

Reformed

A MAGAZINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

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PERSPECTIVE

CELEBRATING 35 YEARS

PRO-LIFE 101

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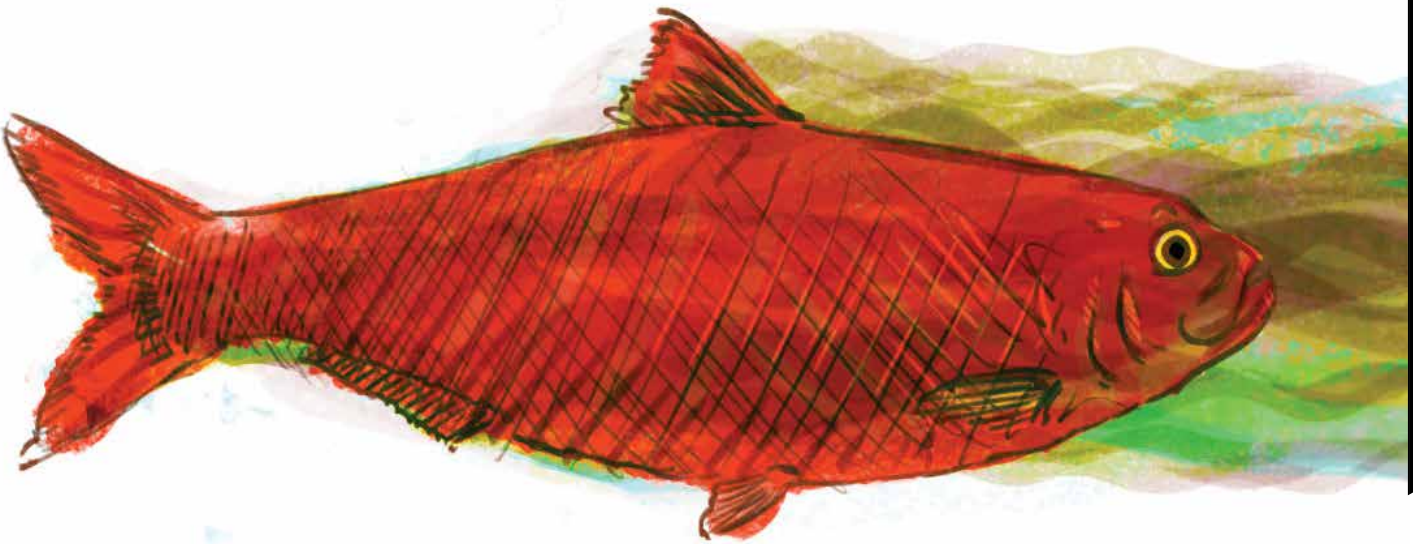
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ON LOYALTY

and the Conservative Party leadership race

Loyalty is attractive in our friends, and in our spouse, and in our dog, and because it is so often a positive trait it's easy to forget that it isn't always noble. Loyalty can be misplaced, and when it is, it can become the reason good people stay involved in endeavors that have long ago taken a nasty turn.

That brings us to the upcoming Conservative Party leadership campaign. The country's second biggest national party is going to be picking a new leader soon and this is too good an opportunity for Christians to pass up. If we take out memberships en masse we might be able to sway the election in a godly direction.

But with this opportunity comes danger. If we encourage our fellow Christians to join the Conservative Party, some of those who sign up may stick with the party no matter who is elected. They'll join to put a good leader in place, but regardless of whether that happens, some may stay because they've already invested so much of their time, their energy, and their money.

To avoid that possibility we need to understand loyalty rightly.

ONLY ONE ULTIMATE ALLEGIANCE

Loyalty can be, and often is, misplaced. An obvious example: an ISIS fighter might be dedicated, but because his cause is vile, so too is his loyalty to it. A less obvious example is the college student who goes into debt to buy the latest version of the iPhone. Loyal yes, but not budget conscious. Loyalty to a brand, a band, or a TV show is a binding of ourselves to subjects that don't

deserve such devotion. Our church, our country, and even our family are also not worthy of our ultimate allegiance – Jesus warned in Matthew 10:37 we may well have to choose God over the people closest to us:

He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

That's why C.S. Lewis described loyalty as "a virtue too important to be lavished on individual personalities." Our ultimate loyalty should lie with God alone.

That still leaves room for loyalties to others, but these will be of a secondary sort. "Secondary" here shouldn't be mistaken for "superficial." Consider how God wants us to be loyal to our spouse and demands that a husband love his wife more than his own life (Ephesians 5:25). Nothing superficial about that. We can be deeply and steadfastly loyal to our spouse, our family, our country, and our company, but our earthbound loyalties must have limits, extending only so far as they don't lead us from God.

OPPORTUNITIES KNOCK

A Christian who has a firm understanding of how his loyalties should be ordered is a Christian who can embrace opportunities and anticipate dangers. Consider a teen who understands, not just in his head but in his heart, that God is more important than his friends. Instead of going with the flow, he's pressuring his

peers to follow his godly lead. This is the sort of young man God can put to good use.

Then there is the citizen who understands patriotism must never mean supporting his "country right or wrong." This is the kind of Christian we need in our armed forces, and in our police departments, and in every position of authority. This is a patriot who won't be afraid to call his country to account.

TAKING OVER THE CONSERVATIVES

This is also the sort we'll need to recruit in any attempt to take over the Conservative Party leadership. Imagine if we could replace Stephen Harper with a godly man or woman who wanted to defend the unborn. That's a possibility we can't pass up! However, even if we all join en masse there's no guarantee that we can impact the outcome. And if our guy or gal doesn't win, then the victor will likely be an abortion advocate; we'll get a new leader who will continue with Stephen Harper's stratagem of maintaining the abortion "status quo."

Therein lies the danger. Trying to impact the leadership campaign will take time, energy and money – it will take a real investment. And what people invest in they become loyal to, whether that's something trivial like a sports team, or something significant like a political party. If we sign up Christians by the thousands and our attempt fails, many of our people may end up staying. And if they do, and they keep donating their dollars and time, it will

be in support of a leader who promises to protect Canadians' "right" to do what God forbids in the sixth commandment.

CONCLUSION

So should we get involved in the Conservative leadership campaign? Yes, but only with the greatest of care. We need to move forward understanding where our loyalties lie. We need to explain to everyone we sign up that we're trying to use the Conservative Party for God's ends; we don't want the Conservative Party to use us.

If we can't accomplish our goal then we need to go. No matter how much we've invested, we have to be willing to leave. We can still support the individual pro-life politicians that exist in the party. But on the national level we must not be loyal to a leader, or a party, that opposes God by denying justice to the unborn.

RP

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NOTA BENE

News worth noting

to also produce ideological [i.e. religious] reactions.

Reformed commentator Dr. Joel McDurmon has a rather different thought. In his Oct. 26 blog post on the study he wrote:

...when you shut down *the part of the brain most associated with logic and reasoning*, greater levels of atheism result. You've heard the phrase, "I don't have enough faith to be an atheist"? Apparently we can now also say, "I have too many brains to be an atheist."

While it is important to note that this was a small study using just 38 subjects and thus any findings are far from conclusive, it is no great surprise that turning off a part of the brain makes someone believe in God less. We've known that for millennia. After all, what was King David thinking when he stole another man's wife? The answer is, he was not thinking! And in willfully turning off his brain he also turned his attention away from God.

And what of the wisest man who ever lived, Solomon, who kept adding to his harem despite knowing that God warned this would lead him astray (Deut. 17:17)? Here too, is an instance of someone who – through his own actions – now has a brain that is not firing on all cylinders. Consider also the sins we indulge in that make no rational sense – what man in his right mind starts using drugs? Who would ever consider trading their family for a one-night stand? We all know the odds are in the house's favor, so why would anyone start gambling? These are clearly foolish acts...and yet men do them. And paired with this lack of rationality comes a predictable increase in uncertainty about God – it is no news at all that turning off our brain, or a portion of it, can lead us to doubt.

SOURCE: "Neuromodulation of group prejudice and religious belief" by Colin Holbrook, Keise Izuma, Choi Debleck, Dnaeil M.T. Fessler and Marco Iacboni; Victoria Woollaston's "Could your views on God and immigration be changed by using magnets" posted to DailyMail.com October 14, 2015; Joel McDurmon's "Atheists embarrassed: study proves atheism uses less brain function" posted to AmericanVision.org on Oct. 26, 2015.

TURNING OFF PARTS OF THE BRAIN MAKES ONE MORE ATHEISTIC?

BY JON DYKSTRA



University of York and University of California researchers have used "transcranial magnetic stimulation" to reduce activity in part of the brain. The result? As the *Daily Mail* reported it:

People who were subjected to this treatment reported that their belief in God dropped by a third following the stimulation...

Researchers targeted the posterior medial frontal cortex, which is supposed to have a role in problem-solving and decision-making tasks. One of the researchers gave the evolutionary spin for the study to the *Daily Mail*:

Dr. Holbrook added that the findings are consistent with the idea that regions of the brain that have evolved to deal with threats are "repurposed"

GARDASIL: A VACCINE OUR BOYS DON'T NEED EITHER

BY JON DYKSTRA



Two years ago the Gardasil vaccine was being promoted and sometimes even required for elementary age girls. In October the Manitoba government announced they want grade six boys to receive it as well.

The vaccine protects against the more common strains of Human Papillomavirus (HPV), a sexually transmitted disease thought to greatly increase a person's chances of

developing cervical cancer. But it is also a disease that cannot be caught by faithful, sexually pure Christians. If single Christians are celibate and Christian couples are monogamous, they are 100% safe from HPV. All vaccines come with some risks, but in most cases the benefits vastly outweigh those risks. In this case, however, the risks, no matter how small, vastly outweigh the entire absence of benefit the vaccine can give to faithful Christians.

Governments have been promoting this vaccine because they can't conceive of young people being taught sexual self-control. However, the government knows nothing of Christian parenting. If we are worried that our children might some day

have a need for this vaccine, then we need to give them something much better now – direction and protection. We need to talk to them about the temptations common to all men and women, and we need to hold them accountable for telling us where they are going, who they are with, and when they will be home. We need to help them avoid situations where they could fall into sexual sin. This vaccine can protect them from some of the medical consequences but none of the spiritual ones.

Our girls didn't need this vaccine two years ago; our boys don't need it now.

SOURCE: Steve Weatherbe's "Manitoba grade six boys to get 'dangerous' HPV vaccine" posted to LifeSiteNews.com on Oct. 26, 2015

NEW SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE CAUSES WORK-LIFE BALANCE DEBATE

BY MARK REIMERS



The U.S. Congress became the unlikely site of a debate about work-life balance recently as Republican lawmakers negotiated terms with Rep. Paul Ryan to become Speaker of the House of Representatives. The powerful position, third in line from the presidency, is notoriously thankless and time-consuming.

"I cannot and will not give up my family time," Ryan reportedly said after a closed-door meeting with colleagues. "I may not be able to be on the road as much as previous speakers, but I pledged to make up for it with more time communicating our message."

Some on the political left accused Ryan of hypocrisy, since mandated worker benefits like family time is not a traditional Republican policy plank. But since Ryan was negotiating for a job no one wanted from a position of power, it wasn't surprising to hear him make certain demands. Still, since the industrial revolution, public displays of this kind of concern have rarely been seen.

There is wisdom to be gained in

Ryan's example: Ryan is known as a Type A, hard-working legislator with a long future. But at 45 years old, with a wife and three children, he has used his influence to potentially reinvent one of the most powerful positions in politics for the sake of his family. King Solomon said that work, unredeemed by God's blessing, is "a striving after wind." Each Christian must remember that his vocation is vanity if it becomes an end, or just a means to riches. Those whom God has granted children must be mindful that their faithfulness in God's kingdom requires them to be faithful in so much more than just their job – no matter how prominent or important that job may appear to be.

UNIVERSAL DAYCARE NOT THE ANSWER

BY ANNA NIENHUIS



We've recently heard politicians touting universal daycare as an important advance for Canadian women and children, but a recent study comes to a very different conclusion. Quebec has had daycare available for \$7/day for some time now, so it was ripe for examination. The study of their system, released in September, makes an excellent case *against* instituting such a system in the rest of Canada.

The study, on "The Long-Run Impacts of a Universal Child Care Program," found that not only does Quebec's universal daycare fail to improve kids cognitively or socially, there is evidence it may actually make boys *more* aggressive and girls *less* pro-social than their non-daycared peers.

Why? Well, in Andrea Mrozek's *Mercatornet.com* article (Sept. 24) on the study, one explanation she offered is that placing children in large groups of other children causes them to attach to peers rather than parents or other loving, caring adults. Some have also suggested that the problem is the very fact that Quebec's approach is "universal." There is no targeting such an intervention – it isn't only for those in desperate need – and no involvement of the parents, aside from getting them to drop off and pick up

their children. Such a system increases pressure on mothers to work outside the home, and incentivizes double-income homes where the child is raised by someone other than his or her parents.

Certainly there are cases, such as single motherhood, where daycare is convenient. Studies such as these show, however, that we may be better off as a nation if we subsidize those mothers to stay home and raise their children, fostering parental involvement, supervision, and attachment that can carry into later years.

For Christian parents, there has long been the recognition of both great blessing and great responsibility in parenthood, neither of which can be fully recognized through universal daycare.

SOURCE: Andrea Mrozek's "New research busts myths about universal daycare"; Sept. 24, 2015; mercator.net

BABIES "SING" IN THE WOMB BY 16 WEEKS

BY ANNA NIENHUIS



New research coming out of Spain has found that babies as young as 16 weeks in utero respond to music by making tongue motions similar to singing. When music was played intravaginally by special speakers, 87% of babies responded with mouth and limb movements, as well as tongue movement.

This groundbreaking discovery is further evidence of the beautiful humanity of pre-born babies. This research also shows them hearing and reacting at a younger age than was previously thought possible. Babies are indeed fearfully and wonderfully made!

SOURCES: Del F. Cowie's "Bach makes fetuses sing in the womb"; Oct. 8, 2015; m.music.cbc.ca; Study details and results: <http://ult.sagepub.com/content/25/4/216>

PM TRUDEAU'S GENDER-BALANCED SEXIST CABINET

BY JON DYKSTRA



During the election campaign Justin Trudeau promised that his cabinet would be gender balanced, with an equal number of men and women ministers. When we consider that the Liberals have 133 male Members of Parliament (excluding the Prime Minister) and 50 female MPs the problematic nature of his pledge becomes evident. There was *almost three times* the competition for the male slots than

there was for the female slots.

While it is possible that the Liberal women MPs were of a vastly better sort than the Liberal men MPs, if they were similarly talented then it is hard to escape the conclusion that some of the female ministers are ministers only because they are female. Then Trudeau's efforts at gender equality are simply sexism – evaluating people on the basis of their sex, not their skills.

PHOTO CREDIT: Stacey Newman / Shutterstock.com

THE ATHEIST'S MIRACULOUS OBJECTION TO MIRACLES

by Rob Slane

The following is an excerpt from Rob Slane's upcoming book A Christian & an Unbeliever Discuss: Life, the Universe & Everything. We are coming in mid-conversation as these two discuss whether it is sensible to believe in miracles. The unbeliever of course says no, the Christian yes, but then he hits the unbeliever with this: why do you believe in the non-miraculous?

“What I am saying is this: ultimately the rationality or irrationality of miracles does not depend one iota on whether such events occur today or not, as you have implied, but on just one simple question – is the universe the product of completely ‘naturalistic’ causes or is it the product of an infinite-personal God? If it is the latter, the ‘problem of miracles’ simply vanishes away. So I want to see if you agree with this very simple statement: if the universe was created by an infinite-personal being, then events such as the parting of the Red Sea and the incarnation, miracles, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ are no more inconceivable than you and I sitting here having this conversation.”

“I don’t have a problem with that,” he replied, after giving it some thought, “as long as you don’t have a problem with this equally simple statement: if the universe was not created by an infinite-personal being, then events such as the parting of the Red Sea and the incarnation, miracles, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ are infinitely more inconceivable occurrences than you and I sitting here having this conversation.”

“On one level, yes,” I replied. “If the universe is entirely naturalistic, then such miracles would seem to be absurd. But on another level, regardless of whether the naturalistic explanation of origins is even feasible, there is a glaring problem with

your position.”

He beckoned me to continue, so I went on: “It all hinges around the definition of the word ‘miracle’. Let me ask you if you agree with this definition: a miracle is a contravention of the normal laws of nature.”

After he had thought about this and then indicated his approval, I continued: “Okay, the question of miracles

encompasses two things: firstly, there is the normal state of physical, chemical and biological affairs, and secondly, there is the miracle itself, which is a deviation from this norm. Now, beginning with the great infinite-personal God, this presents no problem. By definition, in his universe he would have perfect freedom and power to alter these laws if he wished to do so. But for a naturalist such as yourself, the problem is not on the miracle side of things as such but on the normal state-of-affairs side. Your very reason for rejecting miracles is because they run contrary to some kind of unalterable natural law. But the irony of this is that your whole position rests on the denial of the very existence of a lawgiver who could give and sustain such an unalterable law. Instead, you maintain that the universe is somehow the product of blind and random forces. Which means that beginning from your

basic position, it’s not really miraculous deviations of normal natural laws that you should have a problem with – in a sense, they should occur all the time in a random universe – but rather the fact that there is any ‘normal’ state of affairs in the first place from which to judge them from.”

RP

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

The Bible says God created in six days and Jesus arose after three days

by G. I. Williamson

I was there to see, to hear and to report on one of the few heresy trials of the 20th Century. It took place in Christchurch New Zealand in 1967. Professor Lloyd Geering, who was then teaching theology at the Seminary of the Presbyterian Church of New Zealand (PCNZ), was charged with “doctrinal error” and “disturbing the peace and unity of the (Presbyterian) church.”

As I recall it the charge was brought by one other minister of the PCNZ, and also a member of the church who was a lawyer.

ON THE RESURRECTION

And what was the reason for making this charge? It was the fact that Rev.

Rev. Geering was convinced that the people who wrote the Bible were sincere but “pre-scientific” people.

Geering had denied the literal, physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus. And yet at the same time Rev. Geering loudly proclaimed his faith in the doctrine of the resurrection as he defined it. And what did he mean by that claim? He said the resurrection was not something that took place outside of the disciples, but rather inside of them. The disciples of Jesus seemed, at first, to be discouraged and defeated by His death. But then they began to realize that what Jesus meant by promising His resurrection was not something that was to happen to Him, but something that was to happen to them and in them. They were to be amazingly changed because of the momentous impact that He had made upon them.

In other words the only “real” resurrection, according to Rev. Geering, is simply “the wonderful change” that takes place in people because of the witness that Jesus gave in the way He lived and the way He died.

BUT SCIENCE SAYS!

Rev. Geering was well aware of the fact that this was where the most advanced theologians had come in their respectable scientific thinking. He was the man who had the “courage”

to openly say that the physical body of Jesus lies somewhere under the dirt in Palestine. You see, Rev. Geering was convinced that the people who wrote the Bible were sincere but “pre-scientific” people. They didn’t realize in those days that dead bodies of people simply do not rise from their graves. But we modern people have the benefit of modern scientific learning. So it is time to be honest with the people in the pews of the church, and to help them to give up that pre-scientific way of thinking.

But of course Rev. Geering wasn’t there when Jesus lived, died and rose again. Neither were any of the other erudite and advanced scientists of our time who believe in the doctrine of evolution. So they are not any more qualified than you or me to deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus. And the stubborn fact is that the New Testament provides us with the eyewitness testimony of people who were there and who saw that this did actually happen.

What shocked and amazed me, as I sat there at that trial (as an officially recognized reporter for the Reformed Churches of New Zealand) was the combination of two striking things. The first was the impression Rev. Geering



If God could create everything in six days, then he can also resurrect my body from the grave “in the twinkling of an eye.”

Rev. Geering had denied the literal, physical, bodily resurrection of Jesus.

made on me in defending himself! He acted as if he was a kind of modern Martin Luther, courageously taking his stand against hopelessly outmoded thinking.

The second was the amazing fact that the entire General Assembly stood up to loudly cheer Rev. Geering after his speech in defense of himself and his views had concluded. What I saw and heard was a shock from which I still haven't recovered.

Here was the General Assembly of a church claiming to belong to Jesus Christ, while denying its very foundation (see 1 Corinthians 15:3-4). I still can't get over it. I honestly felt a sense of fear at the time that the very earth might open up and swallow up the entire crowd that was there because of such blatant blasphemy.

ON CREATION

But now my point! I do not see any difference in principle between what I saw at that trial in 1967 in New Zealand and what I see today in the prevailing tolerance allowed in even the better Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, where it comes to the doctrine of creation. When creation took place, there was no human being there to observe what happened (not until the sixth day, at least). But God was there.

I am therefore convinced that He, and He alone, is qualified to tell me what happened. I am also convinced that this is exactly what we have in the first two chapters of the Bible. He tells us in plain words that He created everything by His own supernatural power, and that He chose to do so (and actually did do so) in the space of six days.

Yet far too many erudite Bible scholars, and college and seminary professors, keep on insisting that we have to be open to views that say creation did not happen as Genesis 1-2 tells us it happened. They keep saying we should not be so naive as to simply believe that what we read is an accurate account of what actually happened in the space of six days.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

I do not see any difference in principle between the way Rev. Geering redefined the supernatural miracle of the our Lord's resurrection and the way many scholars and teachers redefine the supernatural miracle of His miracle of creation. I am 90-years-old and my body will soon be buried. But I still believe in a future bodily resurrection. I therefore see no reason to doubt God's account of His own work of creation. If God could create everything in six days, then He can also resurrect my body from the grave “in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Corinthians 15:52) at the second coming of Jesus.

I simply cannot see how anyone can believe the one while doubting the other. There is no difference: both are supernatural works of our omnipotent God and He expects us to believe them.

G. I. Williamson is a retired minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, living in the Orange City, Iowa area. He is the author of study guides on the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and the Heidelberg Catechism. This article first posted to TheAquilaReport.com and is reprinted here with permission.

RP



PRO-LIFE 101: REMOVING THE RED HERRINGS

by Jon Dykstra

RED HERRING: In argument, something designed to divert an opponent's attention from the central issue. If a herring is dragged across a trail that hounds are following, it throws them off the scent. – Dictionary.com

It's about the unborn, but we so often get distracted. There's only one issue that matters in the abortion debate, and that's *who the unborn are*. If they aren't human – if the unborn is just a bit of tissue – then no one should care if a woman goes in for elective surgery to get this bit of excess tissue taken care of. If the unborn aren't human, no one should object. But if they are human, then the unborn deserve the same protection under the law that everyone else has.

So it comes down to just one issue, just one question: "What are the unborn?"

That's what it's about...but this isn't what we most often talk about. Abortion supporters will talk about anything and everything else, trying to distract us with red herrings. And pro-lifers will throw out red herrings of our own.

So how can we stay focused? We need to be able to spot these red herrings – whether they are offered up by the other side or our own – and then always, always, always get back to the only issue that matters: the humanity of the unborn.

5 PRO-CHOICE RED HERRINGS

So what are the most common pro-abortion red herrings? Here are a top five.*

1. "WOMEN SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY."

This argument is the basis for legal abortion in the United States, and it is popular in Canada as well. But we all know a

right to privacy has limits and can't be used to justify child abuse – parents aren't allowed to abuse their children so long as they do it behind closed doors!

So the real issue isn't privacy, but rather whether the unborn is a human being. If it is, then it shouldn't be abused or killed, even if that abuse/dismemberment takes place behind closed clinic doors.

2. "WOMEN SHOULD HAVE THE FREEDOM TO CHOOSE."

This is another right that must have limits. We aren't free to do everything, so the key question here is: "women should have the freedom to choose *what*?" We don't believe people should have the choice of whether to kill others, so if the unborn are human beings then they should be protected like all other human beings.

3. "WOMEN SHOULDN'T HAVE TO CARRY A CHILD CONCEIVED THROUGH RAPE."

The emotional impact of rape can be devastating, and complex. However the moral issue is clear – it still depends on whether the unborn are human. If the unborn child is human we shouldn't kill it for the sins of its father (we don't even kill rapists). So the issue is not rape, but rather whether the unborn are human.

4. "MAKING ABORTION ILLEGAL WILL FORCE WOMEN TO HAVE DANGEROUS BACK-ALLEY ABORTIONS."

In no other circumstances are we worried about making crime safer. Bank robbing is also hazardous, but that isn't a good reason to make it legal. So if the unborn are humans, we would not be all that concerned that those who want to murder them will have to do so under risky conditions. The issue isn't back-alley abortions, but the humanity of the unborn.

5. "WHAT ABOUT WHEN THE WOMAN'S LIFE IS IN DANGER?"

Before Canada's abortion law was struck down, this was one of the reasons abortions would be legally permitted. However in many instances it was only the mother's mental, not physical, health that was said to be at risk. While this was a frequently used justification, it is a very rare situation in which a mother's life can be saved by aborting her child.

In those instances this might seem an ethically complicated situation, but clarity can be found if we ask the one key question in the abortion debate: "What is the unborn?" If the unborn aren't human beings, then if the woman's life was in any sort of danger, abortion should be permitted. However, if the unborn *is* human, then this baby should be treated as fully human, just like the mother, and treated as such. Then abortion wouldn't be permitted for faux dangers, as was happening in Canada. But it would be an option where there is genuine danger, not because the unborn is worthless but because in some circumstances only one life can be saved.

COMMON GROUND

Both abortion advocates and pro-lifers employ red herrings and for the very same reason: pro-choicers raise these other issues because they don't want to talk about the real one; pro-lifers talk about other issues because *pro-choicers don't want to talk about the real one*.

When the other side absolutely won't talk about the real issue – when they won't stick around for it, when they won't take their fingers out of their ears, when they won't stop screaming to listen – what use is there to talk at all? In the face of such bluster there is no reasoning, and no chance to dialogue.

So we changed tactics. Instead of asking them to join with

Instead of asking them to join with us in common cause for the unborn, we looked for a common foe.

us in common cause for the unborn, we started looking for a common foe.

While feminists don't want to defend the unborn, they do oppose sexism. Can we work together to stop sex-selective abortions, which target girls far more than boys?

And though a woman cares nothing for the unborn, she might be concerned with anything that would impact her own health. Can we save her baby by raising the abortion/breast cancer link, showing her that abortion isn't in her own best interest?

What of a vegan who catch-and-releases the flies in her home? Might she be shocked to hear that a 20-week fetus feels pain as its limbs are being torn off one by one? Though she has no interest in the unborn as human beings, she wouldn't treat her rescued pet goldfish like this. Maybe this sort will join with us in opposing abortion once the fetus can feel pain.

These are "red herrings" in that they don't address the only issue that really matters: whether the unborn is a human being. But we use them because they allow us to make progress that can't be had while talking about the humanity of the unborn.

4 PRO-LIFE RED HERRINGS

Thus there seems to be real potential in talking about more than just the humanity of the unborn – trying other approaches can save lives!

But there is also an accompanying danger. The truth is that the only reason abortion should be illegal is because the unborn are human beings. As pro-life apologist Scott Klusendorf has noted, it would be fine to experiment on fetuses, clone them, use them in make-up, harvest them for their stem cells, eat them, kill them for any reason at all... *if the unborn are not human beings!* But if they are precious human beings like you and me, then they deserve the very same protection.

This is the only issue.

The danger with using our red herring arguments comes when we present these arguments as our only, or main, objection to abortion. These are arguments we can use, but they aren't ones we want to stand on – they won't support us.

What follows are four of the more common pro-life red herrings, and explanations of how these arguments fall to pieces when they are presented on their own, apart from the issue of the unborn's humanity.

1. "MAYBE YOUR UNBORN BABY IS GOING TO CURE CANCER!"

There are many versions of this argument (it is sometimes called the "Beethoven argument" as in "What if your child is going to be the next Beethoven?") but all focus on the baby's potential: the reason a child shouldn't be aborted is because of what they might do in the future.

But what if a mother already knows that their child isn't going to be a genius? What if they've been given a Down



syndrome diagnosis? Do we think the mother should be allowed to abort then? We do not.

So this isn't about what the child might be able to do one day, but rather about whether or not they are human beings. If they are, then no matter what they will or will not be able to do in the future, they should be given the same protection today as all other human beings.

2. "WHAT IF THE FETUS CAN FEEL PAIN?"

Here the focus is on what the unborn can do *right now*. Other forms of this argument focus on other abilities: it has brain waves, or a beating heart, or can react to music, etc. But what if a child doesn't have this ability yet? Would it be fine to abort the child then? No – that's not what we believe at all.

The real issue for us is not what the unborn can do right now – whether they have this ability or that – but whether they are human beings like you or me.

3. "STUDIES SHOW THAT ABORTION CAUSES BREAST CANCER!"

While some studies show abortion increases a woman's chance of getting breast cancer, drinking a glass of wine a day, or being overweight also increases her risk. Should we restrict wine or caloric intake for women? No? Then why would this be a good reason to restrict abortion?

This issue is not whether abortion harms a woman, but whether it kills her child.

4. "DID YOU KNOW THEY'RE SELLING BABY BODY PARTS?"

The Center for Medical Progress has exposed that Planned Parenthood in the US is selling body parts from the babies

they abort. This is contrary to federal law and the details have horrified many millions. In response, Planned Parenthood has agreed not to take money for these body parts – they promise to stop *selling* them, though the abortions will continue. Are we satisfied?

No, our objection isn't to the selling of body parts, but rather that there are body parts to sell. The killing is what we want to stop.

USING RED HERRINGS THE RIGHT WAY

To be clear, it's not wrong for us to *use* these red herrings, but we shouldn't *rely* on them. These are not, after all, *our* arguments. We don't believe them. We know it's *not* the possibility of breast cancer, or that the fetus could feel pain,

We know it's not the possibility of breast cancer, or that the fetus could feel pain, that makes abortion evil.

that makes abortion evil. That's not only *not* our position, we know that it is factually and actually wrong.

Instead, these are arguments we've adopted from the other side's worldview. We aren't feminist (or at least, not in the way they are), but we can step inside their worldview and consider why a godless feminist might still object to abortion. And then, with that insight in hand, we can confront them with the reason why they, by *their* way of thinking, should oppose at least some abortions.

However, we always want to be clear about the fact that they've got it all wrong. We want to use their arguments, but we sure don't want to stand on them because they are without foundation. Thus when we make use of their arguments, they should always be connected to our own. First we adopt their worldview for the sake of argument, and then, once we have them talking, we lay out our own.

Our argument need not be presented explicitly, but it does need to be done clearly, much as has been done by the Center for Medical Progress (CMP). Their brilliant undercover work exposed Planned Parenthood's illegal activities. So their *explicit* argument was that Planned Parenthood is breaking the law, but barely concealed was the real issue: Planned Parenthood isn't just doing something illegal, but murderous. The CMP aren't speaking directly to the humanity of the unborn, but the footage speaks for itself. It's hard to miss the horror of what's really going on when we hear abortionists laughing as a speaker recollects the time a baby's "eyeball just fell down into my lap!"


ARPA Canada is another example of how to make good use of red herrings. They make use of the fetal pain and parental

notification arguments, and then put on enormous cross and flag displays (see the April 2014 *RP* issue for stunning pictures of the Parliament Hill display) that speak directly to the humanity of the unborn. Again, it is hard to miss the horror of what's really happening when 50,000 pink and 50,000 blue flags – each one representing a child killed by abortion in Canada this year – cover an entire hillside.

CONCLUSION

There are many arguments offered in the abortion debate, but just one issue that matters. If we can spot the red herring arguments, and then either clear them away, or put them to

our own uses, we will be ready to direct the conversation back to where it belongs. Then we can highlight the humanity of the unborn to a culture and a country that wants desperately to talk about anything else.

May God grant us insight, clarity, and courage as we speak up for these little ones. 

** These five examples are taken from a list in The Art of Pro-life Persuasion, a DVD-based pro-life apologist group study by Greg Koukl and Scott Klusendorf (that I highly recommend). I've reworked the items, but Koukl and Klusendorf's work is the inspiration.*

If the unborn aren't our equals...

by Jon Dykstra

In the West we believe all people should be treated equally, no matter their age, race, religion, etc. But why is that? Why should we treat all people equally when, in any way you measure it, no two people are equal? We differ in size, intellect, strength, coordination, hearing, visual acuity, musical aptitude, and in the amount of hair we have on our heads. No two of us are the same, so why should we get the same treatment?

In any other situation we don't treat unequal things equally. We hang a Rembrandt up on a museum wall, while our kids' efforts only make an appearance on the fridge. Both are art, so why don't we treat them equally? We recycle our newspapers but save our dollar bills securely in banks. Both are printed paper so why don't we treat them equally?

Because they aren't equal.

So let's ask the question again: if we don't treat unequal things equally, and in any measurable way no two people are equal, why should we treat people equally?

THE CHRISTIAN ANSWER

There is a Christian answer to this question. The Bible tells us we are all made in God's image – all of us, without



exception. The smallest, weakest child and the largest, strongest man may seem to have nothing in common but they are both made *imago Dei*, in God's image. What makes us equal is not based on our abilities, but is instead intrinsic; not measurable, but still evident to any who pay attention. Every human being is remarkable precisely because we are all, from conception, reflections of our Creator.

THE WORLD'S FAIL

The world rejects God, yet they still talk about equality...just not for the unborn. They won't give the unborn equal rights – not even the right to life – because the child can't breathe on its own, or because it doesn't have a heartbeat yet, or because it can't feel pain yet. They won't treat it equally because it can't do this, that, or the other thing. In arguing against fetal rights *they base equality on ability*. Why are we worthy of respect and the unborn aren't? Because we can *do things* that they can't.

However, if ability is the basis for equality, then we're back to the same

question: on what basis do we treat people of greatly varying abilities equally? If women can't lift as much as men, then aren't men better than women? Aren't they superior?

That's not an attractive thought to anyone. But only Christians know why: "...in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them" (Genesis 1:27). Meanwhile the world has to pretend that a 150-pound woman really can lift the same amount as a 200-pound man – they have to pretend that even in matters of strength women can do all that men can do because ability is their only basis for equality.

THE QUESTION

As Christians, our pro-life argument is that an unborn baby is equal to a newborn, is equal to a toddler, is equal to a teen, is equal to an adult. Different in ability, height, weight, hair color, and every other measurable, and yet equal because we all share the *imago Dei*. And the question we have for the world is this: "if you think the unborn aren't our equals, please explain why you think *anyone* is equal?"

GIVING UP IS NOT AN OPTION

by Pieter Bos

I was ready to pack up my sign, hand it to the leader, thank him for the experience, and give up.

The amount of hostility I was receiving was more than I could ever remember experiencing. Out of the ten volunteers I was privileged to be there with, much of the protest tended to gravitate towards me and my sign. Enraged protestors not only “flipped the bird” more times than I could count, or labeled me with

I knew that abortion was wrong, an act that violently ended the life of another helpless human being, but the reality of the matter had yet to become real to me.

degrading terms I had never before heard of, but one made a rather forceful attempt to pull my sign and me to the ground, and another proceeded to tear the sign from my hands and damage it.

The cause for this bitterness was a reaction to what was portrayed on the sign I was holding, an image of a pre-born child who had fallen prey to the hands of an abortion “doctor.” I knew that abortion was wrong, an act that violently ended the life of another helpless human being, but the reality of the matter had yet to become real to me. And so I wanted to give up.

As all of this was taking place, a young man who was walking down the sidewalk began taking photos of the victims of abortion on the various signs he saw. Desiring to take a picture of my sign, he kindly asked one of the protestors to step to the side only to receive the response, “No, why do you need to take a picture of this anyway?”

The young man replied, “My girlfriend is ten weeks pregnant, and we were going to get an abortion. Now I’m going to show her these pictures.”

This is when I realized that the abortion debate is not merely one about

statistics or pictures, but about real, living human beings. It is about unique, little children who are being brutally torn, limb by broken limb, from their mothers’ wombs, at a rate of almost 300 children every day in Canada. This father did not need a lengthy conversation or debate about abortion, he simply needed to see what this act would do to the body of his little boy or his little girl.

I then knew that I could not give up. I could not let my desire for personal comfort win at the cost of the lives of these pre-born children. To give up would mean to give up on the thousands and tens of thousands of little boys and little girls being drawn to this slaughter.

This is why I did not give up that day. This is why I took every opportunity after that day to expose the injustice of abortion, and this is why I fight, day in and day out, to bring the fruits of darkness to the light.

Their silent screams cannot be heard, but their bloody, broken bodies can be seen. And we who have seen must act.

This article first appeared on the UnmaskingChoice.ca blog and is reprinted here with permission.





"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge."
Prov 1:7

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Illustration by Ben Humeniuk

"IT MAY BE..."

WINNING ISN'T ON US. BUT GOD DOES WANT US TO SHOW UP.

BY ROB SCHOUTEN

Israel's very first prince lived at a time when God's people were facing a foe that was large, powerful, and in control of their country. If this description strikes you as all too familiar then it will be instructive to consider how Jonathan responded to such a foe.

For the first prince of Israel was a godly man. Right from the first time we read about him in the Bible, this young man captures our admiration. We admire him because he's such a firm believer in Yahweh.

He was also a stark contrast to his father.

The first king of Israel was just a regular political kind of a guy. For Saul, politics and power was one thing and faith in the LORD was something separate from all of that. At crucial moments, it was apparent that Saul was more about Saul than he was about God. It's not that Saul completely forgot about God but rather that God was never central for Saul. God was a factor in his life but only that – just one factor among many others such including the pride of Saul and the personal opinion of Saul. When God is only a factor in our lives and not everything to us, then we're not really letting Him be God, are we? God does not allow Himself to only be one factor among many. He wishes to be supreme in our lives and He desires that his Word would be pre-eminent over our own human opinions.

WITHOUT FEAR

Jonathan, however, is so strongly aware of the presence and the power of God, he's not fearful of the Philistines

...he doesn't see a hopeless situation. Instead, he sees an opportunity.

who are controlling Israel. In 1 Samuel 14 we read about Jonathan setting out accompanied only by his armor-bearer. When he spots a Philistine garrison on the hillside, he doesn't see a hopeless situation. Instead, he sees *an opportunity*. Why? Not because Jonathan thinks he's pretty good with the sword but because *Jonathan thinks God is amazingly powerful!* Jonathan isn't awestruck by the Philistines but he's very much in awe of God! Jonathan looks at the Philistine garrison at the top of the pass and he figures that with God's help they can take it out. Listen to his words in verse 6:

Come, let us go over to the garrison of these uncircumcised. It may be that the LORD will work for us, for nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few.

Jonathan knows if the Lord desires to rescue his people, He can do so. God can do that with a thousand men, or a hundred, or one, or none at all. Focusing on God's amazing power gives Jonathan an audacity that people who have not faith can't understand. Instead of being paralyzed by fear, Jonathan decides to put himself out there, to think big and try big things for the Lord's people.


VICTORY ISN'T PROMISED

However, it's important to see that Jonathan's audacity is tempered by

humility. This Old Testament brother of ours is ready to try big things for the Lord and his people but he does not presume on God. It's not as though Jonathan thinks this little raid he's planning on the Philistines has a guarantee of success. He doesn't say, "The LORD will for sure work for us..." Instead, he says, "*It may be* that the LORD will work for us."

That's a really big difference, don't you think? Faith has confidence in God but faith never presumes on God. Faith realizes that there can be failures in the wars of the Lord. It may be that our plans don't coincide with God's plans. He may allow us to experience setbacks instead of victory. The fact is that we just don't know beforehand how things will turn out in any venture that we undertake for the Lord and his church.

So when you know that God is Almighty but you don't know God's plan in detail how does this affect your life? You know what it means? *It means that you will put yourself out there.* You will take on challenges. You will accept risks. You won't be easily intimidated by the powers of evil in the world and in your life. *Instead of just living passively and accepting failure and defeat,* you will say, "*It may be* that the LORD will work in me and through me if I try this." Yes, it may be! How will you know if you don't try? Nothing ventured, nothing gained! The important thing is to put yourself in a place where God can use you.



Don't try to live a safe, carefree life where you never could get into trouble.

"IT MAY BE..."

My neighbor may be a fervent atheist, but I know that God can conquer even the most stubborn heart, so when I have a chance, I will speak a word to him of witness. Who knows what God will accomplish through my words of faith?

The American public may be quite indifferent to the recent Planned Parenthood scandals, but I know that if God wishes to renew our society, He is fully able to do so and therefore I will keep bearing witness to God as the author and Lord of human life. People of faith are not intimidated by the culture. They say, "We will work for changing the culture and changing the law. We will work sacrificially and relentlessly for the honor of God. For it may be that the LORD will work for us – whether through many or through few.

A few months back, in the B.C. Supreme Court, there was a hearing involving Trinity Western University and the B.C. Law Society. Here we have a small Christian university standing up against the spirit of the age on the issue of homosexuality. It seems like a no-contest. How can these few Christians stand up against the cultural juggernaut that is sweeping over our nation? And yet, there they were in court. There were lawyers, including an ARPA lawyer, standing up in a courtroom, making the arguments to defend Christian freedom in this nation. *What drives these people – and their supporters – if not the audacity of faith?* There is no guarantee that God will bring success in this particular venture. But that doesn't matter. What matters is that we put ourselves out there, that we make the case, that we fight the fight, for "it may be that the LORD will work for us, for nothing can hinder the LORD from saving by many or by few."

SATAN WANTS OUR SILENCE

Our culture has changed very rapidly. It's no longer possible to be a comfortable Christian in Canada or the United States. Powerful forces and currents in our society press us to be ashamed of the gospel – ashamed

of God teaches about origins, about the sanctity of life in all stages and conditions, about gender and about marriage being the union of man and woman as husband and wife in a life-long bond. These cultural powers insist that the Church's teachings are out of date, lacking compassion, that in fact they are bigoted and even hateful. We all feel the pressure to yield. We are threatened with consequences if we refuse to call what is good evil and what is evil good. We are commanded to conform our thinking to the orthodoxy of our culture – or else keep silent.

Jonathan looked up the cliffs and saw the Philistines controlling the pass. We look around in our society and we see that enemies of Christian values are sitting in the gates. They control the media, the universities, the courtrooms, the boardrooms and apparently, the law societies. How do we feel when we look at these things? Do we feel overwhelmed? Do we want to run away and hide? Or do we feel stirring in us the audacity of faith?

If Jonathan could demonstrate audacity of faith long ago, how much more should that be the case for us. Jonathan lived in the age of promise and waiting. Israel and the world were waiting for the Messiah to come.

Today we live in the age of fulfillment. Jesus has come, and He has conquered. He has defeated death and sin and Satan. The outcome is not in doubt. Satan is a defeated foe. The world has been reclaimed by God. The enemies we face are defeated enemies. The power they seem to have is but an illusion.

Thus we are not the servants of a Christ who is still trying to get dominion over the world. He is already the Lord of lords and King of kings.

THE BATTLE IS WON

So we don't have to achieve victory. That's already been done. We only have to stand where Christ has placed us. We stand fast. We use the shield of faith. We wield the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. And we keep saying:

"Let us do this thing."

"Let us try this project."

"Let us speak to our neighbor."

"Let us talk to this unbeliever."

"Let us remind politicians they are accountable to Christ the King."

"Let us write our letter to the editor."

"Let us take indeed take the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God out of its sheath and let us show the world its sharp edge."

For it may be that the Lord will work through us.

Sometimes, of course, we will be disappointed. We will try something new for God's Kingdom. We'll put ourselves out there, take the risks, tackle the challenge, only to see our work seemingly come to nothing. That happens quite a lot in our Christian lives. It can tempt us to be quitters.

But God says: keep trusting me, keep moving on in faith, keep taking those risks. Be ready to get out of your comfort zone. Don't try to live a safe, carefree life where you never could get into trouble. Look for new way. Keep trying. Keep looking. You may get hurt in the process of bearing witness to me but don't let that silence you. Just keep bearing witness. Do that until you die!

God was pleased to use the faith-initiative of Jonathan to accomplish an amazing deliverance. The Philistines at the top of the pass were not really expecting anything from the Hebrews. They were probably playing cards and drinking beer and eating pizza to pass the time. What was there to be worried about? Their people were completely in control of the situation. Israel was in complete subjection to the Philistines. The pagans were complacent in their power.

Nonetheless, Jonathan and his armor-bearer went up the steep wall of



**Talk to your neighbor.
For it may be that
the Lord will work
through us.**

the pass and attacked the Philistines. Twenty Philistine soldiers were soon dead and pretty soon a general panic ensued among the enemies of Israel. The enemies of Israel thought they were getting attacked by a large fighting force and they ran away in terror and confusion. Before long, Jonathan was joined by his father Saul and his 600 men and now the battle really went against the Philistines. The Lord saved Israel that day.

Do you see what can happen when people act in faith? When you really believe in God, when you expect great things from Him and just set out to do whatever your hand finds to do, then amazing things can happen. God can give you victory and that can inspire the rest of God's people to join you in the great struggle against sin and Satan and the world. Just when the enemies of the church seem most in control, the Lord can give deliverance.

WE WIN IF WE SHOW UP

It may seem that we Christians are on the wrong side of history. That's what our unbelieving neighbors

will tell us. The people who pay big fines for not wanting to bake a cake for a homosexual wedding, the lady who goes to jail because she doesn't want to validate a gay wedding, the grandmother in Toronto who has been in jail for ten years because she keeps protesting abortion in a place where the law says she can't – all of these folks are on the wrong side of history. So the media tells us with confidence.

But we know that they are not. We know that they are fighting the good fight of the faith. And we don't know yet what God will accomplish through them and through thousands of others who are standing firm. They have audacious and tenacious faith. They are not ashamed of the gospel. It may be that God is using them to advance his Kingdom in amazing ways.

What matters is not whether God gives us victory in this present age. *What matters is that we put ourselves out there.* If we do, it may be that God will graciously bless our endeavors. It may that our stance will prove to be a turning point – as was the courageous initiative of Jonathan. One thing you

can be sure of: when you act in faith, God's name will be honored and his kingdom will come through you. Your testimony will not be in vain.

CONCLUSION

When the final victory of Christ comes, at the end of this age, one thing alone will matter: *was I a faithful witness to the gospel?* Did I do everything in my power to promote the truth? We will all stand before God's only begotten Son and He will want to know whether we sought the truth with a pure and sincere heart. He will inquire whether we sought to live the truth authentically and with integrity. He will ask whether we stood up for the truth, speaking it out loud and in public, even when there difficult consequences.

Let us reflect on these matters and pray for the grace to demonstrate in our lives the audacity of faith. RP

Rev. Schouten is the pastor of Aldergrove Canadian Reformed Church.



A scarlet tanager busy in its pool

A MATTER OF SEEING

Our world is filled with decay and delights to consider

by Christine Farenhorst

This past summer we rented a little island cottage north of Kingston, Ontario, sight unseen, for the first week of July. The fact that in a world filled with animosity and chaos, spiritually as well as financially, we can freely do such a thing as rent a cottage is truly amazing. We read of beheadings, homicides, protests, countless refugee camps; of the persecuted, impoverished and dying; of massive and mind-boggling national debts; and we are free and able to go to a cottage. It is something to digest - something over which to chew.

It was a Friday afternoon when we traveled along the 401 towards our destination. We stopped at a small motel across from the Brighton Christian Reformed Church where, forty-two years ago, our second daughter had been baptized by my oldest brother. My brother is now with the Lord; the church, however, and its denomination, have deteriorated incredibly. We walked around the church building with a pang and thought, "How the mighty have fallen," but Paul's voice reproved us as we drove away across the black parking lot, "... let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall."

FOUR SCORE AND SOME YEARS...

Saturday morning we drove on towards Elgin, bought some fruit and then, became a trifle lost. We asked directions from a man who was an apparent four score and some years - a man who was motoring along on the edge of his driveway in a wheelchair. He was a friendly sort, all gummy smiles and anxious to help. After he had pointed us in the right direction, he began to back up his wheelchair... towards the nearby ditch.

My husband, Anco, spoke loudly

through the open window, "Stop! Stop, sir! There's a ditch behind you!"

His voice grew louder as the thin, old figure smilingly continued to move backwards.

"Stop! Stop!"

It was too late. The wheelchair and its occupant slid down a small embankment. The octogenarian fell backwards off his seat and tumbled onto the grass. We were both out of the car in an instant, as was another motorist passing by. Thin glasses had been knocked off. We reached him as he, on all fours, was reaching for them. A little dazed, the man still smiled as we carefully helped him up.

"You really have to watch those culverts," he said and grinned, while blood dribbled down his nose from small cut next to his left eye.

"Are you all right?" I held onto his arm, and he nodded brightly.

"I'm fine, really I am."

My husband and the other motorist retrieved the mechanized wheelchair, rolling it back onto the driveway. I held a kleenex on his cut and like a child that has fallen off his bicycle for the first time, he climbed back on the wheelchair full of courage.

"I hit the reverse instead of the forward," he said, "I should have known

"I hit the reverse instead of the forward," he said, "I should have known better."

better."

Anco checked the cut, but it was small and he seemed fine. So we drove off as he waved to us.

GOOD NEWS AND BAD

We launched our boat at the appointed dock at Sand Lake. The owner, who was to meet us and guide us to the cottage, was late.

She arrived in a small aluminum boat, exclaiming as she jumped out, "You must be Anco and Christine. Sorry about the wait."

We nodded and she went on. "There's good news and bad news. I'll give you the bad news first."

We nodded again.

"There was a fire in your cottage last night and the fire department had to come. The good news is that the cottage did not burn down and my daughter and myself have been cleaning all day."

We sympathized greatly, raised our eyebrows at one another when she wasn't looking, and followed her, boat-wise, out to the cottage. A little three-room construction on a beautiful hilly, three-acre island met our eyes. Fir trees, mossy rocks, a female loon nesting on a little outcropping by the dock, all met our expectations of a northern getaway. Disembarking and loading ourselves down with food and luggage, we climbed up a small path towards the front door. As we entered the smell of smoke pricked our nostrils. The upstairs bedroom ceiling was somewhat blackened but, on the whole, with the windows flung wide open, things seemed to be under control.

"The last people," Joan, our landlady, volunteered, "foolishly lit a candle before drifting off to sleep and the lamp shade under which the candle was standing

caught fire. The wife burned one of her hands trying to put the fire out. She had to go to emergency. They left a day early."

We nodded once more and felt compelled to say that, generally speaking, we were not in the habit of burning candles. Joan next related that a John 3:16 framed Bible text had been standing on the night table but, amazingly enough, it had not caught fire. This was something which had confounded the pyromaniac couple causing them to exclaim, "Your God did not burn!" Joan, who was a Christian, smiled as she told us this, commenting that perhaps this would give them something to think about.

WONDERS TO BEHOLD

We spent the week fishing, playing Boggle, reading Spurgeon sermons and marveling at God's creation. There was a scarlet tanager moment in which we noted a small splotch of red in a rock pool - a crimson fifth day creature stretching its wings as it bathed. God must have smiled when he pronounced this bird good. We often heard the raucous cry of the great blue heron as he skimmed by and saw, nearby, the dark belly and the white tail of the bald eagle majestically soar overhead. Again and again, the muskrat, apparently undaunted by our presence, swam up to and past our boat towards rock crevices on the shore. Daily the female loon, whom we dubbed Constance for her faithfulness in brooding her eggs, eyed us as we paddled by on our way out. A cerulean warbler sang a duet with a pine warbler. Water lilies lined inlets and little bays. During the day, the high heavens above declared how great God's love was towards us; and as we contentedly fished in the evening, the red-balled setting sun in the west sang of the immeasurable distance God had removed our sins from us. The osprey as well as the kingfisher dove, the big and small mouthed bass bit and we tanned under God's goodness.

SOMETHING BETTER COMING


Yet we were unable to forget that we are pilgrims and continue to be pilgrims en route to a much, much better place than Sand Lake or any other northern getaway.

On our way home, we stopped to say hello to the man who had fallen off his wheelchair.

For even as we enjoyed and glorified God's goodness, Genesis 3 lurked in the background. We noted that creation has many thorns and thistles. There was poison ivy to avoid. Fly-catchers hunted dragon flies and other insects. Bald eagles and osprey ate fish. Owls hunted mice... and so the list went on. And in the background, the newspaper headlines we had left behind, whispered of terrorist organizations, human turkey vultures, seemingly devouring God's people as if eating bread. Neither could we hide from the rampant materialism, egoism and self-centeredness breeding around and in ourselves. It skulked in our hearts and minds; it hid in the weeds as we trolled the shores of earthly life for a piece of the action.

On our way home, we stopped to say hello to the man who had fallen off his wheelchair. Full of good cheer, he was glad to see us. He told us that when he had fallen off his wheelchair, one of the things that had initially concerned him the most was that he might have lost his eye. It seemed that his left eye was made of glass. He was greatly relieved that it had remained in place in spite of the fall. We told him that we had prayed for his well-being and he smiled broadly.

We drove off thinking about the man's eye, and about eyes in general.

After the fall, the continued though spoiled beauty in nature is God's gift; and the promise of a totally renewed nature - both for the earth and for ourselves - through our Lord Jesus Christ, is grace. And Paul's words of hope followed us as we drove home on the highway, "For, as it is written, no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him" (I Cor. 2:9). 

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IN A TIDBITS RELEVANT, AND NOT SO, TO CHRISTIAN LIFE NUTSHELL

BY JON DYKSTRA

WILL OUR PETS BE ON THE NEW EARTH?

While some might question whether pesky critters like mosquitos will be there, most Christians seem to believe we'll find animals on the New Earth. After all, there were animals before the Fall, so why wouldn't they be there when the world is perfect once more?

But it is a matter of some debate as to whether animals there will be resurrected versions of the ones who died here – perhaps there will be cats, but might we find our very own Mr. Fluffy Wussles there? Pastor Douglas Wilson says yes, pointing to 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul speaks of the resurrection. In verses 35-44 the apostle talks of the dead rising and our flesh being like seeds sown, put in the ground to die, to then emerge with a body so much better than what we have now. But we aren't the only ones to have “flesh/seed” – the birds, animals and fish seem to as well.

And what you sow is not the body that is to be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. But God gives it a body as he has chosen, and to each kind of seed its own body. For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish (vs. 37-39).

If our flesh is to be sown and then to “sprout” into new life again, it would seem that animal, bird and fish flesh is likewise seeds that will sprout, and thus some reason to think that our pets, Mr. Wussle included, might be seen again. Note also that while animals, birds, and fish are mentioned as seed/flesh to be resurrected, those pesky mosquitos are not!

SOURCE: “Ask Doug: Will there be pets in heaven?” posted to www. CanonWired.com June 4, 2013



C.S. LEWIS ON HISTORY AND HAPPINESS

“What Satan put into the heads of our remote ancestors was the idea that they could ‘be like gods’ – could set up on their own as if they had created themselves – be their own masters – invent some sort of happiness for themselves outside God, apart from God. And out of that hopeless attempt has come nearly all that we call human history – money, poverty, ambition, war, prostitution, classes, empires, slavery – the long terrible story of man trying to find something other than God which will make him happy. God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing.” – *Mere Christianity*

LYRIC OF THE MONTH: “CHASING AFTER THE WIND”

In the remarkable Christian film *The Song* (to be reviewed next issue), singer Jed King learns life's big lessons the hard way, much like King Solomon. He realizes, as Solomon teaches in the book of Ecclesiastes, that success apart from God is empty, and a “Chasing after the wind.”

*Why have everything? You're leaving here with nothing.
Can't take anything, because you have to move on.
You were the wise one, putting your disguise on.
Lying to pretend, you're chasing after wind.*

*Why should you be, if no one's there to see?
All your deeds are like raindrops in the sea.
What do we mean, if nothing has meaning,
If in the end we're chasing after wind?*

*I have everything; that don't leave me anything.
I have my plans crumbling in the sand.
Now I understand, I was born a natural man,
racing to the end, chasing after wind.*

*Why should I be, if nothing has made me?
All that I've done, will flame out with the sun.
Why should I sing, if nothing has meaning?*

SOURCE: “Chasing after the Wind” is written by Richard Ramsey and performed by Alan Powell

THE BENEFIT OF KNOWING HISTORY

“History makes a young man to be old, without wrinkles or gray hairs, privileging him with the experience of age, without either the infirmities or inconveniences thereof.”

– *Thomas Fuller*

HE DIDN'T SAY MUCH, BUT WAS WORTH LISTENING TO

American president Calvin Coolidge was so close-lipped his nickname was "Silent Cal." A popular joke told about him had an attractive young lady approach the president to explain that she had made a bet with her friend that she could get him to say more than two words. "You lose," the president replied. But while he didn't say much, when he did speak, he was worth hearing. Here are some of the best quotes from Silent Cal.

- "Don't expect to build up the weak by pulling down the strong."
- "No man ever listened himself out of a job."
- "No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave."
- "Prosperity is only an instrument to be used, not a deity to be worshipped."
- "Perhaps one of the most important accomplishments of my administration has been minding my own business."

WHEN WE UNDERSTAND HOW BEAUTIFUL JESUS IS

Corrie Ten Boom's autobiographical *The Hiding Place* is best known for its account of her war time experiences. But one of the many powerful sections in the book is about something that happened decades before, in the year 1919.

Corrie describes her Tante Jans as a Christian social activist, who helped the poor, and also wrote tracts and pamphlets decrying such evils as mutton sleeves and bicycle skirts. In other words, a busy, well-meaning, but generally humorless lady trying to earn her way to heaven.

When the doctor diagnoses her with diabetes it is quite a shock as there was no treatment at the time. It meant that Tante Jans had only a few years. Her response? "And from then on she threw herself more forcefully than ever into writing, speaking forming clubs and launching projects."

But one day her weekly blood test came back black. Black meant she not longer had years, but only days, three weeks at most. Her family learned about the results before Tante Jans, and they gathered to consider how to tell her. Corrie's father hoped that: "Perhaps she will take heart from all she has accomplished. She puts great store on accomplishment, Jans does, and who knows but she is right!" So upstairs to her room they all go.

"Come in," she called to Father's knock, and added as she always did, "and close the door before I catch my death of drafts." She was sitting at her round mahogany table, working on yet another appeal... As she saw the number of people entering the room, she laid down her pen. She looked from one face to another, until she came to mine and gave a little gasp of comprehension. This was Friday morning, and I had not yet come up with the results of the test.

"My dear sister-in-law," Father began gently, "there is a joyous journey which each of God's children sooner or later sets out on. And, Jans, some must go to their Father empty-handed, but you will run to Him with hands full!"

"All your clubs..." Tante Anna ventured.

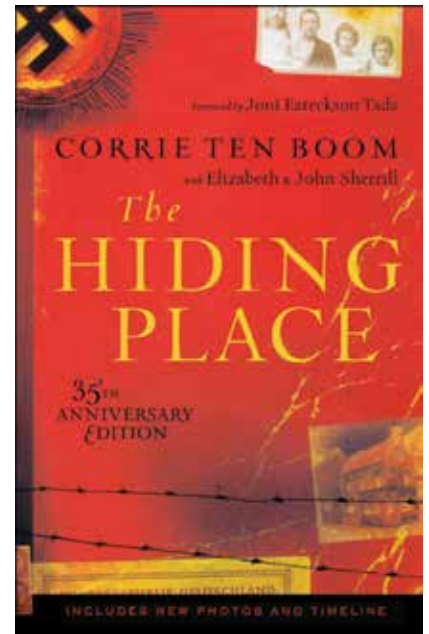
"Your writings..." Mama added.

"The funds you've raised..." said Betsie.

"Your talks..." I began.

But our well-meant words were useless. In front of us the proud face crumpled; Tante Jans put her hands over her eyes and began to cry. "Empty, empty!" she choked at last through her tears. "How can we bring anything to God? What does He care for our little tricks and trinkets?"

And then as we listened in disbelief, she lowered her hands and with tears still coursing down her face whispered, "Dear Jesus, I thank You that we must come with empty hands. I thank You that You have done all – all – on the Cross, and that all we need in life or death is to be sure of this."



BEST MISTAKE

Our magazine's wonderful proofreader marked it as a typo, and of course it was...but the very best I've made. While writing about a Pride parade in last month's issue I offered up a definition of "transgenders" as being made up of:

...men who want to be women, and women who want to be me.

I missed an "n" at the end, but, really, doesn't it work either way?

ON MUNDANE FAITHFULNESS...

"Everybody wants to save the earth; nobody wants to help mum do the dishes."

- P. J. O'Rourke

THE WIT AND WISDOM OF WINSTON CHURCHILL

- "An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last."
- "Politics is the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month and next year. And to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn't happen."
- When I look back on all these worries, I remember the story of the old man who said on his deathbed that he had had a lot of trouble in his life, most of which had never happened."
- "You have enemies? Good. That means you've stood up for something, sometime in your life."



Why study History?

by Michael Wagner

Things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. – Psalm 78:3-4

History is important for day-to-day life in ways that most of us don't know. A shared history unifies communities, and knowing history can inspire individuals to be better people because they can learn from previous generations what to do and what to watch out for.

Recently history professor John Fea of Messiah College in Pennsylvania wrote a book about the importance of history called *Why Study History? Reflecting on the Importance of the Past*. While an aim of the book was to encourage college students to major in history, what he shares would be beneficial to all Christians.

IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY

Fea points out that historical accounts are important to the identity

of communities: "We need the stories of our past to sustain us as a people. History is the glue that holds communities and nations together."

The history of our community (whether as a church, ethnic group, or political unit) creates a perception of shared experience with other members of our community. This helps to bind us to one another.

The kind of experience we share with other community members will be influenced by how its history is presented. In a national context, competing groups may emphasize different aspects of the past and thus offer different versions of history. In the United States, disputes of this nature have arisen in public schools. Fea writes, "The battle over what American

schoolchildren learn about the nation's past has been a significant part of the ongoing culture wars in this country."

"PAST" VERSUS "HISTORY"

Fea makes an important distinction between "the past" and "history."

The past consists of all the events that have occurred before the present time. This includes the dates and facts about what happened.

History, on the other hand, involves the creation of a narrative using information about the past. History is always written by a person, and each one has to determine which information from the past is important and how it fits together. In this sense, history always involves an interpretive framework provided by the historian.

All history is written from a particular perspective or worldview.

THE REFORMATION RECAST

That being the case, it is very important to determine whether or not a particular historian works within a good worldview. For example, when a Marxist writes a history of the sixteenth century, he sees economic forces as the primary factors leading to the origin and success of the Reformation. He will discount the specifically “religious” aspects of the Reformation as window dressing for the real action which he believes is in the economic sphere. The Marxist does not even believe in God, so how could he attribute any facet of the Reformation to spiritual activity? It’s completely outside the realm of possibility in his worldview. Thus a Marxist interpretation of the sixteenth century will inevitably miss the most important aspect of the Reformation, namely, the work of God in restoring His truth to the church.

A Reformed historian will look at exactly the same information as the Marxist and see an entirely different picture. The Reformed historian will focus on the religious and spiritual nature of the Reformation.

Economic forces do matter at various points throughout history but they cannot account for genuine spiritual occurrences and the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of people.

While there are many learned and thoughtful historians of various persuasions who have written important books, if they didn’t approach history from a Biblical Christian perspective it is possible that they missed important features of their subject.

Like a Reformed historian, a Roman Catholic historian may also see the Reformation within a spiritual context. However, his analysis would likely be the opposite of the Reformed view. To him or her, the Reformation involved a schism from the true church.

Clearly, the perspective held by any historian will provide the interpretive framework through which he or she evaluates the past. All historians operate within a particular worldview that determines what they will consider to be worthy of including in their account.

“PROGRESSIVE” HISTORY

Leftwing historians, often known as “progressive historians,” understand the importance of history in the life of

Fea also notes that some of these efforts by Christians have been so lopsided as to turn history into political propaganda.

a community. They also understand the power of historical interpretation as a method of promoting political change. Particular historical accounts can be used as the justification for political action. As a result, they interpret history through an especially leftwing framework as a means to advocate for socialist solutions. Fea explains:

As these historians began to speak out against the injustices that they saw in society, they began to articulate a method of approaching the past that was concerned less with objectivity and more with activism. They looked to the past for

CHRISTIANS WHO DON'T KNOW THEIR HISTORY ARE LIABLE TO DISBELIEVE IT

by Jon Dykstra

I recently encountered a young atheist professor who contended that the world was, morally speaking, getting better and better just as one might expect from an evolving species. This professor has a doctorate in ancient history, but it was in our more recent past that many shared his optimism for Mankind. Just over a hundred years ago folks believed that we as a species were taking giant steps forward, progressing and improving.

Then World War I happened and all this optimism was exposed as simply naïveté. Man was just as brutal as ever, and if any still doubted it World War II and the Holocaust were just around the corner. Getting better, are we?

So, as they say, when a man doesn't know his history, he is

doomed to repeat it. This young atheist's position is hardly new, and had already been disproven, but here it is again, with another generation listening because both he and they don't know their history.

But it isn't just atheists who forget. The Old Testament is a record of a nation that never seemed to learn from their parents' mistakes. This started early, with Isaac passing his wife off as his sister, seemingly unaware his father had already tried this stunt twice before. In Judges 2 we read that the people of Israel stayed faithful to the Lord “all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the Lord had done for Israel.” But after Joshua and comrades-in-

antecedents to contemporary social problems that might help point the world in the right direction.

Their accounts of American history therefore focus on the negative aspects and largely ignore the positive aspects. Fea notes, “They wrote books calling attention to the nation’s long history of injustice. Such works were largely one-sided, but that was the point.”

If the United States is historically based on racist oppression and capitalist exploitation of the poor, then the way to improve it is through socialism. Government planners can enforce “social justice” through state coercion. This is the leftwing ideal, and it appears more plausible when backed by historical arguments about pervasive evil in the nation’s past. If individual freedom has led to oppression and exploitation, then it must be sacrificed to government control in order to achieve justice.

HISTORY MOTIVATING POLITICS

In other words, a particular historical perspective becomes the underlying basis for an associated political agenda. History conducted in this way provides the driving force for a

program of political change.

The example of the “progressive historians” demonstrates the use of history in a powerful and negative way. But history can also be used to undergird a positive agenda. Fea points out that some American Christians have written history books to boost the case for Christian political activism. For example, if Christianity held a privileged position in earlier periods of American political life (and it did), then Christianity should not be expelled from American political life today.

However, Fea also notes that some of these efforts by Christians have been so lopsided as to turn history into political propaganda, much like the progressive historians have done. This is certainly an error to avoid, but it does not discount the possibility of the proper use of history to buttress Christian activism in the culture wars.

SANCTIFICATION

Besides the political role of history mentioned above, history can also motivate us to improve ourselves as individuals. As Fea explains it,


The past has the power to stimulate us, fill us with emotion, and arouse our deepest convictions about what

is good and right. When we study inspirational figures of the past, we often connect with them through time and leave the encounter wanting to be better people or perhaps even continue their legacy of reform, justice, patriotism, or heroism.

Used in this way, history can actually be an aid in sanctification.

CONCLUSION

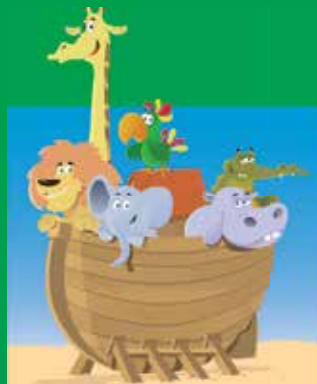
History is important for the role it plays in binding communities together and in motivating political action. It can also help to encourage individuals to improve themselves or inspire them to become involved in a cause. The value of particular historical accounts will be heavily influenced by the perspective of the writer of the account. Only a Christian historian can truly appreciate the role of God in history.

It’s hard to love something you know little about. Learning the history of your country can help you to love your country. Learning the history of your church may help you to appreciate your church more too. Whatever the case, it is certain that studying history is a valuable activity. 

arms died out, “the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord...” They forgot their history and turned their back on God.

A more modern example: at a demonstration against Planned Parenthood this past month I met an older man who as a boy learned some of the Bible stories. He was surprised to hear anyone thought the stories were true. He laughed at the Flood story, wondering how all those animals could fit on Noah’s “little boat.” The picture he had in mind was some cute bathtub toy version of the Ark, the kind Christian bookstores sell in their kids’ section. He had no mental picture of the supertanker-sized, football-field-long Ark that the Bible describes. And because he didn’t really know his biblical history, he disbelieved it.

We need to pass on an accurate account of what God has



VS.

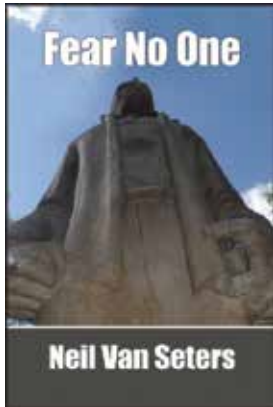


done, particularly to our own children. A proper understanding of History is a gift we give the next generation to help them learn from our successes and avoid our mistakes. It is us asking them to climb up on our shoulders so they can reach higher, and know God better.

FEAR NO ONE

BY NEIL VAN SETERS

BIOGRAPHY / 115 PAGES / 2010



Decades ago the author's grandfather, Jake Van Seters, wrote an account of his terrible suffering as a slave laborer from 1944-1945 deep in Eastern Germany. Neil took that account and then talked to his grandpa for many hours to put "flesh" on his story, and this book is the result.

The Van Seters family crest, established in 1435, has a motto that reads "*Deum Timendo, Neminem Timeo*" or "Fearing God, I Fear No One." This motto and belief sustained Jack throughout his imprisonment as a slave.

During those eleven months he experienced many emotions but never fear. It was this lack of fear that Jack believes helped him to stay alive. Those who were afraid often died. Jack said, "The worst thing you could have was fear. It stinks." Fear can be smelled.

Jake's father was a miller in Dirksland on the island of Goeree-Overflakkee and died at a young age which meant that Jake, as the eldest but only 11 years old, took over the business. When WWII erupted, Jake had to continue working at the mill and so could not go "underground" as many young men did, including his two brothers. Then in May of 1944 Jake was arrested without cause and after passing through a number of different prisons ended up in Eastern

Germany as a slave.

The German's work slaves were dispensable because if one died another was readily put in his place. Thus living conditions were deplorable and Van Seters was always hungry. Neil quotes from *Man's Search for Meaning*, by Victor Frankl, who describes hunger this way:

Those who have not gone through a similar experience can hardly conceive of the soul destroying mental conflict and clashes of will power which a famished man experiences.

Prisoners learned that if the pain of hunger disappeared they knew they would soon be dead. And so the "prisoners lived each day with the awful combination of suffering through the pain but also praying that it wouldn't stop."

Jake found strength in living close to the Lord, with prayer and reading his Bible. God's presence felt like a physical presence.

You feel someone is watching you. You are asked to do things that you think you could never do, and you feel that you are at the end. But God gives you that little more strength you need to still survive another day.

During this time of imprisonment, Jake's leadership qualities helped others to survive. The last quote I'll share is one that we can all take to heart:

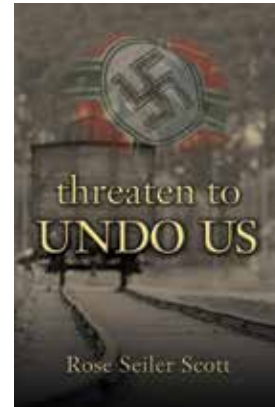
I said I had no fear, but that's not because I was so brave but because I fear the Lord and I know I was always in His hands.

- JO VANDERPOL

THREATEN TO UNDO US

BY ROSE SEILER SCOTT

HISTORICAL FICTION / 396 PAGES / 2015



This historical fiction is based on true incidents that took place in Poland during and after WWII. Generations of German families had been living peacefully in Poland, Liesel and her family being one of those families. When the Germans overran Poland, the German inhabitants were left alone but the Polish were deported. But when the war ended Poland was divided by the Allies down the middle with the "Curzon Line" and the USSR and Stalin got the land where Liesel lived. It took all of her courage, stamina and energy to keep her family together as she fled her homeland while her husband was a prisoner of war in Russia.

Stalin did not dismantle the German concentration camps but instead used them as labour camps for undesirables such as the Germans. though he allowed the Polish people to return to their homes. Luther's great hymn *A Great and Mighty Fortress* was of comfort to Liesel during her incredible struggles.

This is a worthwhile book for high school libraries, giving another picture of WWII in a country that suffered terribly under Stalin after the war ended. The Germans, over the whole, left the women they conquered alone but not so the brutal Russians. One caution: there is one incident of rape but it is mentioned so obscurely that it can be missed.

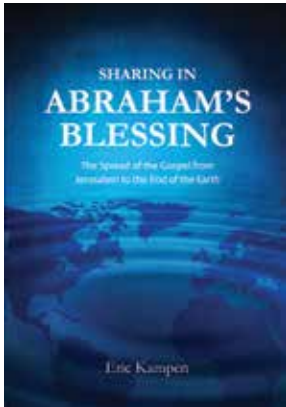
- JO VANDERPOL

ON CANADA'S CHRISTIAN HISTORY & HERITAGE

SHARING IN ABRAHAM'S BLESSING

BY ERIC KAMPEN

HISTORY / 247 PAGES / 2014



In just 247 pages Rev. Kampen takes us on a “helicopter tour” of the last two thousand years of church history. His broad overview takes the major strands of the spread of the Gospel and weaves them together into a succinct and readable book. So, for example, the church history of the Netherlands is hardly mentioned because it played a very small role in the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. Instead there's a strong emphasis on the role of the Roman Catholic and later the Anglican and Presbyterian Churches, who were more pivotal figures.

I enjoyed this bird's eye view – it is a fresh approach to church history. One strand that I found very interesting is that when the New World was discovered, the Reformation had not yet taken place. So it was Roman doctrine that was first brought over by the explorers. Rev. Kampen notes, “When one looks over the centuries, it is often remarkable how the gospel was brought by imperfect people, in imperfect ways, with questionable interpretations of the Bible.” But as the seed was sown, the powerful Word did its work. I'd highly recommend this for home, school and church libraries. It can be purchased from www.GoDutch.com.

– JO VANDERPOL



LEAVING GOD BEHIND

BY MICHAEL WAGNER

HISTORY / 145 PAGES / 2012

If you like Michael Wagner's *RP* articles you're sure to enjoy this book. In it he has the space to fully develop and demonstrate a thesis he has repeatedly touched on in our magazine: Canada has historically been a Christian country. If that sounds surprising to you, then you need to read *Leaving God Behind*. Wagner lays out the evidence, from old federal laws to how Christianity was once treated in the public schools. But, Wagner explains, since the introduction of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in 1982, many of these policies and laws have been eliminated – the Charter had been used to secularize the country.

Why is this important to understand? Many of our young people have grown up in an entirely secular Canada and have implicitly accepted the notion that God doesn't belong in politics. They might know better than to say it quite that way, and might make exceptions for an issue like the unborn, but they might well object when someone promotes a specifically Christian perspective on a public issue. Who are we, they wonder, to force our morality on others?

But as Wagner demonstrates, this isn't how Christians used to think. Now, we don't want to force God on others – unlike some other religions, we know that conversion can't be accomplished via force – but we also know that God is sovereign over all of life, without exception. And that includes the government.

So yes, Canada is no longer a Christian country. But it was once – the proof is right here in Wagner's *Leaving God Behind*. And as Christians who want God to be acknowledged and glorified in every sphere of life, we should be praying that Canada can once again be known as His.

Leaving God Behind is available at www.tinyurl.com/LeavingGodBehind for \$20.

– JON DYKSTRA



CHP: REMEMBERING 25 YEARS

EDITED BY HAROLD LUDWIG

HISTORY / 121 PAGES / 2015

I'm old enough to have been involved in several Christian Heritage Party campaigns through the years, but young enough to have missed the party's forming. So it was with interest that I paged through Harold Ludwig's look back at the CHP's first 25 years. One of the interesting factoids that caught my attention was that the CHP was first conceived of as a national pro-life party – they knew from the start that the murder of the unborn was the most pressing political issue of our age (and they knew better than to worry about being labeled a “one-issue party” by their critics).

This look back is filled with contributions from founding members, mini-biographies of past leaders, a historical overview, and highlights from the national conferences through the years.

So who would most like this book? As editor Ludwig puts it, “If the CHP was part of your past or if you are curious to learn more, you should acquaint yourself with this book.” As Christians become increasingly unwelcome in other political parties it seems a good idea to get re-acquainted with the CHP.

You can order your copy at www.tinyurl.com/CHP25years for \$25.

– JON DYKSTRA

BY JON DYKSTRA

ACE WONDER

FAMILY DRAMA

92 MIN / 2014



Gator Moore is an imaginative ten-year-old whose alter ego is a boy detective – Ace Wonder – who can solve any mystery. But first he has to find one. That's why the always exuberant Gator becomes even more excited when he meets Derek Morton, an older teen boy whose recently deceased grandfather has left him a mysterious note. Boy seeking mystery meets boy with mystery!

No sex, language, or worldview concerns, but there is one notable bit of violence. When Derek attacks a large would-be thief he gets himself into a scary situation. Fortunately Gator's dad arrives on the scene just in time to dispatch the thug in a half dozen blows. This fight, intended to be somewhat comical, is too realistic for what is otherwise a family-friendly film.

Ace Wonder is quite good, quite safe, and quite funny, but not "very" in any of those categories. Still, Gator Moore is charming enough and funny enough to make this a film that mom and dad can enjoy along with the kids. The message at the heart of *Ace Wonder* is one that parents will appreciate – that we must give our hearts to our children, and also grab hold of their hearts. The short, violent fight scene means this likely wouldn't be appropriate for children under 10.

ILLUSIONISM: PREPARE TO AMAZE

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO

45 MINUTES / 2011



Harris III is a Christian illusionist who thinks half the fun in doing magic is being up front that he's tricking us – he's an *honest* trickster. And he's also a generous one: in this DVD he gives away the secret behind five of his illusions.

Each one is simple enough for a ten-year-old to perform but mystifying enough to trick a close-watching 40-something year old (who isn't above making use of the rewind and slow motion features on his DVD player).

So first we get to see the trick, and then he goes through how to do it step by step, including tips on getting your patter right – the way a magician talks is as important as what he does with his hands. To perform them, all that's needed are a few common enough items: a deck of cards, a few dollar bills, a box of crayons, and an elastic band. Oh, and a bottle of rubber glue. Then it's all about practice – lots of practice!

This could make a fun gift for any outgoing child who likes to perform, or maybe a kid who likes to think through and figure out puzzles. You can find it at Harrisiii.com, but give a miss to his second DVD, a drama called *Entangled* – its trailer makes it look much more intriguing than it really is.

THE WILD BROTHERS: WELCOME TO OUR WORLD

REALITY / DOCUMENTARY

28 MIN / 2015



Everyone in our family enjoyed this, from our 2-year-old all the way up to mom and dad. The Wilds live in the deep jungles of Papua, Indonesia, where dad is a missionary to the Wanu tribe. The four Wild brothers are the sort of boys who collect pets in their pockets, and who love to explore the jungle with a butterfly net in one hand and a slingshot in the other.

In this, the first of their three DVDs we get introduced to the family, but more to the point, the boys introduce us to God's creation. So we go hunting with them, we're introduced to their best friend Pu, and we get to watch their facial expression as Pu introduces them to a local delicacy, raw echidna brain. A fun extra is the boys skinning a ten-foot python that, even after it has been dead for an hour, is still moving!

No cautions to note, other than that it isn't clear what denominational background the family is from. However, the Christian reflection the boys and their parents share with viewers is thoughtful and solid.

We've also watched and enjoyed the second in the series, called *Jewels of the Jungle*, and look forward to checking out the third. The series can be purchased at AnswerInGenesis.org or Christianbooks.com.



THE FREE SPEECH APOCALYPSE

DOCUMENTARY
89 MINUTES / 2015

In 2012 Pastor Douglas Wilson gave a public lecture on the contentious topic of sexuality God's way. But it wasn't simply a public lecture: his event took place on the campus of a large university and was advertised well ahead of time, giving campus LGBT groups and their supporters time to arrange protests and arrange to fill the auditorium seats. In addition, this wasn't just any university campus: it was Indiana University, home of the Kinsey Institute, where the infamous sexologist Alfred Kinsey helped launch the Sexual Revolution. For a talk on God's thoughts about sex, this was as hostile a setting as could be had.

His talk, and all the hysteria and hoopla that surrounded it, is the centerpiece of director Darren Doanne's new documentary *The Free Speech Apocalypse*. Doanne uses the event to tackle three related subjects:

- 1. The intolerance of the Left** – As the title suggests, free speech and tolerance are the main topics tackled. Douglas Wilson comes to Indiana to dialogue, but that's not what the Left wants. Instead activist students scream and shout: "We believe in free speech, but this is hate speech!"
- 2. False allegations made about Douglas Wilson** – When students chant, "Racist, Sexist, Anti-Gay; Douglas Wilson go away!" we get to see how Wilson is able to respond and rebut these accusations.
- 3. The difference between Left and Right** – Wilson notes, "this is the difference between the conservative mindset and the liberal mindset: The conservative thinks always in terms of *tradeoffs*. The liberal thinks in terms of *solutions*. The liberal wants *solutions*. And he doesn't want to think in terms of tradeoffs. He doesn't think there is ever a price tag for what he is advocating." Liberals demand more and more, not thinking about how someone will have to pay for this. Conservatives are grown up enough to realize there are no perfect solutions – everything comes with a cost.

Related to this last point, the American Civil War is touched on. In the US it is a near universal belief that this was a good and just war because it ended slavery. But it also resulted in 600,000 dead - that was the tradeoff that liberals don't consider. American presidential candidate Ted Cruz appears in the film for less than a minute, but his interview highlights how even conservatives and Christians can forget to consider the tradeoffs. Concerning the Civil War he says it "was absolutely a just war" but concerning abortion, "We have the ability to change this, and to change this without a war fought in the streets." So he understands that war would be an unsatisfactory tradeoff for today, but won't even consider whether that might have been true for the Civil War.

Cautions

The topic matter – sexuality God's way vs. the world's way, and tolerance God's way vs. the world's way – means this is a film for mature audiences only.

The F-bomb is put to regular use by students, and these occurrences are not bleeped out. The one thing I found surprising was the selection, by the director, of some backing music for a ten-second segue that also included multiple f-bombs – an unnecessary, but fortunately very short, addition. There are also a few brief shots of homosexuals and others prancing about, and one line-drawn diagram shown for a few seconds that includes a depiction of a naked male butt.

Finally, and this isn't really a caution, but more an advisement, there is nothing here related to Douglas Wilson's stance on Federal Vision.

Conclusion

This is an enormously ambitious film but because it tries to fit so much in, it might leave viewers exhausted by the time the credits role.

But it is worth putting in the effort. Few Christians are both able *and willing* to beard the liberal lion in his den, and it is fun and encouraging to watch Wilson venture forth. Here we get to see a brave man standing up, outnumbered, but not outmaneuvered because he stands on God's Word.

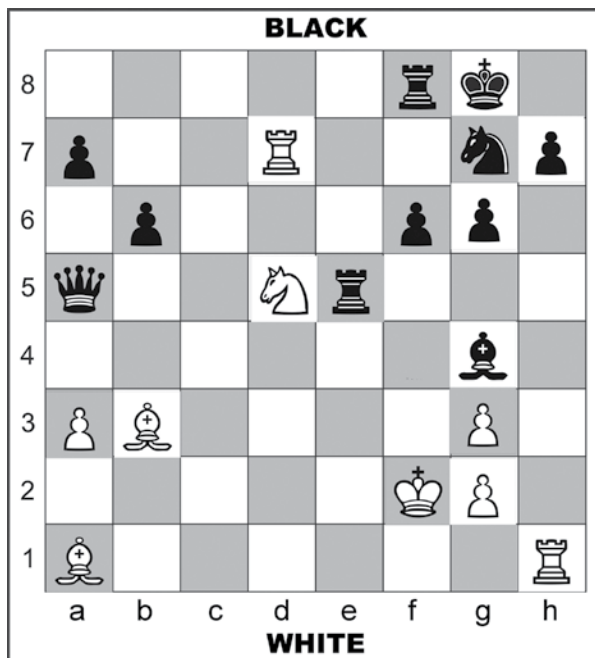
This film is also a must-see because it shows what is coming and what we are up against. As the Left continues to marginalize Christians, it may well be that in some circumstances no matter what we say or do we will not be able to win the debate. And not because of any weakness in our position, but rather because the other side has no interest in discussing. They'll want to meet our words with their shouts, or their claims of victimhood, or even their fists.

However, even then our light can shine. If our words are shouted down, our demeanor can stand in sharp contrast. In Wilson we see a joyful warrior, secure in the knowledge that God has already won. This is how we need to be.

You can watch this online or buy a DVD copy at FreeSpeechApocalypse.com.

ENTICING ENIGMAS & CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Chess Puzzle #226



Riddle for Punsters #226

"Shockingly Dirty?"

How was the Joanne punished for getting dirt all over her best clothes?
She was gr _____ ed.

What happens if an electrician does not eat enough?
He looks rather w _____ y.

Problem to Ponder #226

"Don't blank out - fill in each blank!"

What number must □ represent in each question?

e.g. $\square + 2(\square) + 3(\square) = 24$ Answer: $\square = 4$

- $\square - 2(\square) + 3(\square) = 12$
- $(\square)^2 - 5(\square) + 6 = 0$
- $2(\square) - 12 = 5(\square) - \square$
- $\square + (\square - 2) + (\square - 3) = 2(\square - 4)$
- $\square / 2 + \square / 6 = [2(\square) + 4] / 4$
- $\square / 2 - 6 / \square = [2 - \square] / [3(\square)]$

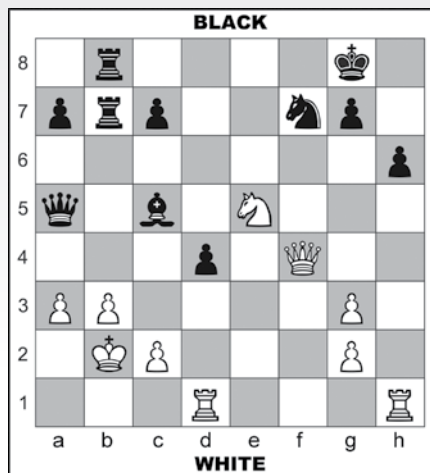
WHITE to Mate in 2

Or, If it is BLACK's Move,

BLACK to Mate in 3

Last Month's Solutions

Solution to Chess Puzzle #225



Answer to Riddle for Punsters

#225 - "Keeping Track of their Skills"

Why did Schultz want a job with the railroad? He had no rail work experience but he heard that they give lots of free on the job training.

Answer to Problem to Ponder

#225 - "Fruit Salad Anyone?"

The unscrambled words are shown IN **BOLD** below the word to unscramble.

PLEAP APPLE	PLENAPIPE PINEAPPLE	NOWMERLATE WATERMELON	TRYWEBARRS STRAWBERRY
RANGETINE TANGERINE	RARESPYRB RASPBERRY	PLANETOCA CANTALOPE	LOMENSKUM MUSKMELON
DACOOVA AVOCADO	LYERUBBER BLUEBERRY	NICETRANE NECTARINE	FRAGEPURIT GRAPEFRUIT

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

WHITE TO MATE IN 3

Descriptive Notation

- QxN ch K-R2
- KRxP ch KxR
- Q-N6 mate

IF

- QxN ch K-R1
- KRxP ch PxR
- N-N6 mate

Algebraic Notation

- Qf4xf7+ Kg8-h7
- Rh1xh6+ Kh7xh6
- Qf7-g6 ++

IF

- Qf4xf7+ Kg8-h8
- Rh1xh6+ g7xh6
- Ne5-g6 ++

BLACK TO MATE IN 4

Descriptive Notation

- RxP ch
- PxR Q-B6 ch
- K-N1 RxP ch
- K-R2 Q-N7 mate

IF

- QxP ch
- K-N1 RxP ch
- PxR RxP ch
- K-B2 Q-N7 mate

Algebraic Notation

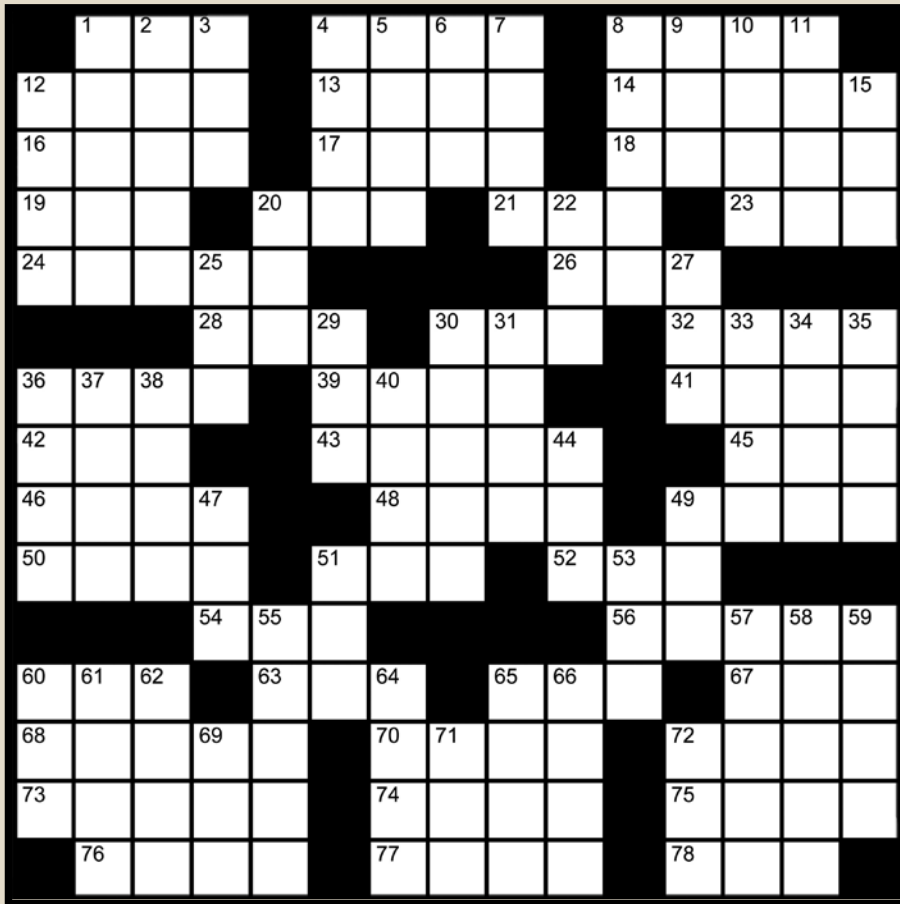
- Rb7xb3 +
- c2xb3 Qa5-c3 +
- Kb2-b1 Rb8xb3 +
- Kb1-a2 Qc3-b2 ++

IF

- Qa5xa3 +
- Kb2-b1 Rb7xb3 +
- c2xb3 Rb8xb3 +
- Kb1-c2 Qa3-b2 ++

CROSSWORD PUZZLE

BY JEFF DYKSTRA



SERIES 2-3

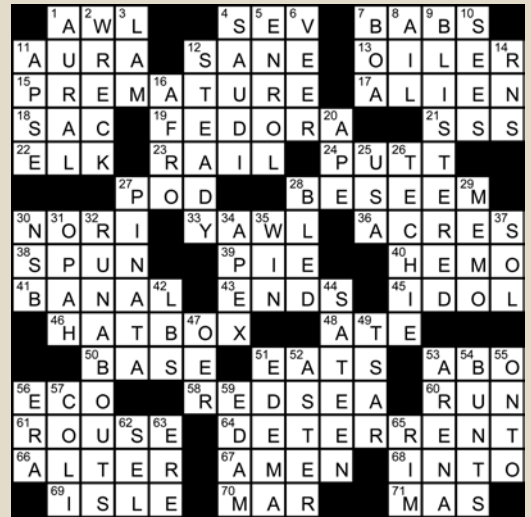
PUZZLE CLUES

ACROSS

1. Patty needs it, or the back of a woman's head
4. "Let the cost be ____ from the..." (Ezra 6)
8. Whispered attention-getter
12. Lavishing adoring attention
13. "...to him who is ____ to do..." (Eph. 3)
14. To receive and pass on
16. Name of four "Holy Roman Emperors"
17. Shout
18. What the Babyonians brought the Jews into
19. "By the breath of God ____ is given" (Job 37)
20. Three consecutive letters in the alphabet
21. Another form of 'Tis
23. Number of fingers that rhymes with 15 down
24. What your head might do that needs aspirin
26. Provider of Internet service (abbreviation)
28. Part of Jacob put out of joint (Genesis 32)
30. Top World War I pilot (on either side)
32. Well ventilated
36. Palindromic and polite way to address a lady
39. "For ____ you is born this day..." (Luke 2)
41. Group of three
42. Force that carries out Impossible Mission(s)
43. Food that gets tossed even without a food fight
45. One, some, a, an (but not a specific one)
46. Cover to keep your tent dry or shaded
48. Cab
49. Take back an action in word processing
50. "A jug of wine, a loaf of bread, and ____"
51. Abbreviation for a trigonometric function

52. French for *step*, as in ____ *de deux*
54. Nickname for your male sibling
56. One who is chosen or set apart by God
60. Belonging to Diana (shortened form)
63. *Much ____ about Nothing* (Shakespeare play)
65. First half of a typical Scrooge remark
67. Plaything for kids or adults who never grew up
68. Wide-winged necktie
70. Overshadow ominously
72. Type of agent who arrests drug dealers
73. Suddenly speak (out) without thinking
74. Sea eagle
75. In addition to, as well as (clues *all so accurate*)
76. Gritty, or how something might make you feel
77. Genus of large antelope
78. See you later!

LAST MONTH'S SOLUTION



SERIES 2-2

DOWN

1. Mess up a *batch* that doesn't quite work out
2. "...its end is ____ destruction." (Number 24)
3. Prefix meaning new, as in ____ *conservative*
4. On a date, this is what the man does
5. Help a criminal (to make an illegal wager?)
6. "No ____ befalls the righteous..." (Prov. 12)
7. Place that serves ____-sliced meats
8. "I ____ on toward the goal..." (Eph. 3)
9. Male or female
10. Long narrow opening
11. Story that may be tall one (no glass needed)
12. Nike's exhortation to "Just ____"
15. Desire (a bit of a *yearning* for something)
20. Batter's statistic (abbreviation)
22. Not a win or a loss
25. Measure of electrical resistance
27. What one does to oneself on the back
29. What comes out of a cut (of part of *octopus*?)
30. He supposedly held up the world (not a thief!).
31. Persuade gently
33. Potential nuclear power in the Middle East
34. Thick outer covering of fruit or cheese
35. Toy that has its ups and downs
36. Glove that is missing its fingers
37. Nursemaid or maid in East Asia or India
38. Huge hairdo
40. Group of countries defending Western Europe
44. "...____ your morsel in the wine." (Ruth 2)
47. A very English place to wet your whistle
49. Country that keeps most track of 20 down
51. Fish found in the North Atlantic
53. Type of tree (or its remains after a forest fire)
55. In poor condition (because the rats got at it?)
57. Warm nation, with interesting shape to boot
58. Type of mythology featuring Thor and Odin
59. Remote control car maker
60. Just a tiny bit (of paint)
61. Body of land in the middle of the water
62. What a boat may do in the middle of the water
64. Colloquial term for margarine
65. Lean, almost scarily skinny
66. Short form for a brand of traveller's cheques
69. Suffix originally for non-profit websites
71. Greatest hockey defenseman ever?
72. What 72 across might do to a drug dealer

**THE VERY BEST
DINOSAUR
BOOKS!** P.32

REAGAN VS. OBAMA
P.26

MY DEMOCRACY IS
BETTER THAN YOUR
DEMOCRACY
P.23



THE EDITOR • BOOK REVIEWS • CROSSWORD

**ARE THEY
MOVING?**

AND THE CHURCH P.16



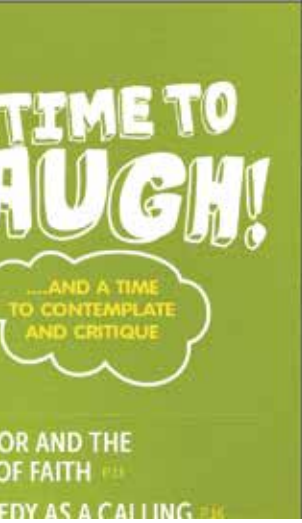
THE EDITOR • BOOK REVIEWS • CROSSWORD

**IT'S TIME TO
LAUGH!**

...AND A TIME
TO CONTEMPLATE
AND CRITIQUE

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EDY AS A CALLING P.16



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PERSPECTIVE CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS

LEST WE FORGET

On May 5, 2015 the Netherlands celebrated the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II with a re-enactment of the liberation.

NOTA BENE P.8

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