communicated that to our children? Or might they also be just an unplanned pregnancy away from considering an abortion? That’s a conversation every family needs to have. You can find *unPLANNED* at Christianbook.com.



FAQs about *The Boycott List*

by Jon Dykstra

How does a company end up on The Boycott List?

According to Life Decisions International (LDI) the list includes, “corporations that have donated to Planned Parenthood (PP) at any level, in any amount, within the past five years.” If the company has a change of mind, and promises that they will not be donating to PP in the future, they are taken off the list. LDI notes that the list doesn’t include every company supporting PP, but all those on the list have been “investigated and given ‘due process.’” They have been given information about PP and been asked to stop supporting them.

Why does LDI charge for the list?

This is very important information, so why does LDI charge for this information? Wouldn’t the boycott be more effective if this information was given out to everyone freely? It turns out that LDI used to offer the list free of charge but two things forced them to change their policy. First, “pro-Planned Parenthood people were urged to send for *The Boycott List* in an effort to bankrupt [LDI] – which they nearly did.” Second, to do the research necessary to keep this list accurate and up-to-date requires a lot of money, so they soon realized they had to charge for it. Some have suggested that they distribute *The Boycott List* on their website, but as they note, that means they, “would simply be publishing a list that pro-abortion groups would use for a counter-boycott. And we would have done all the research for them.” So a lot of thought has been put into how this list is distributed.

How can I order a copy?

The Boycott List can be ordered at Life Decisions International’s website FightPP.org. Once there click on “Order Materials” in the lefthand column, which will take you to a page where you can order the list for \$21.50 Canadian, or \$19.95 US. You can buy additional copies for only a few bucks more, so, before you order, it can be a good idea to ask friends and family if they want to get together with you for a bulk order.

Is the Canadian list different from the US list?

No. LDI publishes just one boycott list which is primarily U.S. companies, but the majority also have businesses and/or sell their products in Canada.



Is Planned Parenthood even in Canada?

In Canada the Planned Parenthood affiliate changed its name in 2006 to the Canadian Federation for Sexual Health. According to REAL Women of Canada it is the leading abortion referral service in Canada.

What if I can’t find an alternative to buy instead?

Some companies are harder to boycott than others. For example, it may not be possible to change prescriptions from brands made by boycotted companies. But there still are many companies you will be able to boycott. As the LDI website puts it, “We do not want the boycott to become a ‘religion.’ Do the very best you can, without offering up unreasonable excuses, and you will be serving the cause well.”

Should I write a letter to the companies I’m boycotting?

Yes! The key is to be polite, clear and brief. All the information you need to contact these companies is included in *The Boycott List*. LDI suggests writing as frequently as once every two months.



BEST BOOKS: Small books for big talks *reviewed by Jon Dykstra*

PRE-ENGAGEMENT

by David Powlison & John Yenchko

The subtitle is a good summary of its contents: “5 Questions to Ask Yourself.” Authors Powlison and Yenchko want to help couples assess whether they are ready to marry by asking them pointed and biblically-based questions. Each of the five main questions is coupled with several follow-ups. For example, the first question asks, “Are you both Christians?” In the pages that follow, the authors note what being a Christian means – that God is first in your heart, above all others – and then ask: “Are you looking to marriage to make you happy or complete, to give you identity or purpose? When this happens, Christ is no longer your Lord in a practical way.” The other four questions are just as helpful:

- Do you have a track record of solving problems biblically? (Follow-up questions: “Do you know how to solve problems biblically?” “Where do you need to change and grow to become a wiser person?”)
- Are you heading in the same direction in life?
- What do those who know you well think of your relationship?
- Do you want to marry this person? Are you willing to accept each other just as you are?

At 36 pages this booklet is not comprehensive, but it is a great, and inexpensive (under \$7), way to start assessing your relationship in light of clear, direct, biblical truths.



WHO SHOULD I DATE?

by William P. Smith

Though it is aimed at teens and young people I would recommend this title to parents. They can use it as a very helpful tool to start a conversation with their children about who, and who is not, a legitimate option when it comes to dating.

Dr. Smith begins with a short essay on what character traits to look for, and which to watch out for. Some of them include:

- Actively listens vs. passively hears
- Constructively disagrees, or just disagreeable?
- Giving vs. needy
- Willingly confesses vs. being cornered

He directs readers to the Bible to show what God thinks of these traits, and ends the list by pointing readers to the most important trait of all: that Jesus is the center of their life.

In the second half of the booklet Smith presents these same points as a quiz in checklist fashion where readers can not only assess a potential date, but themselves, too. They should look in the mirror and ask: “Am I dateable?”

Young people are encouraged not to “casually fall into a relationship” but to instead “start by asking yourself at the beginning of a friendship: Should this relationship take the next step in becoming more serious?” This is advice any parent can appreciate.



TEENS & SEX

by Paul David Tripp

Paul Tripp notes, “as Christians we say that sex is a wonderful gift from God, yet we are strangely silent on the topic, and uncomfortable in the rare instance when it is discussed.” Our silence means our teens are turning to the world to get answers to their questions, and that’s the very last thing we want. So silence is simply not an option.

How then can parents equip their children? The first step is to present them with a biblical model of sexuality, and then establish biblical goals for our teens with regard to sex. Tripp convincingly argues that abstinence is hardly a worthy goal – it isn’t even a good bare minimum: “To be physically abstinent is not the same as being morally pure. Moral purity is a matter of the heart. If the heart is not pure, the body will not be kept pure for long.” In keeping with this, Tripp notes that we can’t simply put off the old man (i.e., “Don’t have sex”) but need to provide our teens with a positive “put on” agenda (Eph. 4:22-24). So we need to present them “some practical, godly goals for the teen’s relationship with the opposite sex.” He concludes with a “threefold plan for helping teens” that will give parents a good foundation for the talks (note this is a plural - and not “the talk,” singular) we need to initiate with our children.

The author has packed in a lot to consider and contemplate in this little book. At just 27 pages, it isn’t all that parents should read about this subject but it is a great beginning



All three can be found at Amazon.ca. Jon Dykstra blogs on books at ReallyGoodReads.com.

Is recycling stewardship? Only if it's worth it.

by Douglas Gregory

New York will lay heavy fines on people who do not recycle, and many people think that's a great idea. They say, "Good! We need to recycle to save the planet."

But the truth is, while recycling some items is good, recycling others is bad stewardship.

Recycling seems to make a lot of sense.

The planet is finite after all.

Well, yes and no. All items are eventually recycled given enough time. We can speed up that process with the proper application of energy. Selectively rotting organic material for fertilizer, sifting out metals, or even incineration, all return raw atoms or simple molecules to the environment. But the underlying

question is whether recycling is worth the time and energy put into it.

Steward of time and energy

Recycling takes up energy and resources, more under the individual mandates, like in New York, and less if commercial processes are employed.



Is throwing something away ever the stewardly thing to do? Yes, particularly in the case of glass. A good case can be made that throwing it away is much more stewardly than recycling it.

Now, if recycling a product leaves you at a net loss of resources and energy compared to dumping it and making virgin product, it is stupid to waste money on recycling just because it is a trendy idea. The world is not running out of resources or room, and in the distant future, if that is ever a concern, recycling will then be worth the money, and market incentives will take over.

Glass? No thanks

Making a decision about the total efficiency of recycling is easier than you think – the answer is prices on a free market. Money represents resources, and so if hauling glass to a dump is \$35/ton (U.S. national average), and recycling costs \$150/ton, then that recycled glass must fetch at least \$115 per ton to be viable on the market. Recycled glass does not sell near that price, so it is a net waste of money, time, and resources to recycle glass. Sometimes glass is “downcycled” and used in other applications, like insulation. It may not always be that way. In the future someone will invent a better way to recycle glass, bringing down the price of recycling, and thus incentivizing recycling. When that happen some enterprising individual will have a gold mine in old landfills.

Aluminum is almost worth it

Recycling is sometimes worth the cost. Most metals, but especially steel and aluminum, are recycled because the cost and energy expenditure are low. It takes only one-twentieth the amount of energy to recycle aluminum as compared to refining new ore. For that reason Brazil, which has a large soda industry, recycles close to 90 per cent of its aluminum. Unfortunately, while steel and aluminum recycling may be lucrative on an industrial level, citizens of industrialized nations would be hard pressed to break half the average Canadian minimum wage (\$10/hour) on collecting aluminum cans or scrap steel to sell.

Paper, sometimes

While it is true that commercial processes are almost always more efficient

than individual actions, that does not mean we should totally neglect individual attempts at recycling. Paper recycling is a good example; 91 per cent of paper in the U.S. is manufactured from farmed trees, which would not have been cultivated without demand for paper (so recycling does not “save trees”). Nonetheless in an office setting where hundreds, or thousands, of sheets of paper are thrown out every day, and all simple paper, it is certainly worth it to have a recycling bin. Office paper is easily recycled, and just as easily discarded in one bin compared to another. It does save about 40 per cent of the energy to make virgin paper by using recycled office paper.

However, not all paper is equal when it comes to recycling. Magazine, and other gloss papers, have harsh and not easily removed chemicals applied to the page. Individual recycling efforts at this level are not marketable, and even in the office the quantity of paper usage is closer to industrial style recycling.

Conclusion

Many would ask if *not* recycling harms future generations by depleting the quantity of virgin resources on the planet? The answer is no, for a number of reasons.

First, resources are resources, and require energy and effort regardless of their source. Second, the resources we consume today establish the world our children will live in, including the infrastructure, technology, and wealth we are going to leave them. Third, in the future, price, either by going up, or costs going down, will make recycling more viable, and in that time the trash we used will provide future generations with already easily manipulated resources. In the end, though, industry will make money on recycling, if it is there. Individual efforts are generally wasted.

Douglas Gregory is the Research & Communications Director for the Cornwall Alliance (www.cornwallalliance.org), a group “committed to bringing a proper and balanced Biblical view of stewardship to the critical issues of environment and development.”

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- Send your requests to editor@reformedperspective.ca. Ads will appear in the issue two months after submission (so if you submit in December, it will appear in February).

This is for groups and individuals whose philosophy and worldview is in accord with that of *Reformed Perspective*, so we reserve the right to refuse any ad.

TOP FILMS: 2 very different dramas *reviewed by Jon Dykstra*

Courageous

Drama
2011, 129 minutes

Like *Fireproof*, *Facing the Giants* and *Flywheel* before it, *Courageous* is a sermon wrapped up as a film. But unlike those earlier Kendrick brothers' efforts – where the message took precedence over the moviemaking – this time the sermon has been wrapped up in a really good film!

The moral of this story is that fathers are vital to their kids, and consequently to the whole country. We follow five fathers, four of them police officers, only one of whom seems to be doing a great job as a dad. Another, Adam Mitchell, will seem quite familiar to most of us – he isn't a bad father; he just isn't as good as he could be. Or to put it in his own words, "I'm doing about

half of what I should be."



Courageous begins and ends with a pair of chase scenes which give the Kendricks a chance to show just how good they have become at staging action sequences. These are basically police chase scenes, and they are intense! In the middle of the film we have some comedic scenes that are laugh-out-loud funny, and, of course, plenty of edifying conversations about the challenges of fatherhood.

Two cautions: the comedy and action make this a film that most of the family would enjoy; however, there is one tragic event that makes this too emotional for children, and might make it quite unpleasant for some parents, too. Without giving too much away, one of the five families is struck by tragedy, which is what gets that father to reassess just what he's doing as a dad. It is a necessary plot element, but it turns this from a start-to-finish feel-good movie to one that will take viewers through the full range of emotions.

The second caution would only be not to expect too much from the film. If you're looking for depth, nuance and Academy Award-winning acting, then this isn't for you. The acting's not remarkable but it is solid. And while godly fatherhood is given a compelling presentation here, it certainly isn't a comprehensive one – there just isn't time for that in a two-hour film.

What you will find here is an encouraging, inspiring plea for fathers to get on with the task and privilege of raising their children. If you don't mind being challenged as you are being amused, you'll enjoy it. Edifying and entertaining – it's a rare combination, but the Kendricks have pulled it off!

Like Dandelion Dust

Drama
104 minutes, 2009

Like Dandelion Dust pits two families against each other for the custody of Joey, a six-year-old boy they both claim as their own. The Porters are a troubled couple – in the film's opening scenes we see a drunk Rip Porter being taken to jail for beating his wife Wendy. The Campbells couldn't be more different – Jack and Molly have a big house, a yacht and a happy family life. And they have Joey.

But the Porters are Joey's biological parents. Wendy discovered she was pregnant soon after Rip's arrest and imprisonment, and decided then to give Joey up for adoption. She also decided not to let Rip know about the pregnancy or adoption, so he learns about Joey seven years later after his release from prison. Since Rip didn't know about Joey, he never gave his consent to the adoption, and when he decides he wants Joey back from the Campbells, it turns out he has the law in his favor.

So the big question in this film is, what would you give up for your children? The Campbells don't seem to have any legal means to keep Joey; should they explore illegal options? The Porters are in the right legally, but are they morally right to take Joey back?

This is simply great storytelling, and while it occasionally treads close to melodrama, the superb acting – anchored by Academy Award winner Miro Sorvino (Wendy) – keeps it from straying over the line.



Two cautions: the theme of domestic violence means this film earns its PG-13 rating but only brief violence is shown. Secondly, in my opinion the abusive relationship between Rip and Wendy Porter is treated a bit too lightly – Wendy is too quick to forgive. Yes, we need to forgive one another, but repentance also needs to be genuine. A man who hits his wife must show that his repentance is a clear turning away from that sin, and not just a brief interruption of it.

While *Dandelion* is based on a Karen Kingsbury novel, the Christian presence in this film is quite muted. There is no one doing a gospel presentation. This is simply a good night's entertainment that will engage both your mind and your emotions. It is, however, recommended for adults only because of the nature of the topic matter.

Jon Dykstra blogs on movies at ReelConservative.com where trailers for both these films can be found.

Does our Charter recognize the “supremacy of God”?

“God” in the Preamble doesn’t mean what we want it to mean

by Michael Wagner

The most appealing aspect of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is its Preamble which reads, “Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law: ...”

The Creator is mentioned right at the beginning of the document, and that is especially noteworthy because it was only due to Christian lobbying that He was given such a place. It would seem that the Preamble is a significant achievement.

A multicultural god

Strangely, though, the Charter has been a big disappointment for Christians. On a number of issues – abortion and homosexual rights featuring prominently – decisions based on the Charter seem to favor the anti-Christian position. How can this be when the document itself recognizes that “Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the supremacy of God”? If God is supreme, why do judicial decisions oppose His law? This seems like a contradiction.

Part of the problem is that Christians assume “God,” as mentioned in the Charter, is acknowledging our God, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Reading further in the Charter leads to Section 27, which reads, “This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.” That is, the entire document is to be read in light of our “multicultural heritage.”

Since that “multicultural heritage” includes people from all sorts of beliefs and religions, the reference to “God” refers to an entity that can be accepted by all of these contradictory beliefs and

religions. In other words, the Charter’s God is not our God, but a generic god that doesn’t offend anyone. It is a multicultural god, a god suited for all religions, and not the Christian God.

Quick to dismiss

This understanding of the Preamble was stated in the first Supreme Court of Canada decision dealing with religion under the Charter, *Big M Drug Mart Ltd.*, 1985. This was the decision that struck down Canada’s Lord’s Day Act, a law based on the Fourth Commandment. The Supreme Court wrote:

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.

Here the Court contrasted “God” in the Charter with “an identifiably Christian conception of God.” Clearly, in the Court’s determination, the “God” of the Charter was not the specifically Christian God.

In a later decision of the British Columbia Court of Appeal, *R. v. Sharpe* in 1999, the reference to God in the Charter was dismissed as having no legal relevance whatsoever. This was a case dealing with child pornography. To make a long story short, a lawyer named R. W. Staley (arguing on behalf of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and Focus on the Family) attempted to use the “supremacy of God” statement from



the Charter’s Preamble to argue in favor of restrictions on child pornography. He argued that that phrase pointed towards Canada’s philosophical and legal tradition that included the protection of children (from child pornography in this case).

The judge did not agree. He stated:

I know of no case on the Charter in which any court of this country has relied on the words Mr. Staley invokes. 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.

So, what did the learned judge say about the Charter’s phrase, “the supremacy of God”? He said these words “have become a dead letter.” In other words, they have no force or effect in the interpretation of the Charter of Rights.

Conclusion

It is, of course, very disappointing to see the ineffectual status of the “supremacy of God” phrase in the Preamble of the Charter. The Christians who campaigned to have it inserted in the Charter undoubtedly thought they had really accomplished something worthwhile for the country. From a symbolic standpoint, they did. But the interpretation of that phrase by judges (in light of Section 27) has definitely been very different than what those Christians anticipated.

As depressing as it may seem, there is little good that Christians can expect from the “supremacy of God” clause in the Charter of Rights. Fortunately, our hope is not dependent on any piece of paper.

BIOETHICS:

How did we get into this mess?

by Dianne Irving

“Bioethics” – the word sounds like old-fashioned medical ethics applied to new medical technology. It must involve the application of traditional philosophical and theological principles to the moral dilemmas created by, say, cloning or experimenting with new AIDS drugs, right?

Not really. Like the word “bioethics” itself, which formally dates only from the early 1970s, the philosophical underpinnings of bioethics are completely different from those that underlie traditional medical ethics. Traditional medical ethics focus on the *physician’s duty to the individual patient*, whose life and welfare are always sacrosanct. The focus of bioethics is fundamentally *utilitarian*, centered, like other utilitarian disciplines, on maximizing total human happiness.

This utilitarian approach means that such factors as the feelings and preferences of other people – the parents of a child with severe birth defects, the husband whose wife seems permanently comatose, or even the doctor who decides that an elderly Alzheimer’s patient would be better off dead – along with the possible cost of treatment to society, can weigh in against and ultimately outbalance the afflicted person’s needs. Goodbye Hippocrates; hello Peter Singer. And goodbye especially to the Christian understanding of the sacredness of the life of each individual human being.

The beginning of bioethics

Bioethics as understood and practiced today was created by an American congressional mandate in 1974. During

the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was an explosion of exposés of research abuses in medicine, and also of ethical dilemmas created by new life-prolonging technologies.

There were reports of patients enduring agonizing deaths, spending their last days – or even last weeks or months – hooked up to mazes of tubes and impersonal machines. Nursing homes and hospitals seemed to be overflowing with the hopelessly ill who were apparently consuming scarce medical resources.

There were also revelations that entire non-consenting populations – orphans in institutions, poor black men recruited by the Tuskegee Institute, prisoners, the mentally ill, residents of inner cities – had been used as human guinea pigs in government-sponsored medical experiments. Aborted fetuses were rapidly becoming prized biological materials for medical investigation, raising serious moral questions. And so, bioethics was formally “born.”

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Senator Edward Kennedy, the Massachusetts Democrat, and Senator Walter Mondale, later to become Vice President under President Jimmy Carter, conducted hearings on many of these abuses. The result was a piece of federal legislation called the *1974 National Research Act*. It required the secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (now Health and Human Services, or HHS) to appoint a commission to “identify the basic ethical principles” that the federal government should use in resolving these extraordinary dilemmas. Those “ethical principles” were to be translated into practice as the basis of

federal regulations concerning the use of human subjects in research.

The Belmont Report

In 1974, Casper Weinberger (President Gerald Ford’s Health, Education, and Welfare Secretary) appointed an eleven-member commission that in 1979 issued a document called the *Belmont Report*, which identified and defined three ethical principles:

1. Respect for persons
2. Justice
3. Beneficence

To this day, those principles are called “the Belmont principles” – “principlism” for short, or simply “bioethics.”

The Belmont principles became the foundation for the guidelines that the Office for Protection from Research Risks uses when assessing the ethics of using human subjects in research. They also underlie a host of other federal regulations and guidelines for medical research, and they have worked their way into the private sector as well. Universities and hospitals routinely use – or try to use – the three principles when approving research projects, deciding who qualifies for certain medical treatments, and even who lives, who dies, and who makes those decisions.

Thus, bioethics is really a brand-new ethical theory, a brand-new way of determining right and wrong. How did we get there? How did it come about that our government and its non-elected experts, rather than religious leaders or even traditional philosophers, acquired

the power to define what is normatively ethical for all Americans facing complex medical or scientific issues?

A short history of medical ethics

The discipline of medical ethics goes back to ancient times, to the Greek physician Hippocrates (about 460–380 B.C.) who was concerned about the qualities of “the good physician” and the decorum and deportment that a physician should display toward patients. The good physician was, in Hippocrates’ view, a “virtuous physician,” whose duties included helping rather than harming the sick, keeping patients’ confidences, and refraining from exploiting them monetarily or sexually. Hippocrates’ code of conduct strictly forbade abortion and euthanasia. The paradigm of those duties was the Hippocratic oath, which most medical schools routinely administered to their graduates until relatively recent times.

During the Middle Ages, a more Christian and communal view of Hippocratic medical ethics prevailed that required physicians to present themselves to the public as “professionals” and to show themselves as worthy of trust and authority. Medicine became more than a physician–patient relationship. Its practitioners now had the sole privilege of educating, examining, licensing, and disciplining other physicians, who pledged themselves to use their skills to benefit society at large as well as their own patients.

Starting in the late 19th century, with the rise of medical schools and teaching hospitals, traditional Hippocratic ethics began to incorporate new rules governing the behavior of physicians toward each other. There developed what was called an “ethics of competence,” especially in the practice of medicine in hospital settings. The emphasis was now on extensive cooperation among physicians and all the other professionals involved in the care of patients. Accurate record–keeping and written patient evaluations became the norm. Physicians were supposed to inform their patients about their diagnoses and courses of treatment and not to exploit them for teaching purposes. Senior doctors

were not supposed to exploit junior doctors. “Moral practice” was defined as “competent practice,” including the mastering of advances in medical science.

After World War II, new medical research and technologies began to complicate patient care, thanks to massive federal funding of the health sciences. The crucial bonds of the physician–patient relationship were beginning to fray. Traditional Hippocratic medicine was breaking down rapidly, seemingly impotent in the face of pressing new questions such as:

- Could one experiment on dying patients to “benefit” other “patients”?
- How should the growing intertwining of medical practice and government, commerce, and technology be handled?
- How should the benefits and burdens of medical research be justly distributed, or scarce medical resources allocated?
- And who should make these decisions? Patients? Their families? Physicians? Clergy? Experts?

The conferences

Starting in the 1960s, there were a series of conferences around the country on such issues as population control, thought control, sterilization, cloning, artificial insemination, and sperm banks. One of the first, the “Great Issues of Conscience in Modern Medicine” conference at Dartmouth College in 1960, hosted an array of scientific and medical savants, including microbiologist Rene Dubos of the Rockefeller Institute, physician Sir George Pickering of Oxford University, and Brock Chrisholm, a leading medical light of the World Health Organization, together with such famous humanists as C. P. Snow and Aldous Huxley.

The hottest topics were genetics and eugenics. Dubos declared that the “prolongation of the life of aged and ailing persons” and the saving of lives of children with genetic defects – two benefits of post-World War II advances in medicine – had created “the most difficult problem of medical ethics we are likely to encounter within the next

decade.” Geneticists worried that the gene pool was becoming polluted because the early deaths of people with serious abnormalities were now preventable. The Nobel Prize–winning geneticist Hermann Muller offered his own solution to that problem: a bank of healthy sperm that, together with “new techniques of reproduction,” could prevent the otherwise inevitable “degeneration of the race” that might ensue thanks to medical advances that allowed the defective to reproduce.

At another conference, “Man and His Future,” sponsored by the Ciba Foundation in London in 1962, the luminaries included Muller; Joshua Lederberg, winner of the Nobel Prize in medicine; the geneticists J. B. S. Haldane and Francis Crick; and the scientific ethicist Jacob Bronowski. As at Dartmouth, concerns about human evolution, eugenics, and population control were primary. The biologist Sir Julian Huxley declared, “Eventually, the prospect of radical eugenic improvement could become one of the mainsprings of man’s evolutionary advance.” Huxley proposed a genetic utopia that would include strict government controls over physiological and psychological process, achieved largely by pharmacological and genetic techniques. They would include cloning and the deliberate provocation of genetic mutations “to suit the human product for special purposes as the world of the future.”

Other conferences of the 1960s delved further into the implications of science for the modern world. One was a series of Gustavus Adolphus Nobel meetings in Minnesota in which many Nobel winners participated. At the first of them, in 1965, where the theme was “genetics and the Future of Man,” the Nobel physicist William Shockley presented his maverick views on eugenics. He suggested that, since human intelligence was largely genetically determined, scientists would embark on serious efforts to raise the human race’s collective brainpower by various means, including sterilization, cloning, and artificial insemination.

Also evolving during this time were new concepts of scientific and medical ethics and the possible roles that professional ethicists and theologians should play in the critical debates over the new standards of

The Tuskegee syphilis experiment

by Jon Dykstra

For forty years, from 1932 to 1972, the US government ran an experiment on 600 rural black men in Tuskegee, Alabama. While pretending to treat these men for “bad blood,” a local term used to describe anything from anemia to fatigue, the intent was instead to study the natural progression of untreated syphilis. After the 1940s penicillin was recognized as an effective cure for syphilis, but scientists withheld both the cure, and information about it, from their subjects. Victims of the study included many men who died from the diseases, but also their wives who contracted it, and those of their children who were born with congenital syphilis. The experiment was halted only after information was leaked to the press. Outrage over these experiments were one of the prompts for the 1974 *National Research Act*.



A researcher draws blood from one of his subjects/victims.

right and wrong. Most of the savants of the 1960s espoused a then-fashionable ethical relativism, which raised concerns among some theologians and philosophers about the wisdom of allowing the scientific elite to develop policies outside the constraints of traditional ethical principles.

Some theologians, such as the Christian ethicist Paul Ramsey, persisted in proposing distinctly theological principles and values to guide such deliberations. Others, philosophers, especially those of the reigning “analytic” school in America and Britain, proposed that secular philosophical principles should serve as the sole guidelines for public policy. Some in that group, such as James Gustafson of Emory University, argued for trying to reach a “consensus” of society on medical ethics, rather than looking to traditional norms.

The result was the secularization of both theology and philosophy for public policy purposes. For example, Reed College in Portland, Oregon, sponsored a conference in 1966 titled, “The Sanctity of Life.” It included a lecture by the sociologist Edward Shils

titled, “The Secular Meaning of Sanctity of Life.” Daniel Callahan, later to found The Hastings Center, a leading bioethics think tank, pressed for formulation of a new normative medical ethic that would be influenced solely by secular moral philosophy. Most agreed with Gustafson’s proposal that “consensus” would be the method of achieving that formulation. This sort of thinking would become a major characteristic of the new field of bioethics yet to come.

The think tanks

As the 1970s approached, the debates and their participants moved from conferences at universities to permanent think tanks. Callahan and William Gaylin set up The Hastings Center outside New York City in 1969.

The first “research groups” at The Hastings Center addressed such issues as death and dying, behavior control, genetic engineering, genetic counseling, population control, and the conjunction of ethics and public policy. In 1971, the first volume of the *Hastings*

Center Report appeared, a publication that was to become a bible of secular bioethics, which was just then acquiring its name. As Albert Jonsen, a pioneer of bioethics who taught at the University of Washington, noted in a 1998 book, *The Birth of Bioethics*, “The index of the *Hastings Center Report* over the next years defined the range of topics that were becoming bioethics and constituted a roll call of the authors who would become its proponents.”

Under the leadership of the Dutch fetal-development researcher Andre Hellegers, the Kennedy Institute of Ethics (originally named the Kennedy Center for the Study of Human Reproduction and Development) opened at Georgetown University in 1971. Its mission was to study the ethical issues involved in reproductive research in a Catholic context, even if it was a generally liberal Catholic one. Such scholars as the Rev. Richard McCormick, S. J., a Catholic bioethicist of decidedly liberal views, and later, Edmund Pellegrino, a more traditionalist Catholic bioethicist, worked out of the Kennedy Institute at various

times. Also in the 1970s, a Protestant counterpart to the Kennedy Institute opened with Dr. Edmund Pellegrino as its first Director, the Institute on Human Values, sponsored by the United Ministries in Education, a partnership of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches.

Many of the conference participants of the 1960s and the think-tank scholars of the 1970s were among those testifying before the Mondale and Kennedy congressional hearings that led to the passage of the *National Research Act of 1974*. Many in this army of secular scholars also sat on the committee that later issued the *Belmont Report* with its three principles. Those scholars were the midwives at the formal “birth of bioethics” that the 1974 act mandated. They were also the first formally designated “bioethicists.”

Belmont principles: no firm foundation

The three Belmont principles — respect for persons, justice, and beneficence —

were supposedly derived from the works of leading secular moral philosophers of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, chiefly Kant, John Stuart Mill, and John Rawls, a highly influential Harvard University philosopher whose 1971 book, *A Theory of Justice*, was a blueprint for certain radically egalitarian legal and social theories of the 1970s, such as affirmative action and wealth redistribution.

Predictably, the new bioethics was anything but systematic. The commission selectively took bits and pieces from different and contradictory ethical theories and rolled them up into one ball. Furthermore, each of the three principles of the new bioethics was *prima facie*: no one principle could overrule any of the other two. In dealing with real-life medical and scientific problems, the bioethicist was supposed to simultaneously reconcile the values of all three principles.

Inevitably, theoretical cracks began to form in the very foundation of this new bioethics theory. In fact, because the Belmont principles were derived from bits

and pieces of fundamentally contradictory philosophical systems, the result was theoretical chaos. More problematically, when people tried to apply the new theory to real patients in medical and research settings, it didn’t work because, practically speaking, there was no way to resolve the inherent conflicts among the three principles.

What sort of beneficence?

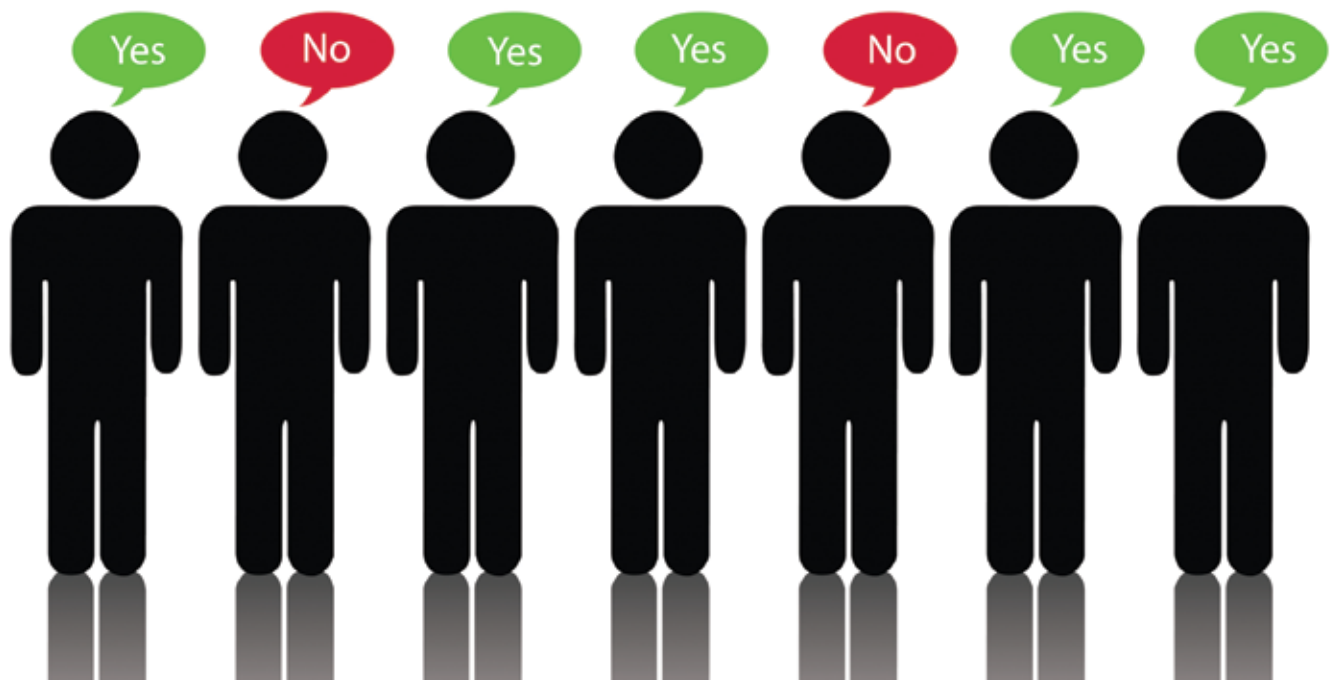
Furthermore, while the *Belmont Report* gave a nod to the traditional Hippocratic understanding of beneficence as doing good for the patient, it also included a second definition of beneficence that was essentially utilitarian: doing “good for society at large.” The report even declared that citizens have a “strong moral obligation” to take part in experimental research for the greater good of society. This obviously contradicts the Hippocratic interpretation of beneficence, and it also violates time-honored international guidelines, such as

CONSENSUS ETHICS

by Jon Dykstra

Morality is grounded in God’s character, and because He is unchanging, morality — right and wrong — is unchanging as well. But what if you reject God? Then on what basis do you decide what is right and wrong? One suggestion by secular bioethicists is “consensus ethics” which is a sophisticated way of saying that the majority can make something moral.

So if a majority of judges rule that a black man is property (as happened in the US Supreme Court’s 1857 Dred Scott decision) or a legislative majority says that we should forcibly sterilize some to improve the gene pool (as happened in Alberta in 1937), this type of ethics might very well declare these acts as ethical.



the Nuremberg Code and the Declaration of Helsinki, which bar physicians from experimenting on their patients unless it is for the patient's benefit.

This is justice?

The second Belmont principle, justice, was also defined along utilitarian lines, in terms of "fairness" – allocating the benefits and burdens of research fairly across the social spectrum. This Rawls-influenced definition is very different from the classic Aristotelian definition of justice as treating people fairly as individuals.

What is a "person"?

Even the third Belmont principle, respect for persons, ended up serving utilitarian goals. Respect for persons is supposed to be a Kantian notion, in which respect for the individual is absolute. But the *Belmont Report* blurred that idea with Mill's utilitarian views of personal autonomy. In Mill's view, only "persons" – that is, fully conscious, rational adults capable of acting autonomously – are defined as moral agents with moral responsibilities.

However, those incapable of acting autonomously – infants, the comatose, those with Alzheimer's – became defined in bioethics theory as non-moral agents and thus "non-persons" with no rights. It is only a short step from this kind of reasoning to that underlying Princeton ethicist Peter Singer's "preference" utilitarianism, in which animals have more rights than young children.

Breaking ranks

Eventually, discontent began to smolder within the brave new discipline. Even the founders of bioethics have recently admitted that the Belmont principles present grave problems as guidelines for physicians and researchers. The Hastings Center's Callahan has baldly conceded that after 25 years, bioethics simply has not worked. The University of Washington's Jonsen recently wrote that principlism should now be regarded as "a sick patient in need of a thorough diagnosis and prognosis." Gilbert Meilaender, a

Christian medical ethicist at Valparaiso University, has noted, "how easily the [reality and worth of the individual human] soul can be lost in bioethics."

Another reason for the theoretical and practical chaos surrounding bioethics these days is that almost anyone can be a bioethicist. Few "professional" bioethics experts – the doctors, researchers, and lawyers who sit on hospital and government bioethics committees – have academic degrees in the discipline, and even for those few who do, there is no uniform or standardized curriculum. Most professors of bioethics don't know the historical and philosophical roots of the subject they teach; the courses vary from institution to institution; there are no local, state, or national boards of examination; and there are no real professional standards. There is not even a professional code of ethics for bioethicists.

Because of these criticisms, many bioethicists now prefer to say that their field is more a form of "public discourse" than an academic discipline, a kind of "consensus ethics" arrived at by democratic discussion rather than formal principles.

The problem with this line of reasoning is that the ethical principles used in the "discourse" are still the same-defined bioethics principles, and those who typically reach the "consensus" are the bioethicists themselves, not the patients, their families, or society at large. So the process is not exactly neutral or democratic. And if bioethics is just a "discourse," then why are its practitioners regarded as "ethics experts"?

Furthermore, the three principles of bioethics – respect for persons (now almost always referred to as autonomy), justice, and beneficence – still pop up everywhere in the literature of a myriad of public policymaking bodies with jurisdiction over medical, social, and political decisions.

The principles of bioethics now also pervade the "ethics" of other academic disciplines, such as engineering and business. Many colleges, universities, and medical schools require a course in bioethics in order to graduate. Bioethics has also heavily influenced legal and media ethics and is even taught in high

schools.

Furthermore, the principles of bioethics themselves have led to radical consequences. Peter Singer is teaching undergraduates at Princeton that the killing of even healthy human infants can be "ethical." Or ponder the thought of Tristram Engelhardt, a bioethicist on the faculty of the Baylor College of Medicine:

Persons in the strict sense are moral agents who are self-conscious, rational, and capable of free choice and of having interests. This includes not only normal adult humans, but possibly extraterrestrials with similar powers.

Bioethicist Dan Wikler of the World Health Organization has declared, "The state of a nation's gene pool should be subject to governmental policies rather than left to the whim of individuals."

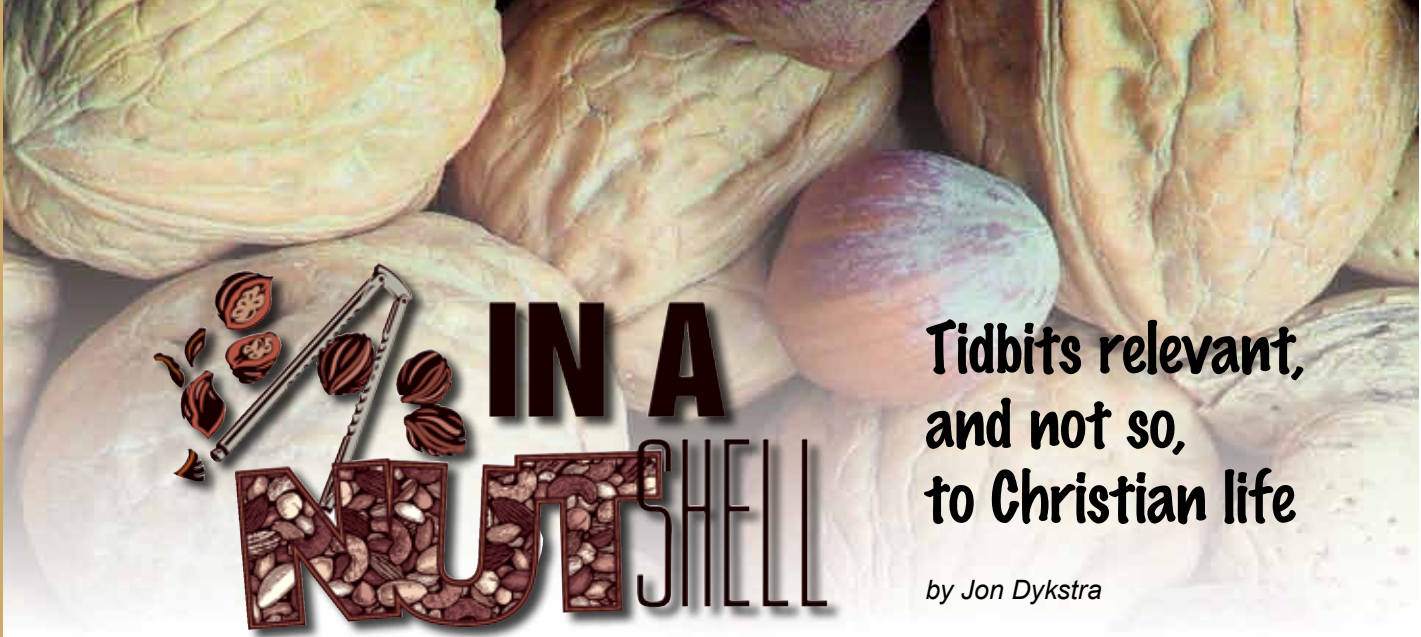
Conclusion

As bioethics supplants traditional ethics before our very eyes, few seem to question its underlying premises. But we should know it for what it is: a form of extreme utilitarianism in both its theoretical and practical forms.

It bears no relation to the patient-centered Hippocratic ethics that for nearly 2,500 years required physicians to treat every human being in their care as worthy of respect, no matter how sick or small or weak or disabled. It certainly bears no relation to Christian medical ethics, which continues the Hippocratic tradition in light of biblical teachings. And bioethics offers little concrete guidance to physicians and scientists even on its own terms.

Perhaps one of these days, society will come to grips with the moral and practical mess that bioethics has created, and replace it. This time society will perhaps not rely so heavily on the self-proclaimed scientific and moral experts.

This article was first published as "The bioethics mess" in Crisis Magazine, Vol. 19, No. 5, May 2001, and is reprinted with the permission of its author, Dr. Dianne Irving.



Tidbits relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

Some quotes age well

“The urge to save humanity is almost always only a false-[front] for the urge to rule it.”

H.L. Mencken’s (1880-1956) words targeted Christian missionaries heading off to “foreign parts.” But a quote that was insulting in its original context has become something else today, when we have would-be environmental, economic, educational and political saviors, all of whom are demanding more control and more power. Mencken’s insult has become insightful.

The real thing

In Charles Martin’s *When Crickets Cry*, the main character has a frank conversation about pornography with a young man named Termite.

“Your mind imprints images, especially that kind, on the heart, so that ten and fifteen years down the road, when you’re married and trying to make something out of your life, they come drifting back, bubbling up and reminding you how much greener the grass is outside your own bed. I have loved one woman in my lifetime...she’s been gone five years, but, I’ve got enough memories to last a lifetime, and I wouldn’t sell you a single one for every picture in every magazine around the world.”

...Termite scoffed and shoved the last

bite of jerky into his mouth, “How would you know? You just said you’ve loved only one woman. I think you need to test-drive a few cars before you buy one.”

“You can buy that lie if you want, but if you’re working for a bank, you don’t study the counterfeit to know the real thing. You study the real thing to know the counterfeit.... From out of the heart, you speak. You put that crap in your heart, and you can’t help but find it coming out your mouth. It’ll color and flavor your whole person. Pretty soon, it’ll eat you up.”

In the interests of the students

John A. Tamminga, a columnist in the Christian Reformed publication *Christian Courier*, recently wrote about some educational highs and lows he received while attending Reformed schools. He described three teachers that challenged his class to exceed expectations, but noted that “those who are honest will also recall in their own journeys teachers who mailed it in” and found “conformity easy” and simply “became like their colleagues.” He is very pointed as to where the blame for this mediocrity lies:

...our schools have erred generously on the side of compassion for teachers with performance issues. Compassion for a single person has too often trumped compassion for literally generations of students who must endure ineffectual pedagogy.

To avoid making this same mistake our Canadian Reformed schools must remember their purpose – that we have created them to educate the next generation, not employ the present one.

SOURCE: “Christian schools and teacher firing,” *Christian Courier*, Dec. 12, 2011

When cults flourish

Some cults are started by charismatic figures with large egos – they are quite happy to have the attention on them rather than God. But on a recent post to his blog, Jay Adams explains that sometimes it is the Church that is to blame for the rise of a cult:

...as someone has said, “Cults are the unpaid bills of the Church.” What does that mean? Simply this – whenever the church of Jesus Christ fails to emphasize some truth, and becomes imbalanced in one direction or another, it leaves room for a cult to creep in and take over that area of theology which it has neglected. You didn’t pay your bill, so someone else moves in to take possession of what was your God-given responsibility to teach in the first place. Take the days in which there was little emphasis upon eschatology. The Adventist cults gained favor. The period in which there was little concern for pastoral care led to the beginnings of the healing cults.

SOURCE: “One way cults begin,” April 18, 2012, Nouthetic.org/blog

Make it deadlier

Scientists have engineered new strains of the deadly avian flu virus. Why?

by Margaret Helder

Since September 2011, rumors have circulated in the biomedical research community that the spectre of a man-made nightmare may be closer to reality than we like to think. The fears center on a new strain of the influenza (flu) virus being used as a biological weapon. Concerning the situation, one expert declared that safety and control considerations have come “far too late” and, indeed, “This horse is out of the barn” (*Nature*, Dec. 22-29/11).

However, life seems to be continuing as normal, so what do these dire statements mean? To understand the situation, we need to look back almost a century.

1918 pandemic

In 1918 an estimated 50 million people around the world died as a result of the

“Spanish flu” pandemic. Of those who were infected by the virus, about 2.5% died. Many were young and previously healthy.

Where did the virus come from and why is it not plaguing us now? Virologists suspect, based on sequencing of DNA in various viruses, that the strains most dangerous to people come from animal hosts. The flu virus has been identified in a variety of organisms such as horses, dogs, cats, and farm animals like chickens and pigs. It has also been found in camels, whales, ferrets and seals. And experts now believe that wild aquatic birds and domestic ducks represent a reservoir of the virus most likely to threaten people.

Within the past fifteen years virologists set out to discover more about the Spanish flu of 1918. That’s certainly understandable, as this was an incomparably catastrophic event. We

know of no other agent that killed more people in less time than the Spanish flu.

Tracking down an old virus

To study the virus scientists had to obtain some specimens, which was not an easy task. In 1997 someone traveled to a remote region of Alaska to recover some tissue from an Inuit victim who lay buried in the permafrost. These samples were then compared with others from the lungs of World War I soldiers who had died of the infection. Analysis of these samples allowed the scientists to piece together genetic information and so genetically engineer the pathogen in the lab.

Then in 2005 scientists discovered that the 1918 virus is very much like influenza viruses found only in birds. This H1N1 virus was unlike most flu viruses infecting people today. Thus these experts concluded that the virus was a pure avian (bird) virus that jumped directly from birds to people. This is unlike the situation in 1957 (Asian flu H2N2) and Hong Kong flu of 1968 (H3N2) in which the flu (from whatever source) appears to have exchanged some genes with a human flu virus and then mutated further into a form for which people had no immunity.

Apparently the 1918 flu virus no longer represents a major threat against society. Its descendants have been present for years, and antiviral drugs and vaccines seem effective against even the original strain. In 2009 there was considerable panic when another H1N1 pandemic was declared, but in the end the numbers who died from it were comparably low - 18,500 people died from this virus (and the death rate was just 0.03 per cent) while as many as a quarter of a million people die every year from seasonal flu infections.



Emergency influenza field hospital in Kansas, 1918

(Image: National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, D.C.)

Avian flu today

It would seem that there are few pressing concerns at present as far as influenza is concerned. Unfortunately, that is not the case.

The H5N1 virus was first isolated from a goose in southern China in 1996. Then the next year the virus was not only observed killing domestic poultry in Hong Kong, but it also infected 18 people of whom six died. Local authorities ordered the destruction of all domestic poultry in Hong Kong.

Then in 2003 the virus appeared again in Hong Kong and China. Between 2003 and 2011 this avian flu spread through bird populations across Asia. In 2004 the virus first surfaced in South Korea, but spread astonishingly rapidly throughout southeast Asia. Two hundred million domestic birds were slaughtered, but the epidemic reappeared. None of this is good news, but the really scary thing is that this virus infected some of the people who came into contact with the sick birds. Even more terrifying is the *60 per cent death rate* of people infected by this virus.

Newspapers in 2004 and 2005 began to call attention to a rising level of concern by experts. For example, an article in the *Edmonton Journal* (Jan. 25, 2005) declared:

[V]irologists and epidemiologists grow increasingly alarmed about the spread of the bird flu in Southeast Asian countries.... They are worried the form of the flu – known as H5N1 – has taken root in the region, and it's now inevitable it will mutate into a human form of influenza that will sweep the world.

Making it deadlier

Two laboratories, one headed by Ron Fouchier at the Erasmus Medical Center in Rotterdam, the other by Yoshihiro Kawaoka of the University of Wisconsin at Madison (and the University of Tokyo), set out to discover why the H5N1 virus is so lethal and how to stop it. Working in biosecure laboratories (but not with

the highest level of security), both teams developed new strains of the virus that were transmitted from ferret to ferret merely by breathing the same air. Ferrets are a laboratory animal of choice for such work because they react to viruses much the way people do.

Whereas previously it had been observed that people could become sick with the virus only if they had direct contact with a sick bird, now the virus may potentially be able to spread from person to person. What is more, the Dutch version of the virus was highly pathogenic, killing about 25 per cent of the ferret victims. Nobody knows if the virus would be similarly lethal in people, but the wild type of H5N1 kills about 60 per cent of infected people. So now a new form of the virus has been artificially produced which may be extremely lethal and which can possibly spread from person to person, even without direct contact. This was cause for concern indeed! The hand wringing began in earnest.

Sharing deadly knowledge

Before any of this was known, Dr. Fouchier, who surely must understand the implications of his results, delivered a lecture on his work in September 2011 at the annual conference in Malta of the European Scientific Working Group on Influenza. The Dutch government requires that researchers obtain an export permit before dual use information is published outside the country. Dual use means that the work involves both good uses and bad uses. Nevertheless the results of this work were widely disseminated before there was any concern raised about publication of sensitive information.

The objectives of the work sounded positive enough. Virologists sought to gain a better understanding of the potential for the H5N1 virus to mutate into a form easily spread between humans. Yet others pointed to the clear benefits to be realized in alerting society to the potential threat of an H5N1 pandemic. The hope is that governments will allocate far more money to prepare society for such an eventuality.

If the potential for good sounded laudable enough, the potential for harm is so serious that some have termed the new strains of H5N1 as doomsday viruses.

It didn't take long for mechanisms to kick into action to mitigate the threat. Thus the U.S. National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB) entered the scene. This body was formed in 2004 in response to the anthrax scare in 2001 in the United States. At that time a lot of scientists were afraid that the government would set up much too rigorous a control system. Thus the American Society for Microbiologists encouraged the government to set up an advisory board, made up of scientists, which would allow the researchers to regulate themselves.

In the case of the H5N1 work, the NSABB should have been involved at the funding application stage. Such a dual-use research project should have undergone a thorough risk-benefit analysis (before funding) in view of the clearly foreseeable implications. The conditions under which the work was to be conducted could then have been modified or the funding denied. None of this happened, however.

What did happen was that the American lab submitted their results to *Nature* for publication, and the Dutch team submitted theirs to *Science*. Both journals accepted the papers for publication. This is when the NSABB became involved. By the terms of its establishment, the NSABB could not become involved unless the U.S. Department of Health for Human Services specifically asks for its advice. And so, belatedly, the NSABB was asked to consider the H5N1 research and possible publication thereof. However, the NSABB is merely an advisory body, and is not equipped to oversee research that could pose a biosecurity threat. As one American security expert, John Steinbruner, declared:

The NSABB was set up not to do anything. It is just a way of pretending there is some kind of oversight when there isn't (*Nature*, Jan.5, 2012, p. 9).

A previous article in *Nature* (Dec. 22-29, 2011, p. 422) had pointed out that important questions of biosafety and

biosecurity are left to the discretion of individual researchers. For research of this type, which puts millions at risk, there is no oversight whatsoever! The hand wringing continued in earnest.

Too little security

Paul Keim, chair of the NSABB, declared that the worst-case scenarios involving the H5N1 research are enormous. This committee unanimously recommended that only general conclusions of the papers be published, and most specifically not the methods and results.

There were two areas of concern connected to this research: first, the accidental escape of the virus (in itself a realistic concern), and second, its deliberate release. In both cases, millions of people might die. One expert listed a number of parties who might seek to release a rogue pathogen. These might include deliberate release by a disgruntled employee, or by terrorists, or by hostile countries undertaking biological warfare.

In order to mitigate these threats, this expert suggested that funding agencies insist on the highest security rating for the research, and undertake a mandatory review of security prior to the research. He also thought they should re-evaluate and terminate research directed at creating and assessing new dangerous pathogens.

None of these measures was carried out. If they had been, there would be no mutant threats today.

Two week flip-flop

Now that these organisms are here should the work be published? The concern is that some hostile agents will use the methods sections of these papers as recipes for the production of their own mutant viruses. Experts considered the question of whether the benefits of publishing this work outweighed the risks. An editorial in *Nature* (Feb. 9, 2012) declared that the immediate



Shortly after coming out against publishing this controversial work, *Nature* published the American research.

benefits of publication are minimal. The risks far outweigh any public health benefits. Indeed, the mutant flu research does nothing to prevent a pandemic.

Not only does the current research do little to assist experts in forestalling the onset of a pandemic, publication could encourage the synthesis of the virus from scratch in hostile laboratories.

In 2003 many science journals, including *Science* and *Nature*, agreed that they would reject any paper if it was clear that the risks of publication outweighed the benefits. Well, the NSABB declared that this was the case. However, in February of 2012, another advisory body, this time international in scope, met in Geneva to consider the issue. Unexpectedly, this meeting of the World Health Organization decreed that the two papers should be published in full. A new editorial in *Nature*, two weeks after the previous one, now declared that “the benefits of publishing data outweigh the risks.” This journal had executed a complete about-face in only two weeks. This resulted in the publication in early May of the American research.

One of the reasons that the scientists were so adamant that the work be

published was that they did not want to see national security concerns used to determine who could and who could not see the research results. As John Steinbruner declared:

If national-security organizations become involved, they will vet scientists on the basis of citizenship and will be inclined to discriminate against those countries in which terrorists have found refuge. It is crucial that scientists and other experts are judged on their qualifications, not on their nationality.

This is all very well, but some highly qualified experts may work for governments with very different political priorities than western countries. The situation is not encouraging.

Conclusion

So is there reason to be concerned? It does seem as if certain governments have abdicated their responsibility to protect and not harm their citizens. They have funded dangerous research without safeguards and without considering the possible consequences.

Although nobody really knows what kind of threat the mutant H5N1 strains pose for human populations, it could well be very high. The wild type kills 60 per cent of victims, but it cannot pass from person to person. The mortality rate of the mutant type most likely is much lower than that, but it would most probably still dwarf the 0.1 to 0.4 per cent rate assumed in pandemic preparedness plans of many countries.

It is time for governments to assume a leadership role here and not let themselves be pushed around by ambitious researchers. Current research on such dangerous organisms should be moved to the highest security laboratories. If the scientists involved do not like mandatory controls, their funding must be stopped, and their laboratories closed. The threats from nature are a concern, but we do not need scientists artificially creating pathogens which may not ever appear in nature on their own.



Searching for hidden treasure

in Proverbs 2:1-6

by Sharon L. Bratcher

My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you,

Have you ever visited the ocean? A painting of it is beautiful, but it doesn't match the grandeur of the real thing. When the temperature allows it, stepping into the water tingles and refreshes. Some people get a glimpse into the undersea world by strapping on a mask with a snorkel that provides air from above the water. They can view the world of fish, coral, and sea turtles, glimpsing a completely different culture.

A rare few go scuba diving with air tanks strapped to their backs. They plunge deep down, discovering plant and animal life that no one on the surface could even have imagined without their report. They invest the time, and discover.

Turning your ear to wisdom

God's Word is like the ocean. Some are content to know of its existence but never come near. Others approach it once or twice a year and feel satisfied that they've learned enough.

Church members have other categories. Some are like those who drive to the ocean regularly but they stay on the beach. They skirt to the sidelines, rather non-committal, keeping their visits brief.

And applying your hearts to understanding –

Others swim happily along the top. They feel certain that they learn all that they need to know by attending worship, perhaps twice, on Sunday. They participate; they listen, sing and give an offering and greet others on their way outside. They feel the tingle and are

refreshed for the week ahead.

Indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding,

The third group of church members are akin to the snorkelers. Besides attending the worship services, they love attending Bible studies and study God's Word on their own. They note the immensity of information given to them by God and dive frequently below the surface, eager to know more. They memorize Scripture, and have general familiarity with the books of the Bible and the people who are part of God's covenant story.

And if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure,

Last of all are the scuba divers. Here are the people who study God's Word in preference to everything else. They live and breathe their desire, as the Psalmist declared, "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night" (Ps 1:2). They don't just read the familiar books; they plunge into the History and Prophets, consulting commentaries written by "divers" who dove before them. They are continuously astounded to discover unfamiliar chapters even after years of study. Nothing brings them peace and contentment like time spent in God's Word.

Then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding. - Prov. 2:1-6

The reformer Martin Luther said,

The Bible is the proper book for men. There the truth is distinguished from error far more clearly than anywhere else, and one finds something new in it every day. For twenty-eight years, since I became a doctor, I have now constantly read and preached the Bible; and yet I have not exhausted it but find something new in it every day.

He also noted that,

The neglect of Scripture, even by spiritual leaders, is one of the greatest evils in the world. Everything else, arts or literature, is pursued and practiced day and night, and there is no end of labor and effort; but Holy Scripture is neglected as though there were no need of it. Those who condescend to read it want to absorb everything at once. There has never been an art or a book on earth that everyone has so quickly mastered as the Holy Scriptures. But its words are not, as some think, mere literature; they are words of life, intended not for speculation and fancy but for life and action.

Now, all analogies break down, and this comparison with ocean-goers seeks only to point out that there is a whole lot more to learn from and about God's Word than we often realize. And unlike scuba diving, God's Word can be plumbed without financial cost or special training; everyone with a Bible can continually study it.

In our churches, do we provoke one another to strap on the air tanks and dive deep into the vast ocean of God's Word? Or do we instead settle for feeling relieved that swimmers show up at all?

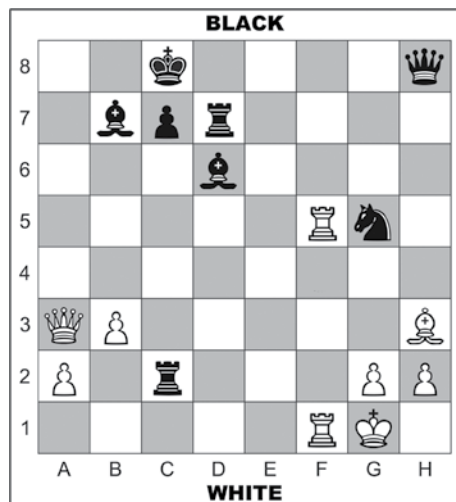
Until we actually dive down, we may not realize what we are missing.



ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Send Puzzles, Solutions, Ideas to Puzzle Page, 43 Summerhill Place, Winnipeg, MB R2C 4V4 OR robgleach@gmail.com

CHESS PUZZLE # 189



NEW PUZZLES

Riddle for Punsters #189 – “Repair Readiness”

Roger wanted to start a door and window repair service and so enrolled in training courses. Whether or not that was a good decision would h___e on him being able to get into the s___g of things and being able to get a good h___e on repair techniques. He sh_____d to think of the consequences if the instructions were not c___r to him but he still tried to keep a positive f___e of mind. To do otherwise would be s___-y.

Problem to Ponder #189 – “Glove Compartments?”

Fred has three containers. One has hockey gloves, one ski gloves and one baseball gloves. Fred’s sister taped a label on each container without checking to see if the labels matched the contents. The labels were “NOT BASEBALL GLOVES” on #1, “HOCKEY GLOVES” on #2 and “NOT HOCKEY GLOVES” on #3. What are the contents of each container if a) no label is incorrect? b) 2 labels are incorrect? c) all labels are incorrect?

WHITE to Mate in 3
Or, If it is BLACK’s Move,
BLACK to Mate in 2

SOLUTIONS TO THE MAY PUZZLE PAGE

Answers to Riddles for Punsters #188 – “Counting on Mathematics”

Sum students are really good at math and later on, when they have a full-time job, that can make a big difference in how productive they are and their work can produce big dividends, especially for company shareholders!

Answers to Problem to Ponder #188 – “Lawn Care with Cash to Spare?”

Benjamin has a lawn with an area of about 600 m². A flyer from a lawn care company indicated that they would, during the spring and summer, apply fertilizer and weed killer a total of three times for \$129 (tax included). Ben decides to do his own lawn care. For one bag of fertilizer that will cover 900 m² he pays \$22.95 plus 12% tax. Ben also pays \$19.00 plus 12% tax for concentrated weed killer (that he adds water to before using). The diluted weed killer will treat his lawn three times with some concentrate left over. To apply the weed killer Ben needs a large pump sprayer for which he pays \$29.00 plus 12% tax. a) How much money does Benjamin save by doing the lawn care himself? b) If he spends 3.5 hours in total preparing the weed killer and applying it and the lawn fertilizer, how much money does he “pay himself” per hour, using the money he saved by “buying and applying” everything himself?

a) If Ben buys 2 bags of fertilizer, it will cover 2x900 = 1800 m² and so will do 3 applications on the lawn, the same as the lawn care company. The cost of 2 bags is 2(\$22.95) = \$45.90 before tax. Add to that the cost of the weed killer and sprayer and the total is \$93.90 plus 12% tax = \$105.17 so Ben saves \$129.00 - \$105.17 = **\$23.83 by doing the work himself.**

b) Ben pays himself \$23.83 / 3.5 hours = **\$6.81 per hour**, which is below minimum wage, but he now owns a sprayer and got some fresh air and exercise!

SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 188

WHITE TO MATE 4

Descriptive Notation

- RxP ch K-B1
- R-N8 ch K-Q2
- Q-N7 ch K-Q3
- Q-QB7 mate

Black loses sooner if

- RxP ch PxR
- QxP ch K-B1
- Q-B7 mate

Or if

- RxP ch PxR
- QxP ch K-R1
- N-B7 mate

Algebraic Notation

- Rb4xb6 + Kb8-c8
- Rb6-b8 + Kc8-d7
- Qb1-b7 + Kd7-d6
- Qb7-c7 ++

Black loses sooner if

- Rb4xb6+ a7xb6
- Qb1xb6+ Kb8-c8
- Qb6-c7

Or if

- Rb4xb6 + a7xb6
- Qb1xb6 + Kb8-a8
- Ne6-c7 ++



BLACK TO MATE IN 3

Descriptive Notation

- RxP ch
- K-N1 N-B6 ch
- K-R1 R-R7 mate

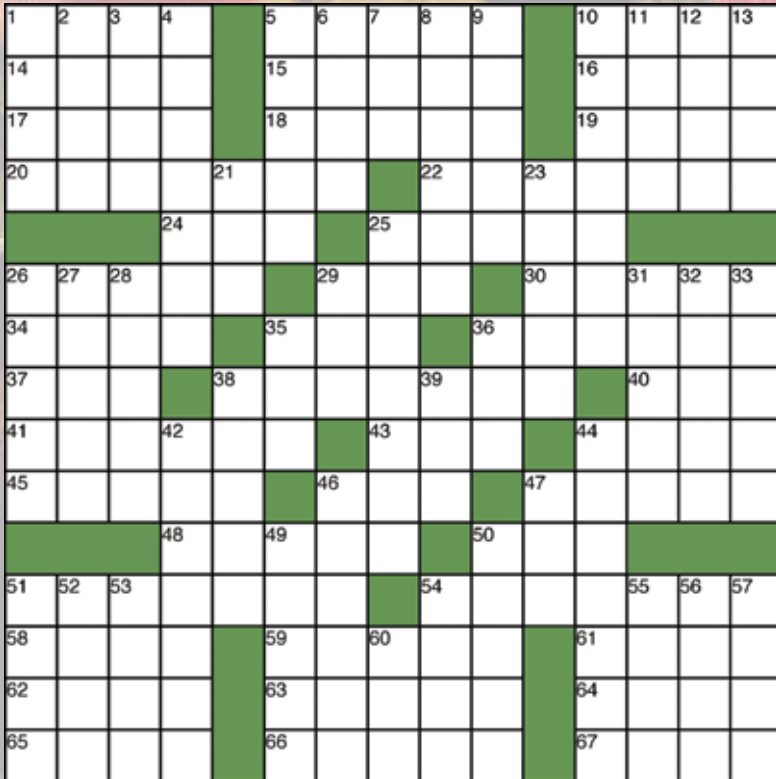
Algebraic Notation

- Rf8xf2 +
- Kf1-g1 Ne5-f3 +
- Kg1-h1 Rf2-h2 ++

Crossword Puzzle

Series 19 No 4

Last Month's solution
Series 19 No 3



ACROSS:

1. Rope fastening
5. British streetcars
10. Giftwrap fastener
14. Comb. form meaning "custom" or "law"
15. Send money to pay
16. Big bird
17. A zoology suffix of the names of subfamilies
18. A spice used in Dutch "koek"
19. Boat propellers
20. Weather phenomenon
22. Bother
24. High playing card, often
25. Roof outlets
26. Unvoiced or unspoken
29. Vehicle
30. Tall bird
34. Landscape lump
35. Take sick
36. City in N. Italy with many Roman remains
37. "Carte's" accompaniments
38. One who praises highly
40. Involuntary muscle spasm
41. Lie in a sheltered spot
43. French direction
44. Entrance opening
45. An old Ford car
46. Agreement
47. Chili con _____
48. Comes closer
50. Cut grass used as forage
51. Withdraws or retracts
54. The return on an investment
- 58 Available for business
59. Kind of wave
61. Repeated sound
62. Soil
63. Make into a statute
64. Endure, suffer; in old Scottish prose
65. Decorates a cake
66. A point on the California coast; national seashore

DOWN:

1. Make a sweater
2. Anything that is not advisable
3. Male given name meaning "Speaker"
4. Foot part
5. Barter
6. First woman US Attorney General
7. French friend
8. Formal man's title
9. The back part of a boat
10. Pant, usually used in plural
11. King of Israel and Jezebel's husband
12. Computer language used especially on World Wide Web
13. Freedom from pain
21. Perform
23. Different in nature or kind
25. What comes between hills
26. A Macbeth character who had this title/rank of Cawdor
27. Caused pain to
28. School group
29. An Am. Intelligence agency
31. Rotating member of a machine
32. Edible bulb
33. Mother-of-pearl
35. Woodcutter
36. Animal doc
38. Female given name, form of Helen
39. What the TSX was formerly known as
42. Renters
44. Certain types of sleepers
46. Kind of gas
47. A small, low island
49. Kind of poison, or venom
50. Puts a stop to
51. Italian name of Rhodes
52. Long poetic composition
53. Part of a parrot's beak
54. Walk back and forth
55. Land measurement
56. Claw (comb. form)
57. Kind of cuckoo from India or Australia
60. Part of 24 hours

Joyce