

Reformed

A MAGAZINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

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PERSPECTIVE

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Reformed PERSPECTIVE

A MAGAZINE FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY

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WHY WE'LL NEVER RUN OUT OF THINGS TO DISCOVER



A few years ago *NationalGeographic.com* published a provocatively titled article:

“Opinion: Science is running out of things to discover.”

Author John Horgan’s view is a rarity, but not entirely unique – it was already popping up in the late 19th century. In Steven Weinberg’s *Dreams of a Final Theory*, he shares this recollection from famed physicist Robert Millikan:

“In 1894, I lived...with four other Columbia graduate students,

one a medic and the other three working in sociology and political science, and I was ragged continuously by all of them for sticking to a 'finished,' yes, a 'dead subject,' like physics when the new 'live' field of the social sciences was just opening up.”

There was an idea at the time that it would be possible to finish off a whole field of science because we’d discovered all there was to learn there. This was a minority view then and is today, but there’s a reason some scientists held it and a reason some still do. The new discoveries still being made are evidence against

it, but when Horgan's view is evaluated from an evolutionary perspective, it's actually the logical conclusion to draw. After all, if the physical universe is all there is, then no matter how vast, it is *finite*. And if it was brought about by chance, and without purpose, then just how sophisticated and complex can the universe really be? Shouldn't we *expect* to figure it all out eventually?

DEEPER AND DEEPER

In contrast, Christians have every reason to expect the discoveries will never end. We know the universe was crafted with purpose, and designed to reflect the attributes of our *infinite* God (Ps. 19:1-4, Roman 1:19-20). We should assume that no matter how deep we dig into God's creation there'll always be more to uncover.

And that is, in fact, what we find.

In the last decade, there has been a flood of discoveries related to our own DNA. Back when Darwin first published his book *On the Origin of the Species*, the individual cell was a "black box" – its inner workings were undiscovered and thought to be simple structures. That assumption served Darwin's theory because the more complex that Man proves to be, the more obvious it is that we couldn't have come about by evolutionary happenstance.

But since then we've discovered that even a single one of our cells has a level of complexity comparable to that of a city, with its own microscopic vehicles travelling on its own highways, carrying material from manufacturing plants, supplied by energy from its power plants.

Even after DNA was discovered and we started to get a glimmering of how much more was going on in the cell than Darwin had believed, evolutionists repeated their mistake – they underestimated the cell's complexity. Again, that was only natural: how complex should something produced by unguided processes really be? So it was that, prior to about 2012, evolutionary scientists were writing off the 98.5% of human DNA that didn't produce proteins as "junk DNA" because they had no apparent function. As evolution apologist Richard Dawkins put it in his 2009 book *The Greatest Show on Earth: The evidence for Evolution*:

"it is a remarkable fact that the greater part (95% percent in the case of humans) of the genome might as well be not there for the difference it makes."

But just a few years later the ENCODE project discovered this "junk DNA" was active, getting transcribed into RNA, and may have a role in regulating protein production. There's lots of maybes and perhaps still being tossed about, so there's much more to discover, *and in an area of the genome that was once thought to be unimportant*.

Still sticking with DNA, one of the more fascinating recent discoveries has been how the same section of our DNA can produce different proteins if read different ways. Or as Andrew Moore explained in his Nov 12, 2019 *Advanced Science News* article "That 'junk' DNA...is full of information!":

... endless and ever more intricate discoveries present a problem to an evolutionary theory that says the universe is finite and unplanned.

"One of the intriguing things about DNA sequences is that a single sequence can 'encode' more than one piece of information depending on what is 'reading' it and in which direction – viral genomes are classic examples in which genes read in one direction to produce a given protein overlap with one or more genes read in the opposite direction...to produce different proteins. It's a bit like making simple messages with reverse-pair words (a so-called *emordnilap*). For example: REEDSTOPSFLOW, which, by an imaginary reading device, could be divided into REED STOPS FLOW. Read backwards, it would give WOLF SPOTS DEER.

Once again, the deeper we dig the more we find there is to learn!

NO END IN SIGHT

What's true for our DNA is true everywhere else too – Millikan's roommates couldn't have been wronger about physics being a dead science. But endless and ever more intricate discoveries present a problem to an evolutionary theory that says the universe is finite and unplanned. If they were right, there *should* be an end to it. But no such end is in sight.

In contrast, these constant discoveries are an inspiration to Christians. Knowing our Creator to be inexhaustibly great, God's people can look forward to not only a lifetime of discoveries, but to an eternity of them! RP



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NOTA BENE

News worth noting
BY JON DYKSTRA

LOOTING IS GOOD?

About a week after Vicky Osterweil's book *In Defense of Looting* was published, it got a spot of media coverage via an interview with US public broadcaster *NPR*. There the author made it clear that the title was not hyperbole, but accurately summed up the book's message. Osterweil told *NPR*'s Natalie Escobar that looting was valuable because:

Looting strikes at the heart of property, of whiteness and of the police. It gets to the very root of the way those three things are interconnected. And also it provides people with an imaginative sense of freedom and pleasure and helps them imagine a world that could be.in terms of potential crimes that people can commit against the state, it's basically nonviolent. You're mass shoplifting. Most stores are insured; it's just hurting insurance companies on some level. It's just money. It's just property. It's not actually hurting any people.

Vicky is clearly confused about what happens to a business's insurance rates after an insurance payout is made – that money has to come from somewhere. (Vicky's confusion also extends to gender, as until recently *he* went by "Willie.")

While the *NPR* interview was positive coverage, the media storm it spawned was mostly not. The best rebuttal? Christian apologist Tim Barnett noted how Osterweil denounces property rights as "innately, structurally white supremacist" – property is racist! – but his book begins with the standard publisher warning against any unauthorized "scanning, uploading, and distribution" because it's "a theft of the author's intellectual property." Why is Osterweil working with a publisher that makes such racist assertions? Then, even as he celebrates theft and denounces property rights, he's also offering his own property on Amazon for \$28 a pop.

This isn't simply ironic. It highlights how unChristian worldviews are unworkable, with proponents so often unwilling to apply to themselves the standards they've proposed for everyone else (Matt. 7:12).

NETHERLANDS CONSIDERS EXPANDING ASSISTED SUICIDE TO HEALTHY PEOPLE OVER 75

As *LifeSiteNews*'s Jeanne Smits is reporting:

"A draft law proposing the legalization of assisted suicide for people over 75 who are 'tired of living' has been presented in the Second Chamber of the Dutch parliament by Pia Dijkstra..."

While there probably isn't enough time to pass the bill before the next election, it is significant that there is now a push for euthanasia of the healthy. This is further along the slippery slope, and if it doesn't pass this time around, there's no reason to think it won't pass soon after. And then, if life isn't worth protecting after 75, why wouldn't the pressure come to lower that age limit to 70? Or 55? If euthanasia is good for some, why would we limit this "good" to

just some age groups?

But suicide is wrong for the same reason that murder is: because we are taking the life of an image-bearer of God, and life is His, and not ours, to take. This is the "religious argument" that Christians are often reluctant to raise because we don't think our secular world will listen. They probably won't, but as we see time after time, any other arguments at best slow, but never stop, us from slipping further down this deadly slope. Maybe the world won't listen to God's position, but they can't even consider it if we won't ever share it.



VANCOUVER ADS PRESUME BIG FAMILIES HURT THE PLANET

Ads popping up around Vancouver, BC encourage couples to reconsider any plans for having a big or even medium-sized family. Some of the ads read:

- “The most loving gift you can give your first child is to not have another”
- “Traffic congestion begins at conception”
- “We chose one!”
- “Climate crisis? Think small.”

The group behind the ads is the US-based non-profit “World Population Balance” which believes the planet is threatened by an overpopulation crisis. Their “One Planet, One Child” campaign features ads that go even further, celebrating “childfree” living.

One Vancouver news outlet framed this as a freedom issue, with the interviewed passersby seemingly unanimous in their insistence that family size is nobody’s business but the couple’s. *News 1130*’s Kelvin Gawley went deeper, interviewing a disabled Vancouver writer, Gabrielle Peters, who put the campaign in a historical context.

“By blaming overpopulation for climate change and environmental degradation, [Peters] said the billboards revive a debunked theory known as Malthusianism, named for an 18th Century reverend, Thomas Robert Malthus, who warned humanity would soon outgrow its food supply. His dire predictions never came to pass, but that didn’t stop others – including Nazi eugenicists and the author of *The Overpopulation Bomb*, a bestselling 1968 book – from remixing Malthus’s ideas to bolster their beliefs, Peters said.

“‘It’s based on bunk and it invariably leads into dark places,’ she said.”

“Peters said that the theory of scarcity is especially alarming to disabled people, who ‘may not be highly productive in the eyes of

capitalism’ while consuming medical and other resources.

“This thinking has led some modern academics to call for forced birth control and government-mandated licensing for parenthood, she said.

“But Peters said her fear of this philosophy backstopping real-world action aren’t merely hypothetical. She cited a new ‘frailty scale’ used to determine eligibility for health-care services in Ontario.”

That was some deep perspective for a secular news source, but there is deeper still we can go by highlighting the biblical truth these ads attack. God speaks of children as blessings (Gen. 1:28, Ps. 113:9, 139:13-16, 127:3-5, Prov. 17:6, etc.) while World Population Balance says the fewer the better.

So how has that worked out where it’s been tried? For decades China had a mandatory one-child policy and that’s meant many a Chinese couple will be caring for two sets of parents, and four sets of grandparents without any siblings or any cousins to help them. As the Christian Heritage Party’s Peter Vogel put it in his article about the ad campaign:

“Imagine there’s no uncles...no aunts, no cousins too. No siblings either. This is what young people today are being told to imagine for their grandchildren.”

While human beings’ value isn’t based on what we can do (but rather on being made in the image of God – Gen. 1:27, 9:6), more kids does mean more hands at the ready, and imagine how helpful those extra hands could be in caring for aging parents! More children also means more creative thinking. Want to figure out cold-fusion, or safer fission? The more brains the merrier, right? Those family relationships, those extra hands to lighten the load, the multiplying impact on ingenuity that results when heads are put together – those are the blessing we’d forgo if we



all did as these ads encourage.

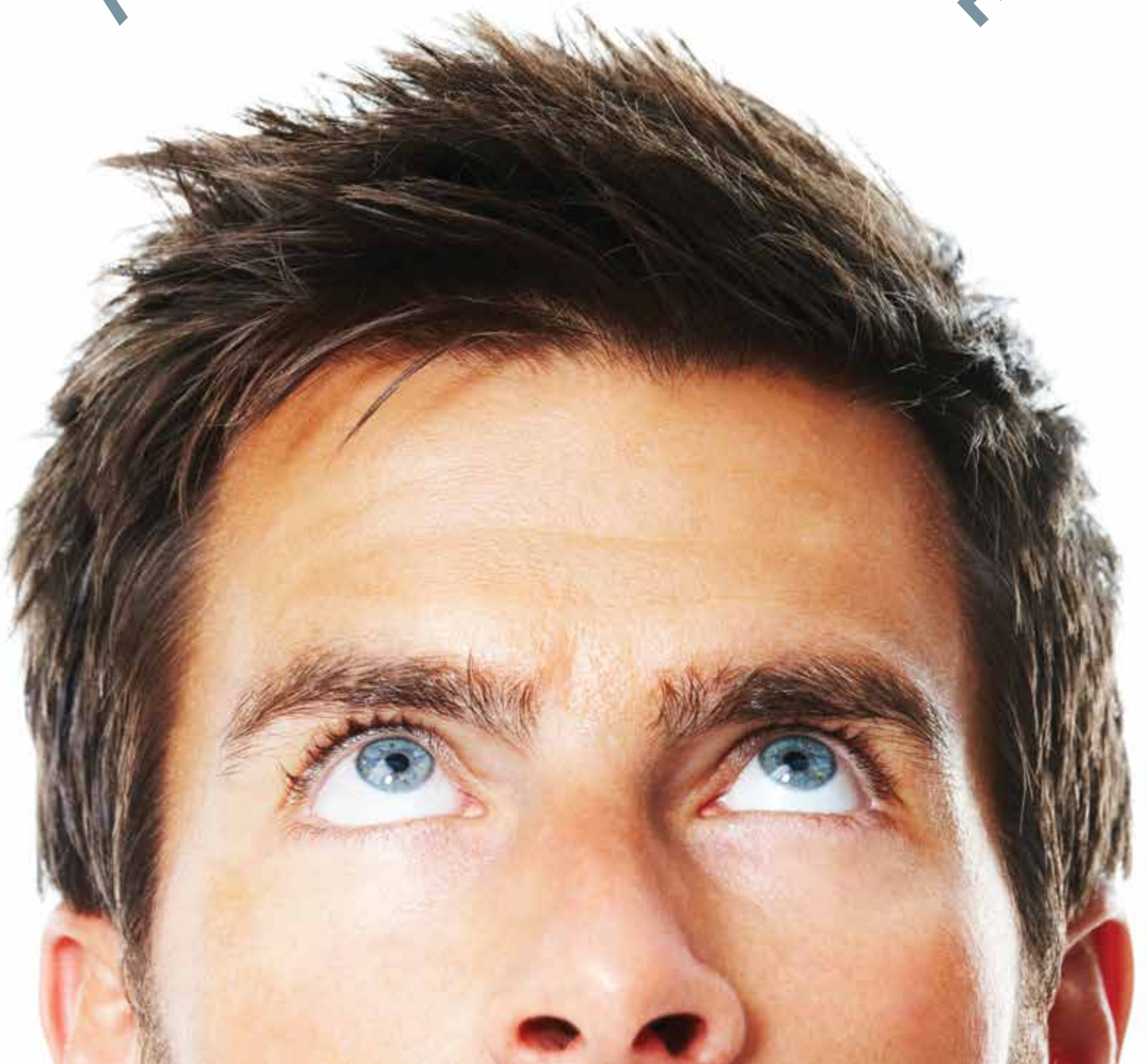
But what of the climate crisis that World Population Balance is afraid of? Their “solution” isn’t one, so can we conclude the same is true of their problem? That doesn’t necessarily follow; that a group is wrong on one point gives us reason to question them in other areas, but we can’t rely on the foolish to be consistently so. We can’t count on them to *always* get *everything* wrong.

So when it comes to the supposed climate crisis, here is what we can know for sure: if children are a blessing (and they are) and each one comes with their own carbon footprint (which they currently do), then *either* that carbon footprint isn’t the problem it’s being made out to be, *or* children don’t have to be accompanied by a carbon footprint. What we can know for sure is that children are a blessing we will never have to reject for the sake of our planet.

SOURCE: Peter Vogel’s “Imagine there’s no uncles...” posted to CHP.ca on Sept 29, 2020; Kevin Gawley’s “Vancouver ads urging one-child families fuel eco-fascism: critics” posted to CityNews1130.com on Sept. 27, 2020

YOUR HEAD IS FEARFULLY AND WONDERFULLY MADE

by Jon Dykstra



“A little science estranges men from God, but much science leads them back to Him.”

– Louis Pasteur or maybe Blaise Pascal or perhaps someone else altogether

It's unclear who exactly spouted this bit of wisdom above, but it is clear it isn't always true. Well-studied evolutionists, like a Richard Dawkins, or like documentarian David Attenborough (the fellow narrating those amazing *Planet Earth* videos), have looked at God's creation closely and remained evolutionists still. So, the principle clearly doesn't always work.

But there's still something to it. The deeper we dig into God's creation, the more we find out how amazingly it's all been crafted. And then it is only by choice, and not evidence, that one remains blind to God's artistry.

Consider just the human head. The human brain has more than 100 billion neurons, connected to maybe 1,000 other neurons (though some estimates up that by a factor of 10), for 100+ trillion electrical connections in all, making the human brain more complex than all the wiring done for all the houses in the world combined. All those interconnections then route into a very rigid, yet strangely flexible housing – your spinal column – that delivers messages to the rest of the body.

EYES AND THEIR “PROGRAMMING”

Staying with our head, if we were to compare the human eye to a camera it's one with auto-focus, aperture control, and paired up to allow for depth perception. It has more than 100 million light-sensitive rods and cones that convert images into electrical impulses that our brain has the proper “program” to convert into images. There is said to be a “blindspot” where all the nerves bundle together in the back of the eye to head off to the brain, and this blindspot is understood by critics to be evidence of the sort of bad design one might expect from accidental unguided evolution. But do you actually see any “blindspot” in your vision? No... because your brain, and the overlapping fields of vision from your two eyes, wonderfully compensate for it, such that it is only a *theoretical* and not *actual* blindspot. Astonishing!

Your ears also come in pairs, allowing us to hear directionally. They are precision instruments, able to differentiate between thousands of different sounds. Their inner workings also give us our sense of equilibrium – our sense of balance – without which we really couldn't get around except on our hands and knees.

YOUR MARVELOUS MOUTH

Still sticking with our head, the tongue houses 10,000 tastebuds, is deft enough to tie a cherry stem in a knot, and tough enough to guide our food towards the teeth where it can begin to be digested. Those teeth first show up in a set of 20 shallowly rooted models, sized just right to fit our infant mouth. As we get bigger, these baby buds get replaced with teeth that are bigger too, with more of them, coming in a set of 32 that fills out our adult jaw. What wonderful timing! Concealing those teeth are our lips, which have the ability to express our moods, produce music, and, with our best beloved, smush other lips in a very agreeable manner!

Let's not forget the nose, with its extreme sensitivity, filtration ability, and self-clearing capability (i.e. sneezing).

THE INCREDIBLE KEEPS ON COMING

Anyone not already amazed simply isn't paying attention. And we haven't even looked at the rest of our body, like how our heart pumps 1,500 to 2,000 gallons a day, for 75 years, and yet weighs a mere 12 ounces. We haven't looked at the skin, just a 20th of an inch thick, yet our body's biggest organ, self-repairing, infection-sparing, touch-sharing. And what of our bones, all 206 of them, flexible during birth when they need to be, then toughening up to function as the scaffolding for all our other parts. They also produce the white blood cells that help us fight infection.

Of course, if we were to venture south of the jawline to start exploring God's engineering genius on display there too, this article might never end. So we'll have to limit ourselves to just the neck and up, and that is more than enough to make our point.

Yes, educated men and women can deny God's evident artistry, they can choose not to see it, but that's only because it is possible for Man to suppress and deny the truth (Romans 1:18). But any with eyes to see – *creatively and brilliantly crafted eyes!* – the deeper we look, the more evident it becomes that from the top of our heads down, we are fearfully and wonderfully made (Ps. 139:14)! **RP**

I BELIEVE IN THEISTIC "EVOLUTION"

Here's some key questions to ask potential pastors and teachers, even after they've said they are "creationists"

by Wes Bredenhof

I recently realized I believe in/affirm theistic evolution. Depending on your perspective, have I sold out or have I finally come to my senses?

Neither. Let me explain.

BAIT AND SWITCH

It has long perturbed me that those who affirm or allow for Darwinian macroevolution to be compatible with a biblical worldview will sometimes call themselves "creationists" or will claim to believe in/affirm biblical creation. They do this knowing that biblical creation is usually understood to refer to a view that holds to God having created in six ordinary days on a timescale of some thousands (rather than millions or billions) of years ago. By claiming to believe in creation they lay concerns to rest, whereas all they have really done is disguise their true position.

Stephen C. Meyer has helped me to see I could do the same thing with theistic evolution. Meyer wrote the "Scientific and Philosophical Introduction" to *Theistic Evolution: A Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Critique*, a massive volume published in 2017

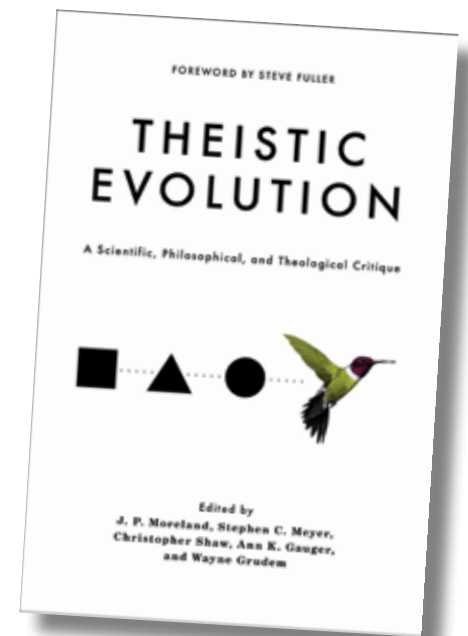
by Crossway. He notes that theistic evolution can mean different things to different people, as can "evolution" without the modifier "theistic."

For example, it can refer to common or universal common descent or to the creative power of the natural selection/random variation (or mutation) mechanism.

But evolution can also just simply mean "change over time." And if one believes that God causes "change over time," then that can be understood as a form of theistic evolution. With that, Meyer contends, no biblical theist could object. He concludes, "Understanding theistic evolution this way seems unobjectionable, perhaps even trivial." So, in the sense of believing or affirming that there is change over time directed by God, I am a theistic evolutionist — and I suspect you are too!

IT ISN'T HONEST

But what's the problem with this? Let's say I were to (miraculously) get myself invited to a BioLogos conference as a speaker who affirms theistic evolution. It appears I'm on board with the BioLogos



agenda. The conference organizers are a little doubtful, but I insist that I affirm theistic evolution and they take me at my word and welcome me in their midst.

Then I give a talk where I evidence that I'm actually a six-day creationist who believes Darwinian macroevolution to be a fraud. "But you said you hold to theistic evolution!" "Oh, but you didn't ask me what I meant by that. I believe that God causes change over time — that's how I'm a theistic evolutionist." Would anyone blame the conference organizers for thinking me to be lacking in some basic honesty?

Integrity is really the heart of the matter. If I say, "I read a book and I realized I'm a theistic evolutionist," most people will hear that and conclude that I still believe in God, but I also affirm Darwinian evolution. And that is not an unreasonable conclusion. Furthermore, what would be my purpose for making such a claim? Would it be to tell something designed to mislead so as to advance my cause? Does the end justify the means?

If you affirm Darwinian

Evolution of Phone



Just as “evolve” can be used to mean its near opposite – applied here to a phone evidencing obvious design – so also some are applying the label “creationist” to its opposite: those who believe God created over millions of years.

Just because someone says they believe in biblical creation doesn't mean they actually believe the biblical account as given in Genesis.

macroevolution as the best explanation for how life developed on earth and you believe God superintended it, then man up and say so. Honestly say, “I am a theistic evolutionist.” As for me, believing that God created everything in six ordinary days on the order of

some thousands of years ago, I will say directly, “I am a biblical creationist” or “six-day creationist,” or “young earth creationist.” But let’s all be honest with one another.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK TEACHERS AND PASTORS

Biblical creationists also have to stop being naive. Just because someone says they believe in biblical creation doesn't mean they actually believe the biblical account as given in Genesis. They can fill out those terms with their own meaning. So we have to learn to ask good questions to ferret out impostors. Questions like:

- Do you believe God created everything in six ordinary days some thousands of years ago?
- Was the individual designated as Adam in Genesis ever a baby creature nestled at his mother's breast?
- Was the individual designated in

Genesis as Eve a toddler at some point in her life?

- Do you believe it biblically permissible to say that, as creatures, the figures designated in Genesis as Adam and Eve at any point had biological forebears (like parents/grandparents)?
- What does it mean that God created man from the dust of the earth?

These are the types of questions churches need to be asking at ecclesiastical examinations for prospective ministers. These are the types of questions Christians schools need to be asking prospective teachers at interviews.

True, even with these sorts of questions, there are no guarantees of integrity, but at least we will have done our due diligence. ^{RP}

*Dr. Bredenhof blogs at
yinkahdinay.wordpress.com.*

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

BY JON DYKSTRA

WE HONOR GOD WITH OBEDIENCE...NOT RESULTS

Martin Luther may or may not have said, "If I knew that tomorrow was the end of the world, I would plant an apple tree today!" Whether the attribution is correct, the sentiment is. If it is God-glorifying to plant an apple tree – and it is, because it is a part of fulfilling our dominion mandate – then it remains so even if the project won't be brought to completion before Jesus' return.

It is the means, and not the results, that are in our hands, so we must use the means to glorify God, and not look to accomplish that through uncertain results.

Or as Mike Ratliff has put it:

"...I had always assumed that when God gives us a message or lesson or sermon or counsel in which to write or teach or preach or give to those who need to hear it, He would also cause those hearing it to recognize it as the truth, believe it, and obey it. Reality hit hard. The principle I learned was that God is glorified when we obey Him whether the results of our obedience meet our expectations or not."

WHEN THE PASTOR FELL ASLEEP

Charles Spurgeon was acclaimed as the "Prince of Preachers," with more than 3,500 published sermons. And he didn't even stop when he slept. Marshall Shelley shared the story of how, one Saturday night, Spurgeon began to talk in his sleep.

"His wife, Susannah, heard the noise and awoke. She realized her husband was preaching, so she listened attentively and in the morning gave her husband a detailed summary. A few hours later, he preached that sermon to his congregation."

SOURCE: "From the editor: Sleepy Preacher" posted to ChristianityToday.com

I HAVE A SIXTH SENSE?

We all know about the standard five senses – taste, touch, sight, smell, and hearing – but did you know some of God's creatures have a little something extra?

In some animals that extra amounts to "super senses": hummingbirds can see in the ultraviolet range (their eyes' 4 types of color receptors are one more than we have), and elephants can communicate over long distances by using tones that are so low our ears can't detect them.

In other animals that extra something goes beyond the standard five senses. Bumblebees seem to be able to use the positive electrical charge their bodies generate while buzzing around to help them detect flowers' pollen which has a negative charge.

Meanwhile, sea turtles are able to somehow navigate across the ocean using variations in the Earth's magnetic field to guide them on their way. Exactly how they do it is unclear, but scientists are closing in on how birds do something

similar, and remarkably, it may involve quantum mechanics. It's theory at this point and a really complicated one at that, but just the gist of it is amazing enough. Scientists are speculating that some birds can "see" the earth's magnetic fields and do so by using particles in

their eyes that are in a "quantum entangled" state. We don't need to worry about what that exactly means; here's one key point: *that state lasts for just 1/10,000th of a second.* That these birds might be processing information derived from a state lasting such a short time is pretty cool, but there's another incredible wrinkle, as detailed by PBS Nova's Katherine J. Wu.

Even in ideal laboratory conditions, which usually involve powerful vacuums or astoundingly icy temperatures, artificial quantum entanglement can unravel in just nanoseconds. And yet, in the wet, messy environment of a bird's eye, entanglement holds. "It seems nature has found a way to make these quantum states live much longer than we'd expect, and much longer than we can do in the lab," Gauger says. "No one thought that was possible."

A nanosecond is a *billionth of a second* (yes, I had to look it up). This might have us tempted to say that the birdbrains are beating the brainiacs, but as amazing as the bird's performance is, to give the credit where it is due we should be singing the praises of its Designer!

Humans beings also have a sixth sense, and we're not talking about ESP. *Proprioception* is your sense of bodily awareness – the ability to know where all the bits of your body are without looking at or touching them. That might not seem as cool as "seeing" magnetic fields, but just consider what it allows you to do. When you close your eyes and can still touch your nose, that's proprioception enabling you to do it. This is also why a quarterback can throw the ball accurately, even though his overhand motion doesn't really allow him to see his throwing arm until the ball is released. And proprioception is why you can be balanced (even on one leg!) and how you can walk, without having to look down at your feet. This is one important sense!

So if you've ever thanked God for the wonderful flowers you can smell, the amazing sunrise you can see, the funky music you can hear, the delicious pizza you can taste, or the amazing softness of a newborn's cheek that you can just barely feel, now you know there's also a sixth sense to marvel at and thank Him for!

SOURCE: Katherine J. Wu's "A bird's eye view of quantum entanglement" published to PBS.org on February 6, 2019.

RELATIONSHIPS TAKES TIME

Jay Younts wants parents to understand that they won't be the biggest influence on their children's lives if they aren't investing time.

"If teenagers are listening to three hours of TV every day and averaging five minutes a day talking with their dads, who is winning the influence battle?"

And as a Frank Viola points out, what's true for parents and our children is also true for us and God.

"In Willard Harley's marvelous book on marital relationships – *His Needs, Her Needs* – Harley observes that in order for couples to stay emotionally connected, they need to spend 15 hours a week together. The point there is that for any relationship to flourish, there must be intentional time spent for communication and presence..... It's no different with our relationship to Jesus. If we neglect Him, we'll eventually shrivel up spiritually. Our lives will be overtaken by 'the cares of this life,' 'the lust/desire for other things,' and 'the deceitfulness of money'...(Mark 4:19)."

FREE CHRISTIAN FILMS AND VIDEOS

With other streaming networks producing and promoting increasingly problematic content, Christians may be interested in a new and free streaming network full of Christian content. *RedeemTV.com* isn't without problems. For example, it promotes Roman Catholicism right alongside films celebrating the Reformation – how's that for double-minded? And most of the films aren't well acted. But there are a handful worth checking out, and all you need to do is give them your name and email. Five of *RedeemTV.com*'s best are:

- *Martin Luther*
- *Storm and Luther's Forbidden Letter*
- *Bonhoeffer: Agent of Grace*
- *Tortured for Christ*
- *God's Outlaw: The Story of William Tyndale*

THEISTIC EVOLUTION FLIPS THE SCRIPT...

"The Bible teaches that Adam produced death. The opposing view has to say that in some manner death produced Adam."

– Douglas Wilson

GLORYING IN IGNORANCE

When Charles Spurgeon met a fellow proud to be an agnostic, the preacher used a quick bit of translation work to illustrate how strange it is to be prideful on this point.

"One walking with me observed, with some emphasis, 'I do not believe as you do. I am an Agnostic.'

"Oh," I said to him. 'Yes. That is a Greek word, is it not? The Latin word, I think, is *ignor'amus*.'

"He did not like it at all. Yet I only translated his language from Greek to Latin. These are queer waters to get into, when all your philosophy brings you is the confession that you know nothing, and...enables you to glory in your ignorance."

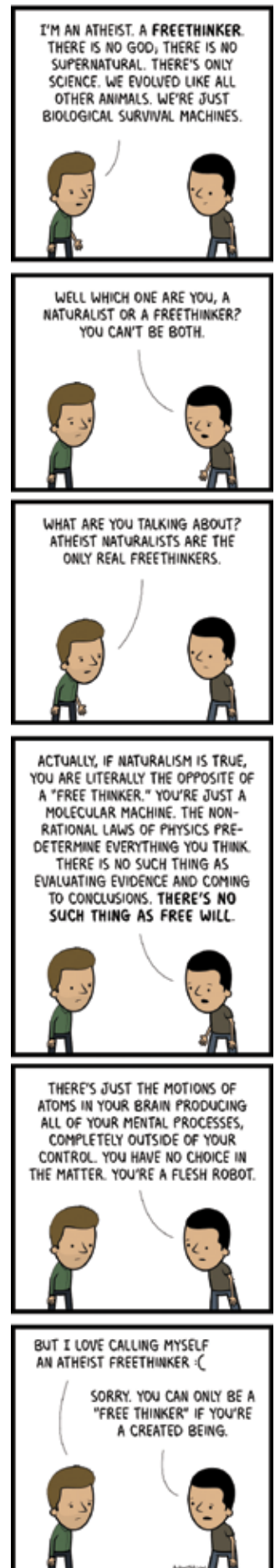
– "The rowers have brought thee into great waters" preached Dec. 12, 1886

CLARITY CAN COME FROM CLOSENESS

When faced with any big decision Christians will pray for clarity because it becomes so much easier to take on even very difficult tasks when we know that, yes, this is something we really should be doing.

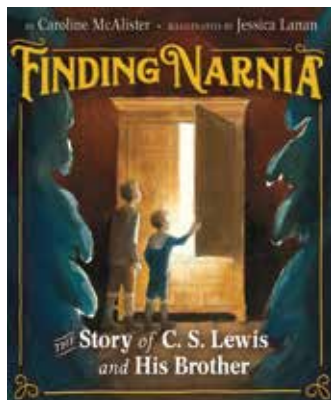
But how does God provide that clarity? In a blog post on fostering children, Jason Johnson (JasonJohnsonBlog.com) shares how clarity can come by moving closer.

"Sometimes our prayers for more 'clarity' are answered with a call for more proximity. From a distance we say, 'God show me the way!' and He responds with, 'Just move closer and you'll see.' And a lot of your questions about fostering are only answered through this kind of proximity. The closer you get the more you see and the clearer things become. You begin to see things you can never unsee, hear things you can never unhear, know things you can never unknow and then suddenly, nothing can ever be the same again. You simply cannot pretend it doesn't exist anymore."



FINDING NARNIA: THE STORY OF C. S. LEWIS AND HIS BROTHER

BY CAROLINE MCALISTER
48 PAGES / 2019



C. S. Lewis wrote, "A children's story that can only be enjoyed by children is not a good children's story in the slightest."

Lewis, known by his family as Jack, and his brother Warnie were best of friends even though they were very different. Trains and ships fascinated Warnie, while imaginary worlds with heroes and knights enthralled Jack. McAlister traces their lives from the schoolroom to adulthood describing their experiences leading to the creation of Narnia, a magical kingdom which has enchanted generations. Paired with beautiful illustrations, we gain insight into their collaborative work.

Although one drawing shows Jack in church, McAlister does not dwell on Lewis's conversion nor connect his Christian faith to the fantasy world he created. However, fairly extensive author's notes at the end of the book include a paragraph about his conversion. The illustrator also has detailed notes about her illustrations. It is worth reading them and turning back to the drawings to appreciate her care to detail and historical accuracy.

This book is recommended for ages 4-8 but, Mr. Lewis, I'm happy to say that our grandchildren *and* I equally enjoyed this book. I recommend it to any Narnia fan. It would be a great addition to a church, school or home library.

- ALIDA VANDERHORST

THE PLOT TO KILL HITLER

BY PATRICIA MCCORMICK
184 PAGES / 2016



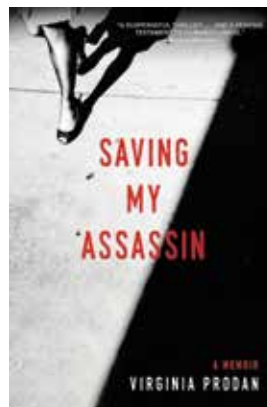
Dietrich Bonhoeffer was the youngest son in a large, loving, and intellectual family. When he, at a young age, announced that he planned to become a pastor, everyone was astonished. His father told him that it was a pity that he chose such "a quiet...uneventful life." His brothers told him that his career choice meant a retreat from the big issues of the day. Little did they know that the gentle daydreaming Dietrich would one day challenge one of the most evil tyrants in history.

The short chapters in this well-researched book contain aids to enhance the young reader's understanding of World War 2. Helpful also is the list of characters, and a time line. McCormick focuses our attention on Bonhoeffer's fight against Hitler's Nazi ideology, not on his struggle with his Christian beliefs so seemingly at odds with his chosen path of treason and murder. Nevertheless, if read in a classroom or family setting, this book could spur a lively discussion on the meaning of true discipleship. The question "Can we see evil and do nothing?" still resonates today. This book would be an excellent addition to our church, school and home libraries. Recommended for readers ages 12 and up.

- ALIDA VANDERHORST

SAVING MY ASSASSIN

BY VIRGINIA PRODAN
336 PAGES / 2016



How would you respond if you were staring down the barrel of a gun held by someone the government had paid to kill you? That's how Virginia Prodan found herself. A citizen of communist Romania, her memoir begins when she was a young girl, in trouble already for her family's attendance at the Catholic Church. Then, as a recently converted lawyer she defends fellow Christians from the government, and eventually she is exiled to the United States.

It is an intense story, full both of bravery and reliance on God to make that bravery possible. It is also an important window into the persecution that many of our brothers and sisters face all over the world. Finally, it wraps up with some information on the assassin mentioned in the title, showing the ways God's grace goes much further than was ever expected.

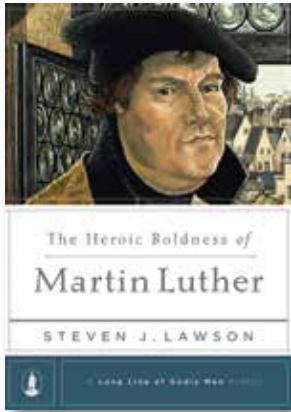
This would be interesting as an action story or spy thriller. But it is more than that, a book that examines how God can provide great courage to his people, how He works in situations that are frightening, and how He uses means that no one involved would expect to bring his sheep home to the fold. I'd recommend it for mature teens and adults.

- ELISSA DYKSTRA

THE HEROIC BOLDNESS OF MARTIN LUTHER

BY STEVEN J. LAWSON

145 PAGES / 2013



This is a book that every Protestant minister should read. Why? Because it uses the story of the first Protestant minister, Martin Luther, to show what Protestant ministers should be doing with the word of God. Author Steven Lawson's goal isn't to present a complete biography of Martin Luther (he completely ignores the man's flaws), but rather to show how God used Luther to redirect His people back to His Word.

Luther had, in the words of the title of Chapter 2, "A Deep Conviction about the Word" – its verbal inspiration, its divine inerrancy, its supreme authority, its intrinsic clarity, and its complete sufficiency. Of course, a deep conviction about God's Word is not effective unless one also has a deep knowledge of it, and Luther did. Chapter 3 portrays the second key characteristic of Luther's approach to the preaching of God's word – his "Relentless Drive in the Study."

Lawson also shares the structure and content of Luther's sermons: concise introduction, biblical exposition, a stress on God's law, the exaltation of Christ and His work on the cross, personal application, and the invitation of the gospel.

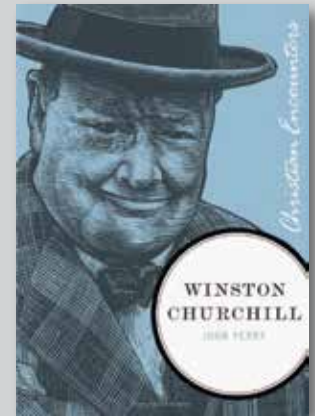
Lawson's concluding exhortation to continue the Reformation with Luther's high view of the Scriptures, God, and the pulpit reminds us again of the kind of preaching that Luther practiced and promoted.

- JEFF DYKSTRA

WINSTON CHURCHILL

BY JOHN PERRY

158 PAGES / 2010



Though the man himself has been gone 50+ years now, the myth is enjoying a revival. Churchill has made recent appearance in the big screen productions *Churchill* and *Darkest Hour*, and has also shown up on the small screen in the British drama *The Crown*. For a more accurate accounting we need to turn to print, and there can't be a better reasonably-sized biography than John Perry's *Winston Churchill*.

Since it's part of Christian publisher Thomas Nelson's 16-book *Christian Encounters* biography series, I wondered if that meant Churchill himself was Christian. But, no, sadly it wasn't so. It turns out that while Churchill knew his Bible, and would sometimes speak of God – particularly in rousing speeches to the British public – he thought that, *if* there was a God, then God owed him heaven.

As Perry makes clear, Churchill had a spiritual type of fatalism. Early on Churchill came to understand that no man is in charge of his own fate; the fact that one man lives through a battle and another dies has little to do with the men themselves. So when Churchill survived a number of dangerous encounters, he grew in his conviction that he had been destined for something great. Destined by Who? The answer to that question wasn't all that pressing for Churchill.

Caution

As a rule I don't recommend (or even review) books that take God's name in vain – why would I praise someone who is mocking God? This is especially true when it comes to fiction, however, a case can be made for exceptions when it comes to history. In detailing Churchill's agnostic attitude towards God (and his son Randolph's especially arrogant view) it would seem unavoidable that some of Churchill's blasphemous quips and comments would need to be shared. But while these quotes do seem necessary, this is an instance where less is more, so we can be grateful for the restraint with which Perry shares them.

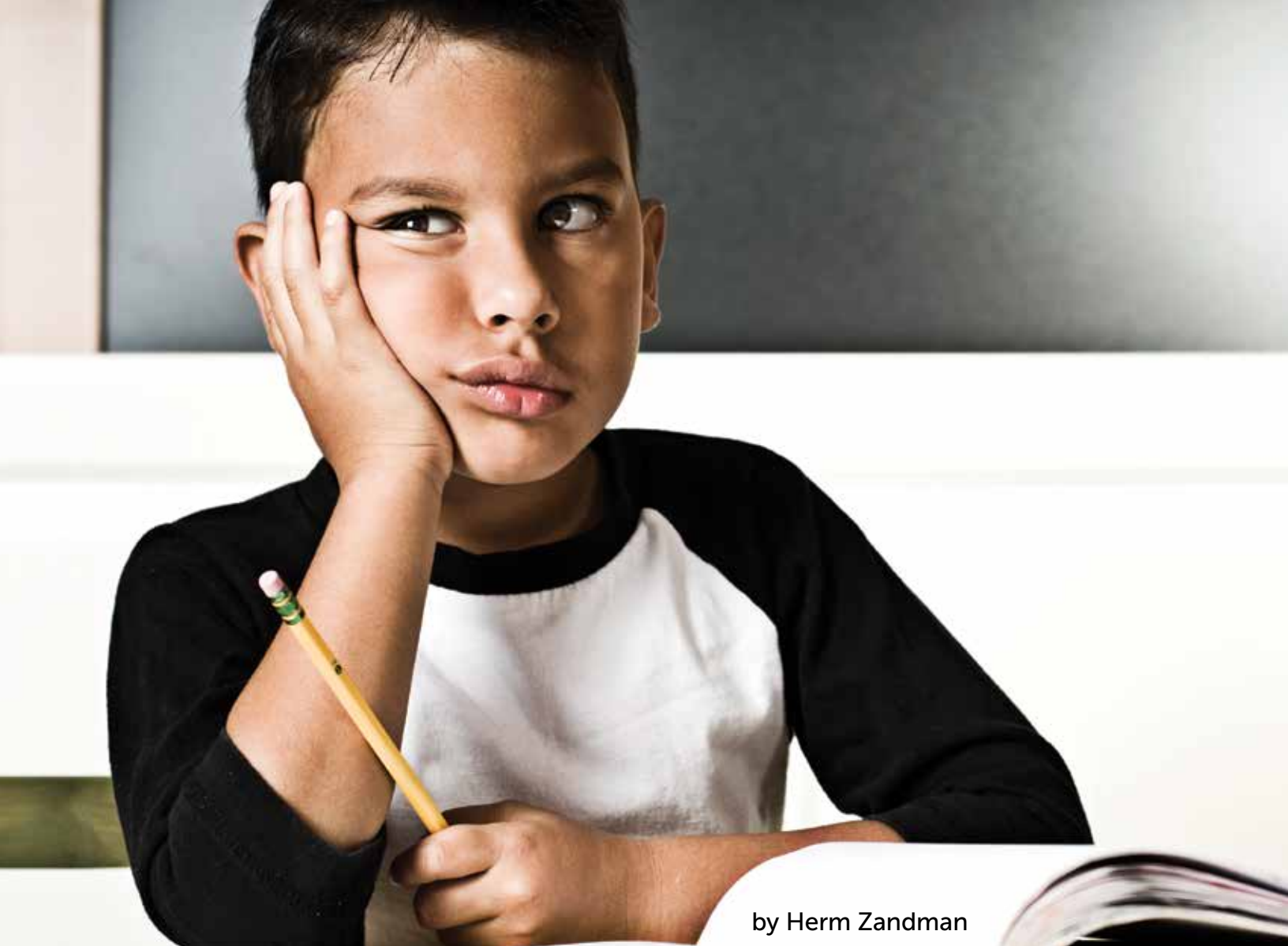
Conclusion

Why, then, is Churchill being profiled in this Christian series of biographies? Because we can see God's hand on the man. He was destined – from birth God was preparing him to be the right man, for the right time. And He so arranged things that Churchill was in the right place too, as the war time prime minister. This was all beyond Churchill's arranging, but looking back, we can see how God laid out events, and how He can use whomever He will because, whether Christian or agnostic, all are a part of His plan.

That's the real reason to read this biography – it is a treat to see how God has acted in history to preserve His Church. Churchill was a great man in ways, but he was also a petty one in others. He blew through taxpayer dollars to fund his own high living, and he was known to indulge in "alternative facts" in his writings. At a different time, he might have been run out of politics. That's the lesson here – the greatness of this great man can't be found in the man himself. Instead what's on display is God's gracious providence in providing for us the response we needed to Hitler's Third Reich.

Winston Churchill is a quick, eye-opening read that anyone, teens and up, would be interested in if they have the slightest interest in the subject. And while the paperback is running at \$1,000 right now, the e-book can be had for just \$5.

- JON DYKSTRA



by Herm Zandman

SHOULD A STUDENT'S PEER GROUP BE SO IMPORTANT?

...or can skipping, or failing, a grade be a very good thing?

Let me tell you the tale of four students.

DANNY

The first, Danny, had decided to better himself and become more flexible in the job market, given the prevalent economic uncertainty. So he went to the website of the Open University and looked for a course package that would appeal to him.

After due consideration, he decided

on a subject, whereupon he proceeded with his enrolment. The course involved a number of challenging assignments, all accompanied by due dates, and length and formatting requirements. Danny was not fazed. Full of enthusiasm, he started on the course work. He industriously complied with all the required readings, studied the assignment requirements, and set to work. Long before the deadline he finished the first homework assignment and sent it away.

It was less than a week later that he received word back: he had failed his first assignment. Failed miserably. However, the kind lecturer gave many tips as to how to improve the work for resubmission.

Disappointed, but not down, Danny set to work again. He carefully followed the lecturer's suggestions and, with hope in his heart, resubmitted. The result, though slightly better, was still disappointment – Danny hadn't passed, even on his second attempt.



Meetings between the teachers and parents followed. It was agreed that Shaun struggled and required some remedial help. Emily needed no help at all; perhaps she could be given some extra work, expanding her challenges in that manner. The teachers would do their best, but with the large number of students in their care, it would be difficult.

At the end of the year, Shaun was promoted to the next grade, even though his progress reports showed failure after failure. Emily was promoted as well, with straight A's all over her list. Both children looked forward to the summer holidays and nagged their parents for a different school come the new year.

The new school year commenced, and the children joined their peers. Shaun was looking at another year of discouragement and remedial treatment. Emily's motivation was also at a low and she decided to do just what was necessary to get by...

WHEN PEERS AREN'T THE MAIN CONCERN, THEN ABILITY CAN BE

Peers were not a concern for Danny so when he noticed his course was above his ability; he could simply quit it. He could adjust and find something more suitable.

Shaun and Emily were locked in a system from which there was no escape. Shaun was forced to endure the ignominy of failure after failure; Emily was exposed to what she called "kindergarten material" which she considered humiliatingly unchallenging. However, as the Principal pointed out, it was important to keep the children in their peer groups. It would not do to place them with those older or younger than they, as this would stunt their emotional development.

CALEB

Now meet Caleb (not his real name). He was brought to this little Christian school. Dad and Mum said that Caleb was a problem student in his current school and did not perform well at all. In fact, the larger part of the day he was forced to reside outside the classroom.

On his report card the teacher had written about his reading skills that Caleb needed to *guess more!* Caleb did not want to guess, he wanted to read! This nine-year-old was by now on the level of a six-year-old student, even though there was nothing wrong with his cerebral capabilities. He did not like school anymore. "And then to think how he started so full of enthusiasm," Mum remarked.

The long and short of it was that the Principal and the parents agreed that Caleb would start according to ability with the little ones, moving between different groups fluidly to tap into his present abilities. Being more mature, he would succeed at a faster pace and consequently move through the ranks ever more closely to his peers, all the while tasting academic success. Caleb finished high school within a year of his peers and went on to do a bachelor's degree in Computer Science at university. As an adult he wrote on Facebook how that little Christian school and its teaching approach had been the saving of him in terms of developing his abilities.

Caleb was not forced to sit in class with his peers and be confronted with repeat failure. He was not singled out for remedial (often sensed as humiliating) lessons. He was successful in class and was able to join his peers outside class when playing games (during PE lessons he did join his peers, by the way, and outshone most of them).

WHY HAVE WE MADE THIS THE PRIORITY?

In Matthew 23:4 the Lord Jesus accuses the Pharisees of putting heavy and grievous burdens on the people with rules and regulations that they themselves wouldn't bear.

This text had me wondering if, educationalists – with the best of intentions – have placed burdens upon children that they would not place upon themselves! (We can think also of the Golden Rule in Matthew 7:12.) An adult who enters on a course of study will do so within his capabilities. Should there be an error of judgment, the course will

Danny was thoroughly disheartened. After honest and deep contemplation, he decided that he had overreached and that he needed to bite the bullet and quit. Perhaps he should have another look at the courses and take on something more realistic and in keeping with his current abilities...

SHAUN AND EMILY

The family of little Shaun and Emily moved to a new district. The 7 and 9-year-old embarked on the adventure of a new school. They were kindly received, then tested on their abilities, and placed in a classroom with their peers.

It was not long before both children became unhappy and unruly. Shaun could not care less whether he did his homework or not. Emily did not have any homework, because she finished everything in school time. She said school was boring.

Success is achieved by enabling children to punch according to their weight, not above their weight, or below their weight.

be discontinued and, perhaps, a more suitable one entertained.

School children, as a rule, are not given that choice in the traditional system. We've deemed it as the first priority that they mingle with peers, even when they are to concentrate on

cerebral pursuits. And we've done so, knowing that intellectually mismatched children who are being set the same challenges can be a hindrance to each other in class time! The discouraged girls might skulk away, or a frustrated boy resort to bravado, while the capable students are irritated by unwanted distractions. The net result is a teacher with a classroom harboring behavioral challenges. When considering the eagerness of the little five-year-olds upon entering "the big school," it is a shame upon the education system to erode this eagerness by providing systemic failure on the one hand and systemic boredom on the other.

Success is achieved by enabling children to punch according to their weight, not above their weight, or below their weight. A good school will strive to place just the right expectation (burden) upon each child's shoulders, in keeping

with capability and maturity, regardless of age.

I would submit that many schools, including several Christian schools, unwittingly create educationally disenchanted children with the misguided concept of peer group education, and procuring motivation-eroded people.

"One may miss the mark by aiming too high as too low." -Thomas Fuller (English clergyman, 1608-1661)

Dr. Herm Zandman has been both a schoolteacher and truck driver, writing on both, including his book "Blood, Sweat, and Gears." A version of this article first appeared in the July 25, 2020 issue of Una Sancta (frca.org.au/unasancta).

*Tulip*Singles.com

*Love...
Devotion...
Commitment*

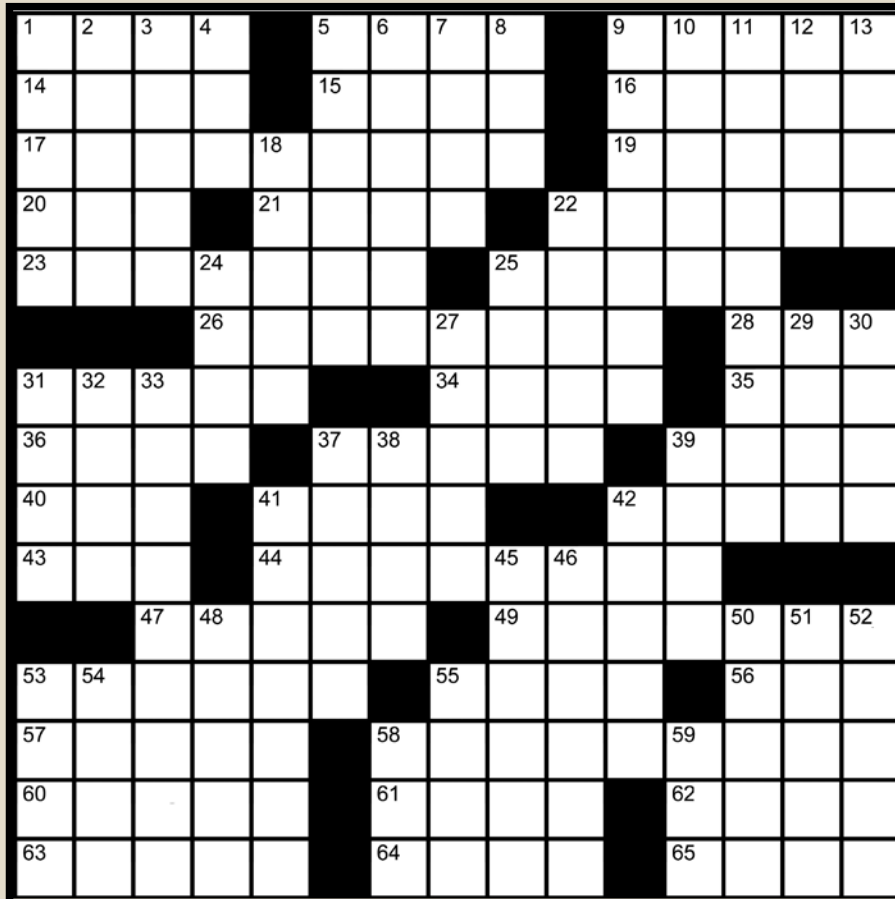
Then the Lord God said,
"It is not good for the man to be
alone; I will make him a helper
suitable for him." Genesis 2:18

A Dating Venue for Reformed Christian Singles



CROSSWORD PUZZLE

BY JEFF DYKSTRA



SERIES 6-2

PUZZLE CLUES

ACROSS

1. Where the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded
5. Stumble
9. Interoffice reminders
14. ____ Festival in Niagara Falls. Also, movie title:
The ____shank Redemption
15. Draped women's garment from India
16. Final winged adult stage of insect. Also, ____
Dei, Latin for "made in the image of God"
17. "Get lost!" or get exercise
(3 words)
19. ____ grind: regular coffee?
20. Anger; wrath; temper
21. It's as good as a mile.
22. Wraps (around), interlaces
23. Reasoning from accepted assumption (Latin)
25. Chinese units of weight used as currency.
Also, *sounds like* the dangly things monkeys
use to hang from trees.
26. "That excuse will ____ with me!" (3

Find this issue's solution on page 2!

- words)
28. "that used to be hoed with a ____" (Is. 7 ESV)
31. Izzy ____ - late Winnipeg philanthropist
34. ____-a-boo - game for babies
35. It's legal to poach this.
36. "Whoever does ____ is from God" (3 John
ESV)
37. What Archie Andrews does all the time
39. ____meter; ____scope
40. You'll find them in M&Ms. A nickname for
Emilys.
41. "they do not understand his ____" (Micah 4
ESV)
42. They're played by minstrels or troubadours.
43. "the mole ____, the mouse" (Lev. 11 ESV)
44. Dangerous place to be when flames start
47. Make corrections to a piece of writing.
49. While technically ____, gum is not food
53. On a quest (in the wrong direction?)
55. Piece of fiberglass

- insulation or felt material
56. Traditional Scandinavian wool rug. Also, the Royal
Yachting Association.
57. "Let not sin therefore ____" (Rom. 6 ESV)
58. Army threatening 50 Down
60. Ruth's mother-in-law
(a "pleasant" woman)
61. Coral structure forming a "Great Barrier"
62. Garfield's clueless canine companion
63. Prop to support a roof or stop a wagon
64. Airport Hotel in Izmir, Turkey. Also turning the f ____
65. Tic ____ (tiny candies)

DOWN

1. Township and port of ancient Rome
2. "And you... take a ____ sword." (Ez. 5)
3. Superior cargo ship or Los Angeles player
4. "____ no one anything, except..." (Rom. 13 ESV)
5. Typical souvenir from a 5-Across
6. ____ Bran (Kellogg's cereal)
7. Annoys, bothers, partly irritates
8. ____ chart
9. Halfway between Monday and Friday
10. Paperless correspondence
11. Sheet used for controlling the mainsail
12. Look over lewdly, leer lecherously
13. Type of bean or sauce (plural form)
18. Love in Paris or Montreal
22. Performed with
instrument silent
24. One way to enjoy tea
25. Level of a structure
(especially of a cake)
27. "____, I ____ that you are a great tree!"
29. Man-eating giant
30. Armor plate protecting the chest
31. Teen ____
32. Drug for the masses in *Brave New World*
33. Back side
37. "Like emery harder than ____" (Ez. 3 ESV)
38. Pig fat used in baking
39. Earlier stage of 16 Across
41. Currency unit: 1/100 of German mark
42. Drink made with espresso and steamed milk
45. Collection for serving guests in afternoon
46. Give formal consent to (e.g. an amendment)
48. Molten rock
50. Town in Netherlands besieged in 1624
51. Type of poetry (sung to a lyre?)
52. Makes easier
53. Sea eagles
54. "shall sow, but not ____" (Micah 6 ESV)
55. Root ____ (A & W's famous drink)
58. Sis's sibling
59. "When they ____ out on land," (John 21)

RP AS A COUNTER TO THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA

by Chris deBoer

Everyone has a worldview. Ours is a *reformed perspective*. As an organization, we seek to grapple with relevant contemporary issues using the light of God's Word. Doing so takes time and energy. We want to use our publications (magazines, books, podcasts, etc.) to promote the biblical understanding of challenging issues, and we seek to be careful not to simply spout off personal opinions. Studying what others say about a topic, representing opposing views fairly, citing sources, and choosing words carefully are part of the tasks involved in publishing meaningful pieces.

When you consider a phrase like *fake news*, do you ever wonder what someone means by that? On the one hand, *fake news* could be an outright fabrication or lie about something. That sometimes takes place via social media but not usually on mainstream media sites. What is often meant by *fake news* is the idea that the narrative around the facts are presented in such a way to manipulate how people think about the facts of a story.

THE GENDER WAGE GAP?

For example, there seems to be evidence that women make less than men, on average. This is referred to as the "gender wage gap." So, the narrative is told that women are discriminated against because they, on average, make less than men. The truthfulness of the statement is hard to argue; evidence suggest that this is indeed true. So, the fact of a lower average median income



for women is not really in dispute. What is, however, in dispute, is the basis for this wage gap, and even if it is evidence of gender discrimination.

What are some of the reasons for the wage gap? Many women choose different careers and few strive to be CEO's, garbage collectors, oilfield workers, carpenters, electricians, etc. Many entrepreneurial women choose to work from home and work part-time. Women also have the unique privilege of bearing children, which may result in some women having to make a choice between pursuing a career, taking some time off, or trying to balance both. Of course, other women are staying home and working hard without financial gain. Interestingly, a major paper, *The Gender Wage Gap: Extent, Trends and Explanations* (Blau & Kahn, 2017), refers to the "penalty" of motherhood, as it views the consequence to one's career advancement as a penalty. The fact of the existence of the wage gap is most often told by mainstream media within a narrative that suggests that this is a problem in need of fixing, although academic literature is more nuanced.


What does this have to do with

worldview and *fake news*? It is not fake to suggest that there is a wage gap and so the constant use of the term *fake news* becomes somewhat of a misnomer. However, the gender wage gap needs to be seen from the lens of scripture. What does scripture teach about this topic? For one, workers should be treated fairly. Secondly, the biblical concept of justice plays a role here: if a woman does the same task as a man, they should get paid the same. In

addition, Christians see the beautiful task of motherhood and parenting as being a special privilege, not some hurdle towards career advancement. Truthfulness also matters to Christians; are women being paid less because they are women, or because their jobs are different?

EXPLORING IT ALL

Reformed Perspective wants to explore topics like this one and provide biblically sound understanding to it. When you consider how you would engage young people as they grapple with the narrative of the mainstream media, we hope that *Reformed Perspective* will be a resource you can use. Email or print them off an article, have them listen to a podcast, engage them in discussion, etc.

If you ever have any concerns or questions for us, please let us know. If there are topics you think need to be addressed, we'd be happy to hear from you. We're open to discussing theological, economical, political, social, and all kinds of issues, striving to provide a biblically reformed perspective to the best of our ability, to God's glory! 



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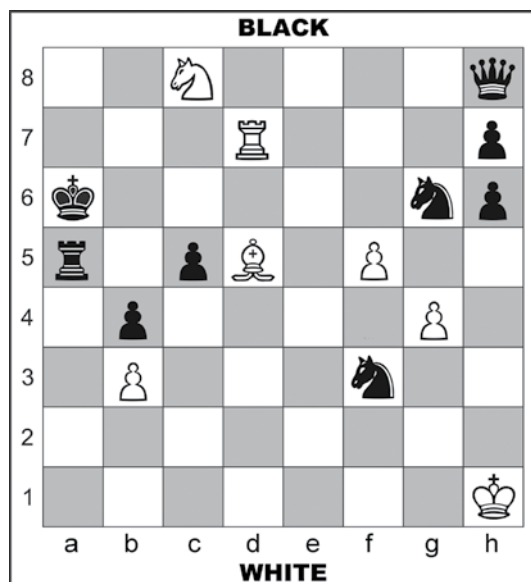
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Thank you for standing with us as we together proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ over all spheres of life!

Completed forms, along with a void cheque, can be mailed to: *Reformed Perspective*, Box 1039, Carman, MB, R0G 0J0.

ENTICING ENIGMAS & CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Chess Puzzle #260



Riddle for Punsters

#260 – “Not for the weak of heart!”

What do you call the fear of being in a small elevator with a mean animal with big claws, even though the animal is in a cage? ____ trophobia.

Problem to Ponder

#260 – “These JUMBLED WORDS make me sick!”

Unscramble the following names of physical illnesses or diseases.

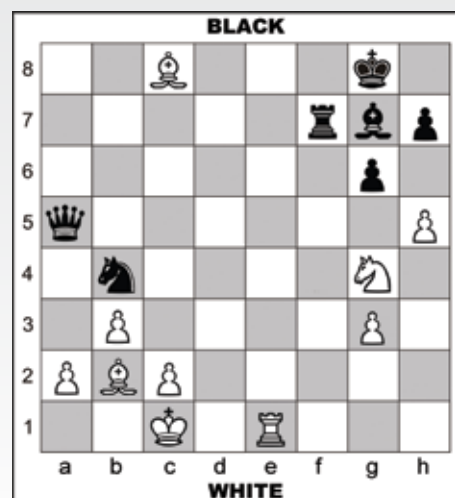
For example, **slichl** -> **chills**.

araimla	_____	cheehaad	_____
flazenuni	_____	meanpunio	_____
svairruncoo	_____	yesterdyn	_____
biadeets	_____	chronstibi	_____
nopeshiretyn	_____	mashat	_____
thare katcat	_____	phowogin chugo	_____
myle seedsai	_____	welloy vreef	_____

WHITE to Mate in 2 Or, If it is BLACK's Move, **BLACK to Mate in 4**

Last Month's Solutions

Solution to Chess Puzzle #259



WHITE TO MATE IN 3 Descriptive Notation

1. R-K8 ch R-B1
2. B-K6 ch K-R1
(the black rook is pinned)
3. RxR mate

White wins sooner if

1. R-K8 ch B-B1
(the black bishop is pinned)
2. N-R6 mate

Algebraic Notation

1. Re1-e8 + Rf7-f8
2. Bc8-e6 + Kg8-h8
(the black rook is pinned)
3. Re8xf8 ++

White wins sooner if

1. Re1-e8 + Bg7-f8
(the black bishop is pinned)
2. Ng4-h6 ++

BLACK TO MATE IN 4

Descriptive Notation

1. ---- N-Q6 ch
2. PxN QxR ch
3. K-B2 Q-K7ch
4. K-N1 QxB mate

Black wins sooner if

1. ---- N-Q6 ch
2. K-N1 QxR ch
3. B-B1 QxB mate

Black wins even sooner if

1. ---- N-Q6 ch
2. K-Q1 QxR mate

Algebraic Notation

1. ---- Nb4-d3 +
2. c2xd3 Qa5xe1 +
3. Kc1-c2 Qe1-e2 +
4. Kc2-b1 Qe2xb2 ++

Black wins sooner if

1. ---- Nb4-d3 +
 2. Kc1-b1 Qa5xe1 +
 3. Bb2-c1 Qe1xc1 ++
- Black wins even sooner if
1. ---- Nb4-d3 +
 2. Kc1-d1 Qa5xe1 ++

Answer to Riddle for Punsters

#259 – “The budgie fit her budget!”

Old Mrs. Van Nestegg, a widow, stayed continually in her home and was often lonely. A kind neighbor gave her a budgie to keep her company. What a **tweet** thing to do! One day the bird became sick so the widow phoned a vet who told her that it sounded like a common illness quite **tweetable** by changing the budgie's diet. She was glad that the vet had been honest and not **cagey** since he did not suggest an expensive treatment. Mrs. Van Nestegg did as the vet suggested and soon she **seed** great improvement in the bird. Again the budgie would sing to her all day long and did so for the **roost** of its life.

Answer to Problem to Ponder

#259 – “All of the players won trophies!”

Three scientists, named Ben and Jen and Ken, played a science game on their day off. One was a physicist, one a biologist and the third was a chemist. By the end of the game, one had captured the Galileo trophy, another captured the Einstein trophy and the third player captured the Newton trophy. The Galileo trophy was the most valuable and the Newton trophy least valuable in the game. Determine the name of each scientist and determine who captured each type of trophy, using the following clues.

- The physicist, much to his chagrin, did not capture the Einstein trophy, nor did the chemist.

- Ben had a better trophy than Ken and lesser trophy than Jen.
- Jen did not capture the Einstein trophy.
- Neither the biologist nor the chemist captured the best trophy.

From the first clue, the **biologist captured the Einstein trophy**. From the second one, **Jen had the best trophy (so the Galileo trophy)** and **Ben the Einstein trophy** since his trophy was better than **Ken's (who thus had the Newton trophy)**. Jen did not capture the Einstein trophy so she is not the biologist. From the last clue above, the physicist captured the best trophy, the Galileo one. **Thus Jen who has the Galileo trophy is the physicist. Ben has the Einstein trophy so is the biologist, therefore the chemist must be Ken who must have the Newton trophy**, the only one left.



BLACK LIVES MATTER – THE SLOGAN

by Chris deBoer

The death of George Floyd in May was met with chants across the US, and in other countries too, that: “*Black lives matter!*” This cry, being undeniably true, resonated with Christians, leading many to march, and others to “black out” their social media pages in solidarity.

But as clear as it is that Christians must not be racist and must fight against this sin, what I am presenting in this article is why both the *organization* Black Lives Matter, and even the *slogan* itself, shouldn’t be embraced by Christians.

Why?

ACCUSATIONS NEED TO BE SPECIFIC TO BE ACTIONABLE

To begin, the entirety of the movement is based on the blanket

assertion that by simply being Black, a person is oppressed. The claim is made that there aren’t just individual cases of discrimination, but there is “systemic racism” – it is a feature of, and built right into the, whole fabric of our culture and institutions, public and private.

It is important to understand that there could well be evidence of systemic racism or other individual racism, but the first step to addressing problems is identifying them...specifically. Where there are specific examples given of racial injustice, we can then work to find specific solutions. If police are targeting Black drivers in expensive cars, or for driving through a rich neighborhood, that would be racial profiling and would be wrong. This specific problem would require specific solutions such as

restricting police officer’s ability to pull over vehicles without evidence of just cause or probability. If Black people are being killed in “no-knock” police raids – operations where the police break down the door without first identifying themselves – this specific problem could also be addressed with a specific approach that might involve completely re-examining this practice.

To be sure, widespread systemic racism has existed, with laws in the US that restricted where Blacks could sit, or eat, or even what water fountains they could use. And examples could persist in certain institutions today. But those laws are now gone. And for many years there has been an effort towards affirmative action, both *codified* (by law) or *de facto* (local hiring policies), opening greater opportunities for historical minorities to

have a better chance for post-secondary education or certain jobs. We could explore the pros and cons of affirmative action in a future article, but the point here is only to note it was certainly an effort to address systemic racism and to provide increased opportunities for those whose opportunities may have been lacking.

Unspecified claims of systemic racism suggest that it is intentional and state-sponsored; that the cultural power elites have set up a system where they can continue to suppress any opportunity that Black people, or members of other racial minorities, could have of empowerment. How they account for the many successful and middle-income members within the Black community is not very clear. They don't fit the victim narrative and their success seems to be either ignored, or they themselves are attacked as sellouts (as Larry Elder highlights in his new documentary *Uncle Tom*). The idea of systemic racism does not allow much room for individual success for Black people, and any example of such success isn't allowed to counter the narrative of oppression.

The point I'm trying to make is that we can address specific problems with specific solutions. In contrast, it is impossible to fix nebulous unspecified problems, especially with riots and looting.

THE BLM ORGANIZATION IS SPECIFICALLY ANTI-CHRISTIAN

Why we should not support the Black Lives Matter (BLM) organization becomes clear when we take a closer look at what that organization supports. This is from their website:

We are self-reflexive and do the work required to dismantle cisgender¹ privilege and uplift Black trans folk, especially Black trans women who continue to be disproportionately impacted by trans-antagonistic violence.

It is not a societal "privilege" when your sexuality and gender match – it

is healthy, natural, and normal. The Creator God made it so. It is possible that this division between gender and sexuality becomes normal language even among Christians, and we must resist this, entirely.

We have to understand that we are up against a Great Deceiver, who is prowling around like a lion seeking to devour. There is a battle going on for us and our children and we need to equip ourselves and our young people with clear unambiguous language about the created order. Where there is evidence of gender dysphoria, then empathy, compassion, and help should be readily available; but by seeking to "dismantle cisgender privilege," and "uplift Black trans folk" the BLM organization is attacking what is good, and celebrating what is broken. They boldly state:

BLM foster[s] a queer-affirming network. When we gather, we do so with the intention of freeing ourselves from the tight grip of heteronormative thinking, or rather, the belief that all in the world are heterosexual (unless s/he or they disclose otherwise).

The "Black Lives Matter" slogan has many people thinking this is about racism. To be sure, the organization addresses racism in its statement of faith, but the organization's focus is fixated on sexuality and gender identity too. By using charged language of "freeing ourselves from the tight grip of...", they are affirming that all those who are not part of the cultural elite (white, male, able-bodied, cis-gendered, etc.) are oppressed. They hate the idea that heterosexuality is normative, but as Christians, we confess its normative status from creation. We acknowledge, in humility, that there are Christians who struggle with same-sex attraction and the church needs to develop greater empathy for such brothers and sisters,

but that does not take away from the norms that God has established in creation.

As we look through their website their radical anti-Christian intent becomes more and more clear.

We disrupt the Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement by supporting each other as extended families and "villages" that collectively care for one another, especially our children, to the degree that mothers, parents, and children are comfortable.

The very foundational structure of civilization, all civilizations, is the family unit. It is the Christian worldview that highlights the importance of fathers and mothers, both. God created both male and female in his image; God demands that children honor both father and mother; the Triune relationship includes that of Father and Son, etc. While Christians express the importance of belonging to the communion of saints or the "extended family" and "village" that "collectively cares for one another," we stress the biblical truth that the primary responsibility for children are parents, both fathers and mothers. It is the task of both parents to train up their children in the fear of the Lord. You'll also notice that BLM mentions *mothers* and *parents* in this statement, but not *fathers* specifically. They are focused on ensuring they don't make any allusions to anything that could be remotely close to patriarchy. They would object to orthodox churches refusing to allow women to serve in the office of elders and deacons. They would object to asking a wife if they would "honor, love, and obey" her husband. Any language that suggests that a husband is the head of his household would be forbidden.

... the organization's focus is fixated on sexuality and gender identity too.

The brand “Black Lives Matter” was strategically chosen. Who can disagree with it?

THE BLM SLOGAN IS 100% TRUE AND STILL SHOULDN'T BE EMBRACED

The brand “Black Lives Matter” was strategically chosen. Who can disagree with it? Black lives do matter, and all people, especially Christians, must fight injustices including racism. But we may not support in any way, shape, or manner the BLM movement which ties the slogan and organization so tightly together.

We need to see that the driving force behind the Black Lives Matter movement is an organization that is entirely ungodly, unchristian, unbiblical, and wrong. It is a deceptive movement, seeking to deceive whole nations of people in an effort to portray all the things God teaches us are right and good, as being wrong and unjust. And their influence is seen everywhere, especially, these days, on the professional sports playing field. Might it be time for us to stop watching NBA basketball or NFL football, since these organizations have embraced the Black Lives Matter movement uncritically, and ideologically? Maybe it is time we stop cheering and spending money on BLM ideologues and their paraphernalia whether that is pro-sports or any other organization.

Going forward, we will have to choose our words carefully. When we want to express how unjust racism is, we will have to find another way than to echo a slogan that is tightly linked to so much more than the words it says. Perhaps we can find a way to say that all people of all races are “image-bearers of God”? We can no longer use “black lives

WHAT COULD WE SAY INSTEAD?

If we can't join in the chants of “Black Lives Matter!” what can we say instead?

Imagine this: what if Christians who were upset with the seemingly cavalier death of George Floyd would have responded with “George Floyd was an image-bearer of God too”? That would have underscored the importance of treating him and everyone as persons with dignity and respect. It also would have been specifically targeted to George Floyd's death.

To address the larger challenge of racism, some have suggested, “Black lives matter *too*!” The benefit of adding “too” makes it clear that the sentence itself is not racist. It highlights that racism against Black people is a problem while also recognizing that all races matter.

Would a phrase like “Erase racism” capture the same point? Perhaps “Christians against racism” could be a phrase we “meme-ify.” It demonstrates Christians' opposition to racism, while also confessing we are followers of Christ.

Finally, a more wordy suggestion, but that would include the reason for *why* we oppose racism: “The New Jerusalem will be filled with a mosaic of peoples. Stop Racism Now.” Our anticipation of the perfection that is to come should motivate towards working towards the standards of perfection. As R.C. Sproul and Ligonier Ministries remind us regularly, “Right Now Counts Forever.” So, right now, let's do our best to hold up every human being, from conception to natural death, as the image-bearers of God that they are, and demonstrate our desire to help those who may be victims of racism.

– Chris deBoer

matter” because it implies that we agree with the organization and what it stands for, but we don't, and we can't.

I want to conclude this article by suggesting that BLM is not the root of a new tree, but it is a fruit of a tree planted many years ago. The founders of BLM are synthesizing instruction from those who have gone on before them including Karl Marx and Saul Alinsky – one of the co-founders has even described herself and her colleagues as “trained Marxists.” In future articles I hope to explore some of these foundational developments that have provided the fertile soil for BLM and other such

causes.

May the Lord help us to remain diligent in keeping his Word, using it as a light to our path, shining the light of His Word on the darkness around us. We are the salt and light in this world; let's be sure we know what needs preserving and how to preserve it. ^{RP}

Chris deBoer is the Executive Director of the Reformed Perspective Foundation and the host of the Focal Point podcast.

ENDNOTE

¹ A new term used to describe a guy who *doesn't* think he is a girl (and vice versa).



by Astride Wenigerova-Noga

IN PRAISE OF RED LIGHTS

THE CASE FOR BUMPER-STICKER AND T-SHIRT CHRISTIANITY

We found the handprinted note tucked beneath the windshield wiper, as we returned to our car in the mall parking lot. “May you not be judged as severely as you judge others,” it said. The note, printed by some shaky hand, was a reaction to our Mazda’s bumper sticker: “A nation that kills its own children is a nation without hope – Pope John Paul II.”

Whoever left the note definitely “heard” our message. Signs of the effect it had on them were present. Without writing paper on hand, the person tore off a piece of some box to pass on their reaction to us. Shaky printing suggested

that the writer was emotional and wanted to say as fast as possible what they had to say, and wrote it on the palm of their hand only, not bothering to look for a firmer support. (Or, I wondered, could this be the shaky hand of an older person? But no, the elderly don’t print, they use handwriting. Only the new generation never learned how to write, so they print).

Furthermore, the writer, unable to attack the message, attacked the messenger – another sign of emotionalism. They must also have had some rudimentary knowledge of God and of his Word since they called for some higher judgment on us. Yes, the

writer was definitely not left unmoved by our bumper sticker’s message. They heard it well.

The same sticker got us a handshake in front of our cleaner’s shop. A man in his 30’s commended us for the sticker, and made some comments on the prevailing apathy of western Christians to the ongoing slaughter of the innocent.

A BOUNCING GELATIN WALL

I believe in bumper stickers, in stickers and in T-shirt messages. I know they work. And they work because they catch people before they are ready, in the moments when their hearts and minds are open and ready like a freshly

plowed field to receive a seed. That seed, once planted, sends out a tiny root and eventually can give life to something good.

Let me explain myself. Human minds and hearts are wonderfully able to hear what they want to hear, and to be deaf to what they don't want to hear. For example, I was at one time convinced my son did not hear very well. But when I dragged him in for a hearing test it turned out he had perfect hearing. But also selective hearing.

I'm sure you experience this yourself many times every day. When our spouses, teachers, preachers, parents, children or the media communicate something to us it takes us only 30 seconds to figure out if the coming address is going to be uncomfortable to us, or request something from us, or be hurtful to us. And if we sense such a message, instantly our defenses come up and we erect a powerful wall. This wall will not let anything from the outside penetrate us. Everything we don't want to deal with just bounces off. It is a bouncing gelatin wall! With our defenses up, we hear selectively and pick up only the weakest points of the address to eventually use for a counterattack. But we are deaf to the main points, the facts of the address because of our mighty bouncing "gelatin wall."

I remember the communist indoctrination lessons I had to learn growing up behind the Iron Curtain. I remember clearly that when my beloved history professor started to praise the achievements of the communist ideology and tear down everything that was built before it, something always happened to me. I erected my own "bouncing wall." I, too, did not hear.

This wall allowed me to distance myself from the responsibility I had to stand up and say, "Comrade teacher, this is a lie! You know how bloody and unjust communism is!" The wall let me pretend I did not hear, so I did not have to comment.

But in truth I knew that speaking would get me in trouble and perhaps put my father back in prison, so I did not

**DON'T WAIT FOR 6 STRONG MEN
TO TAKE YOU TO CHURCH**

**I have noticed everyone
who is for abortion has
been born. -Ronald Reagan**

act. After all, when I once approached this professor privately to talk about some great historical lie, he commanded me not to listen to my father, but to believe instead the communist history books.

BEFORE THE WALL GOES UP

This mental "bouncing wall" is real, and everyone has one. Through this wall, we are not heard.

So, ladies and gentlemen, we must get our message to people before this wall gets up! Speed is crucial. The reality is you have no more than 30 seconds to reach people before the bouncing wall goes up. You have only 30 seconds to get to them!

Repeat this to yourself and adapt your strategies to it. Learn from the businessman who knows that advertising sells! Their 30-second commercials cost millions, but they make millions. They sell.

Why?

Because these short commercials get TV viewers unprepared in the midst of some other story, before their bouncing wall comes up. The message sneaks in and they say, "Hey, didn't I always like this song?" And they rush to the computer and order the gadget, tool, book, or DVD that will soon make an appearance at their next garage sale.

I know that people read bumper stickers. I read bumper stickers too. They get at us with their short messages while our walls are still down. That's why they work, like TV ads. That's why they get our message heard.

Now, you and I don't have the money to go on TV and say, "Dear Canadians, abortion kills people. Abortion is the cruel execution of the innocent..." Even if we had the millions of dollars needed to put this message on TV as an ad, the CRTC (Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission) would not allow it on the air, because it is not politically correct.

And if we tried a different approach and got permission to preach against abortion in the town square, nobody would come listen to it. The invisible bouncing wall would prevent all but the committed pro-lifers from coming and listening.

IN PRAISE OF RED LIGHTS

But my bumper stickers?

May our Lord be praised because of the one who invented them!

My bumper sticker always catches the eyes of following drivers. They have to watch my bumper because that's where the signal lights are. And while waiting for the green light with wandering eyes, bored by familiar scenery, they look



eagerly for some distraction. My bumper sticker gives it to them – a definitely not common, nor boring, but rather clear message that sticks.

They might get convicted and repent. They might get convicted and get angry. They might just process it as information and stay apathetic. Regardless, they are confronted with the truth and can never tell the Creator, “I did not know. Why did your servants, Christians, not tell me?”

So when my dearest husband complains that he, “did not get even one green light today,” I say, “Thank-you Lord, for thou has created the yellow and red colors!” Those red lights mean that 16 people were confronted with the truth on the way to work. If we are lucky, 16 more will be confronted on the way home. Great! If we go to the city 3 times per week, we will reach 48 drivers (and some of their passengers). In one month that will add up to 200 people. Wow! In one year 2,400 people will read the \$3 pro-life message on my bumper, a message we are not really permitted to say aloud anywhere anymore...except in the midst of traffic on my bumper.

I gave one of my most blatant pro-life bumper stickers to my brother. Soon somebody who worked at the hospital needed to borrow my brother’s car for one week. And it came to pass that the old red car was parked in the staff parking lot, standing in a predetermined strategic parking stall just next to the exit, where every car had to slow to stop and catch the message: “Abortion – the ultimate child abuse.” There it was, a witness to all the hospital staff, and I praised the Lord for it.

I love small stickers too. I know that the message, “Abortion stops a beating heart” stuck just beneath the address on the envelope will be processed and read by 5-7 people. Its design is appealing and very interesting. With the 200-500 envelopes we mail every year I rejoice that I will reach large numbers of people who I would never have been able to speak to – especially members of the Canadian Postal Union, which donates lots of money for the advancement of the death culture in Canada! Now mind

you, my local postal employees have read the sticker 2000 times already, but I still rejoice. After all, if Joseph Goebel’s idea – that a lie repeated often enough becomes the truth – worked in Nazi Germany, then the truth repeated 2000 times must work also.

*Try sticking a small
“Abortion stops
a beating heart”
sticker on your
mailbox.*

Try sticking a small “Abortion stops a beating heart” sticker on your mailbox. I bet you that when your paperboy or girl first hears the word “abortion” in one of their condom-and-banana sex education classes, the first thing jumping to their mind will be the words, “...stops a beating heart.” He or she might even speak it out loud and start a very interesting conversation in the class, or with their parents.

Marvelous things can be done with one-liners like “Beware of Dog!” or “Stop!” or “Don’t drink and drive!” It is time for us to use that power.

BACKWARD T-SHIRTS

With T-shirts I have one problem – its effectiveness is best when it is backwards. I have found that any message is lost on me when it is printed on the front of a T-shirt. Our culture avoids eye contact; we do not stare, or prey on privacy. While we may read the logos on T-shirts while they are still in the store, and may love to wear some that enhance our stands or our personalities, we hardly ever read what others carry on their bellies or across their busts. It is invasive. *C’est un faux pas.*

On the other hand, we feel free to read what people carry on their backs as we walk behind them. This does not force on us any contact or seem as invasive. So

should you wish to print up some great T-shirt message, print it on the back of the shirt.

Just imagine that you are strolling in the fresh air and in front of you walks a person with a message on her back that you now have all the time to read: “Polluted by sin? Hardly breathing? Fresh air will not do. I might know the remedy. Feel free to ask.”

Our most beloved T-shirt was given to me by my daughter, a University of Alberta student then. It listed on the back the “Top Ten Reasons to be Pro-life.” Aimed at university students, it read:

10. Equal rights for unborn women too.
9. All the best babes are pro-life.
8. You were a fetus once.
7. Diapers are disposable, babies aren’t.
6. Pampers stocks are up 1/8 on the TSE.
5. Nine out of ten babies do not pee on your rug.
4. Babies don’t talk back.
3. You’ll need someone to support you when you’re old and want a home in Florida.
2. Babies don’t drive up the !@# Grade Point Average.
1. 1,336 unborn babies will be killed in Canada today.

While this was not a short 30-second message, the first 30 seconds of it were so amusing for any reader, except the committed pro-abortion, that people continue to read on about these cute, friendly creatures – babies. And then, when they were already sold by the cute message, they were hit with number 1!

EVERYWHERE THEY LOOK?

I understand from the latest statistics that close to 30 percent of Canadians regularly attend some Christian church. Wouldn’t it be great if our politicians, media people and academia found out, as they traveled to work one day, that 30 percent of the vehicles they saw had some sort of Christian or pro-life message on them? And that 30 percent of the T-shirts they saw, as people

strolled down Main Street, had some message showing off adherence to God and Christian morals? Don’t you think they would act accordingly?

Don’t you think businessmen would soon sell them in any mall? Or that the editor of the paper would not leave out the name of Jesus Christ from my Christmas story he recently published? I bet you many things would look very different.

Priests for Life has said that now, when Christianity and the Pro-life message are almost completely pushed out of the press, TV, and culture generally, *the street is our media!* They are right. The last frontier left to us is the street. Let’s make the best of it.

But will we? Does it make any sense to try and figure out how best to get our message heard if there are no takers for the positions of criers and watchmen? Does it make any sense when people are not even willing to use bumper stickers?

LAME EXCUSES

People say it does not change anything. I have a sticker for them that reads, “Did you try it?” They respond, “No, but others did.” Like who? Here in Grande Prairie there are only 10 cars carrying a meaningful message. (But we have lots of cars running around with the latest “angst” bumper sticker which reads, “I am a bitch.”)

Some Christians say that while the message is true, it offends people, especially those who have had an abortion. “Jesus was and is always a gentleman, so we must follow his example and not offend people. After all, how would you like it, if somebody tried to impose their set of beliefs on you?” I have a bumper sticker for these people that reads, “The truth will make you free.” And I ask them how they would bring the message to the world in a better, less offensive way. “We would wait to be asked,” is their reply. And so most of them are still waiting for their first customer to show up and ask.

Others don’t want their employers to get mad at them. I have a sticker for them that reads, “If you are ashamed of me, I will be ashamed of you before my


Father” (Luke 9:26).

The most honest admit, “I don’t want to get my car vandalized.” I would recommend to such honest people to continue their honesty and not to sing, “All to Jesus I surrender, all to him freely I give.”

The most honest admit, “I don’t want to get my car vandalized.”

All these and many, many other “reasons” are perpetuated in Christian circles, so the message does not get out simply because there are no messengers. But these are not real reasons, they are just excuses for our laziness, our cowardice and our lack of love for God and our fellow man. This is a point worth repeating – the three real reasons we do not get our message out are cowardice, laziness, and lack of love for God and our fellow man.

The moment we repent and start to proclaim our God and His morality to the world (even if only by bumper stickers), that is the moment we start to obey God, and thus become courageous. In that moment we also return to our first love for God and we love our fellow men again. *And at that moment we’ll get our message heard* because there will finally be messengers to carry it, and no matter how it will be received it will be heard! I pray for that.

Ladies and gentlemen, I now rest my case. 

You can find pro-life bumper stickers at LifeCycleBooks.com, which has both Canadian and American delivery. Pro-life and Christian t-shirts can be found at MissionalWear.com, ReformedGear.com, WrathAndGrace.com, SolaGratia.co, Abort73.com, and other online retailers. A version of this article first appeared in the February 2002 issue.

FULLY KNOWN

A "mis-snaken" identity, a beggar bishop, and a dead father found

by Christine Farenhorst



It is a very special thing to be known, to have someone look at you and understand you and love you simultaneously.

My father lost his father at the tender age of six. He was just a tiny boy in stature but he loved his father with all his heart. His father, by the grace of God, had been able to help to implant the love of God in his young son. My father recounted to me that he had not really understood death when it did occur. He had read a Psalm, at his father's request, as his father lay dying. Then his father's bed was suddenly empty and a host of people came to visit his mother. He told me that he recalled the livingroom being filled with people, and that he (being such a short, little guy) had been engulfed in a sea of legs. Strangely enough, he thought he recognized his father's legs. He ran up to those legs, grabbed them and tried to hoist himself up. When he had done that previously, his father had always lifted him up. But a strange face stared down at him. It was not his father. He had been mistaken.

It can possibly be rather dangerous to be mistaken in identifying someone or something. There was a news item a number of years ago about a man who bought a snake from a neighbor. He was told that it was a python. After paying one hundred dollars for the creature, which was a good size, he took it home to the other pythons he owned. As he walked towards his door carrying the snake, it somehow fell to the ground. He bent down to pick it up and it bit him. Because

the man assumed that the animal was a python, he was not worried about the bite when it happened. After all, pythons are not poisonous. However, about thirty minutes later, as his hand became very swollen and painful, he was concerned enough to head for the hospital. It turned out that the snake was not a python after all, but a copperhead. Anti-venom was given and what potentially had been a life-threatening situation was averted. The fellow was extremely thankful that he had not hung the new snake acquisition around his neck.

But an unfortunate unawareness of identity can sometimes have a happy ending. There is the story of a little girl in England who was evacuated to the Welsh countryside during the Blitz – Germany's WWII bombing campaign against the United Kingdom. She was placed with a family for quite a while and was constantly hopeful that her parents would arrive to convey her home again. The girl's surname was Knight. Back home she had a neighbor by the name of Mr. Wright. This neighbor was killed during an air attack. When the news of the neighbor's death came out, the names of Knight and Wright were mixed up. The child was mistakenly told that her father had died. Many tears were shed before it came out that there had been an error of identity.

Archbishop James Ussher, (1581-1656),
Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate

of all Ireland, was a Calvinist. He lived in turbulent political times, times in which there was much tension between Catholics and Protestants. Much can be said about the man, but there is a story about him which deals with mistaken identity.

The Archbishop was often about the country visiting his curates. He wanted to know how they were doing, whether or not they were well respected in their communities and if they were true shepherds of the flocks which had been entrusted to them. He did not want them to know, however, that he was checking up on them. So he became a master at disguising himself so that no one would recognize him.

On various occasions, Archbishop Ussher dressed as a beggar and knocked on the doors of his clergy. One fine day, dressed as a vagrant, he knocked on the door of one particular curate. The man was out, and his wife answered the door. Seeing the rather unkempt figure of a man at her threshold, she took him in and offered him bread, porridge and water at the kitchen table. But she alongside this meal, she also served him a lengthy harangue.

"For shame, old man, to go begging at your age!!" she began, "How can you be so lazy!"

He did not answer, but regarded her thoughtfully above a spoonful of porridge.

"Your sitting here is not the fruit," she went on, waving her finger at him, "of

an honest, decent, industrial and hard-worked life."

He still did not respond, but took a drink of the water she had placed by his plate. Thinking, perhaps, that she could aid in the education of this ill-looking specimen of a man, the wife questioned him. "Tell me, old man," she spoke a little gentler now, "how many commandments are there? Do you know the answer?"

Ussher, pretending to be confused, stammered out, "Eleven."

"Eleven?"

He nodded.

"Eleven," she repeated in a frustrated manner, and then went on, "I thought so. Not only are you lazy, but you are also unlearned and not knowledgeable in the ways of God."

Ussher sat before her in silence, seemingly unresponsive. The wife walked over to the cupboard and took out a booklet. "Here, old man," she said, placing the booklet next to his food, "take this with you when you leave. Learn your catechism. And when you have learned it, you will find out that there are not eleven commandments, but ten. Ten, you hear? Put that in your bowl and eat it."

Archbishop Ussher left that home and later made it known that the following Sunday he would preach in that very parish which he had just visited. When Sunday arrived the wife of the curate was among the congregants. She had no idea that the old beggar who had graced her kitchen table that week would be

preaching. The text was announced. It was to be from John 13:34:

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another".

"It would seem," Ussher began his sermon, "from this text that there are eleven commandments."

At this point of time, the Archbishop was recognized by the curate's wife. What she thought and what she felt at that moment is not known, but shame might have enveloped her.

The most important person to recognize and know is, of course, the Lord Jesus. There is the story of Mary Magdalene, weeping for Jesus, and not knowing him. John 20:14-16 relates the incident of her standing by the tomb.

"When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, 'Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?' Because she thought he was the gardener, she said to him, 'Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will take him.' Jesus said to her, 'Mary.' She turned and said to him in Aramaic, 'Rabboni' (which means Teacher)."

We are fully known. This is what 1 Cor. 13:12 tells us.

"For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known."

This is so good and so comforting. It is also good to realize that, because of the Holy Spirit, Jesus is always with us, constantly near us, even though we may not always recognize Him or be aware of Him. Our eyes might be filled with tears, or blind with worry and fear. Yet it is good to remember that He is omnipresent – everywhere and in all places. He might appear differently than we think, dressed in ways that take on an appearance we might not expect.

At this point of time we see only a bit of His glory, and that imperfectly. But we are in the process of becoming like Him and we shall know Him fully. 1 John 3:2 gives us assurance:

"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is." RP

Christine Farenhorst's newest book, "The Corner of His Garment," is available at Amazon and other online retailers.





C.S. Lewis's Apologetics: A REFORMED ASSESSMENT

by Wes Bredenhof

Many Christians admire C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) and enjoy his writings. I was introduced to C.S. Lewis through my Grade 4 teacher who read *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* out loud to us. I was hooked. Shortly thereafter I went out and bought my own set of the complete Chronicles of Narnia. That just got me started. I've long enjoyed his imagination and literary style and I'm by no means alone.

But his influence goes further. He

was a well-known and persuasive advocate for Christianity. Many people claim to have become Christians through the writings of Lewis. Books like *Mere Christianity* and *Miracles* are still widely-read and touted as powerful tracts promoting Christian truth. He was one of the most influential Christian apologists of the twentieth century. But what should a Reformed believer think about his method? Can we make use of his writings in Reformed apologetics?

SOME BACKGROUND

Lewis was born in Ireland, but spent most of his life in England. He was a professor of English at Cambridge University. He wasn't trained as a theologian, but did study and briefly teach philosophy. He'd been an unbeliever for much of his young adult life. He writes about this in his spiritual autobiography *Surprised by Joy*:

I was at this time living, like so many Atheists or Antitheists, in a whirl of contradictions. I maintained that God did not exist. I was also very angry with God for not existing. I was equally angry with Him for creating a world.¹

In the early 1930s, Lewis abandoned his atheism and professed to be a Christian. He became a member of the Church of England.

Today many Christians believe C.S. Lewis to have been an orthodox, evangelical believer. However, it's important to realize that Lewis had some serious theological problems.

For example, he didn't hold to the inerrancy of the Bible. In his book *Reflections on the Psalms*, he insists that the imprecatory psalms (like Psalm 137) are "devilish." In *Mere Christianity*, he affirms some form of theistic evolution.² In the same book,

...what should a
Reformed believer
think about his
method?

he writes about the possibility of Buddhists belonging to Christ without knowing it:

...A Buddhist of good will may be led to concentrate more and more on the Buddhist teaching about mercy and to leave in the background (though he might still say he believes) the Buddhist teaching on other points.³

There are more such issues. On the basis of some of his statements, one might even wonder to what extent C.S. Lewis really understood the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ. For myself, I'm not sure.

One thing that is certain is that Lewis has had a huge influence. In the last few years, this is definitely because of the Chronicles of Narnia books being made into films. As mentioned earlier, there are many people who claim to have become Christians because they read a book by C.S. Lewis like *Mere Christianity* or *Miracles*. Let's briefly look at those books and the method Lewis uses.

MERE CHRISTIANITY

Mere Christianity was originally a series of radio talks. It was an attempt by Lewis to argue for a basic ('mere') form of the Christian faith. Early in the book, Lewis uses the moral argument for the existence of a deity. He says that because there is moral law, there must be a law-giver. That law-giver must be a deity. At that point, he wasn't arguing for the Christian conception of God, but only a generic divine being. His method becomes clear in what he says here:

We have not yet got as far as the God of any actual religion, still less the God of that particular religion called Christianity. We have only got as far as a Somebody or Something behind the Moral Law. We are not taking anything from the Bible or the Churches, we are trying to see what we can find out about this Somebody on our own steam.⁴

Lewis was thus trying to reason to God apart from any revelation from God. He was asking readers to independently judge the existence of God on the basis of the arguments presented. This method is found elsewhere in *Mere Christianity* as well.

Lewis tries to build up his case bit by bit. Eventually he gets to the question of what should his readers think about Jesus and his claim to be God:

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sorts of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.⁵

That's a brilliant piece of writing, often quoted. You'll sometimes hear it condensed down to the idea that people have to decide whether Jesus was Lord, liar, or lunatic. Yet note again that people are called to judge. You have to judge the claims of Jesus.

C.S. Lewis wrote another book entitled *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. In that book he gets to the heart of the problem with his own approach in parts of *Mere Christianity*. He writes:

The ancient man approached God (or even the gods) as the accused person approaches his judge. For the modern man the roles are reversed. He is the

judge: God is in the dock...The trial may even end in God's acquittal. But the important thing is that Man is on the bench and God in the dock.⁶

That's exactly what Lewis did in *Mere Christianity*. He allowed man to judge God. He flattered the unbeliever. Lewis gave him a position of authority over God. That method was and is not unique to C.S. Lewis. Many others before and after him have done exactly the same thing. I should also note that it can sometimes be persuasive. These types of arguments can work to get people thinking about the Christian faith, and maybe even convince them. However, just because they work doesn't mean they're right or pleasing to God.

MIRACLES

In his book *Miracles*, we do find Lewis using a different method at times.⁷ He discusses the philosophy of naturalism, the idea that nothing exists besides nature. Against naturalism is supernaturalism, which allows for the existence of other things outside of nature, and therefore also allows for the existence of miracles.

Lewis starts off by rightly noting how the disagreement between the naturalist and the supernaturalist over miracles is not merely about facts. One needs to spend time considering the philosophy of facts held by each side. Lewis is saying that presuppositions matter. He writes,

The result of our historical enquiries thus depends on the philosophical views which we have been holding before we even began to look at the evidence. The philosophical question must therefore come first.⁸

That could have been said by Reformed theologians like Herman Bavinck or Cornelius VanTil. Lewis recognizes that people have pre-existing philosophical commitments which must be exposed and discussed.

So when it comes to naturalism, Lewis does exactly that. He does an internal critique of this philosophy

and how it fails to account for logic, morality, and science. To illustrate, let's just briefly look at what he says about naturalism and logic or reason.

Lewis demonstrates that the naturalist cannot consistently hold to his position without undermining reason itself. His philosophy cannot account for reason and cannot support reason. Even though the naturalist tries to talk highly of reason, he actually destroys it. This is because our reasoning powers are not explainable with naturalism. Naturalism is materialistic – all that exists is matter. But what is reason? Is reason material or non-material? Because reason is non-material, naturalism cannot account for it, we have no way for knowing whether it's true, and our reasoning has no legitimacy. Lewis writes:

A theory which explained everything else in the whole universe but which made it impossible to believe that our thinking was valid, would be utterly out of court. For that theory would itself have been reached by thinking, and if thinking is not valid that theory would, of course, be itself demolished. It would be destroyed by its own credentials. It would be an argument which proved that no argument was sound...which is nonsense.⁹

Naturalism collapses under its own weight when it comes to reason. Later in the book, Lewis shows that naturalism also collapses when it comes to morality and science.

Instead of naturalism, Lewis argues that supernaturalism can account for everything. While he doesn't get to the point of affirming that only the Christian worldview's supernaturalism can account for everything, he comes close. Elsewhere in his writings, he did reach that conclusion. There is this famous quote from his book *The Weight of Glory*:

Christian theology can fit in science, art, morality, and the sub-Christian religions. The scientific point of view

cannot fit in any of these things, not even science itself. I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it, but because by it I see everything else.¹⁰

That is *very* well said – completely in line with Psalm 36:9, “For with you is the fountain of life; in your light do we see light.” Indeed, only Christianity can consistently account for everything. Christianity is true because of the impossibility of the contrary. Lewis didn't always consistently work with this method, but when he did, he used it to great effect

At the end of the day, Lewis is worth reading, not only to see some wrong ways of doing apologetics, but also to learn to use some right ways – and brilliantly. Moreover, if you have non-Christian friends, reading Lewis with them might be a great way to bring Christian truth to bear on their lives. If you do that, I'd recommend *Miracles* over *Mere Christianity*. RP

ENDNOTES

1. C.S. Lewis, *Surprised by Joy*, New York: Walker and Company, 1955, 170.
2. C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, London: Fontana Books, 1952, 181ff.
3. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 173.
4. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 35.
5. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 52-53.
6. C.S. Lewis, *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, ed. W. Hooper (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970), 244.
7. For this section on *Miracles*, I am indebted to an unpublished paper by Daniel R. Dodds, “Elements of Transcendental Presuppositionalism as Found in the Works of C.S. Lewis.”
8. C.S. Lewis, *Miracles*, New York: Fount Paperbacks, 1947, 8.
9. Lewis, *Miracles*, 18-19.
10. C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory*, 1980, 92

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where this first appeared.

WHEN LEWIS SAYS IT BRILLIANTLY

On the problem with Materialism

“If the solar system was brought about by an accidental collision, then the appearance of organic life on this planet was also an accident, and the whole evolution of Man was an accident too. If so, then all our present thoughts are mere accidents – the accidental by-product of the movement of atoms. And this holds for the thoughts of the materialists and astronomers as well as for anyone else's.

“But if their thoughts – i.e. of materialism and astronomy – are merely accidental by-products, why should we believe them to be true? I see no reason for believing that one accident should be able to give me a correct account of all the other accidents. It's like expecting that the accidental shape taken by the splash when you upset a milkjug should give you a correct account of how the jug was made and why it was upset.”

– *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*

Shucks, a stiff drink can make you happy...

When asked “which of the religions of the world gives its followers the greatest happiness, Lewis gave an unexpected response.

“While it lasts, the religion of worshipping oneself is the best. I have an elderly acquaintance of about eighty, who has lived a life of unbroken selfishness and self-admiration from the earliest years, and is, more or less, I regret to say, one of the happiest men I know. From the moral point of view it is very difficult! I am not approaching the question from that angle. As you perhaps know, I haven't always been a Christian. I didn't go to religion to make me happy. I always

knew a bottle of Port would do that. If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity."

– *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*

Abiding happiness is only found with God

"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.

"The reason why it can never succeed is this. God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on Himself. He Himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to burn, or the food our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other. That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."

– *Mere Christianity*

Homemaking as the pinnacle of all other work

"I think I can understand that feeling about a housewife's work being like that of Sisyphus (who was the stone rolling gentleman). But it is surely in reality the most important work in the world. What do ships, railways, miners, cars, government etc. exist for except that people may be fed, warmed, and safe in their own homes? As Dr. Johnson said, "To be happy at home is the end of all human endeavour". (1st to be happy to prepare for being

happy in our own real home hereafter: 2nd in the meantime to be happy in our houses.) We wage war in order to have peace, we work in order to have leisure, we produce food in order to eat it. So your job is the one for which all others exist..."

– *The Letters of C.S. Lewis*

Too earthly-minded to be of any heavenly use?

There is an expression that "some folks are too heavenly-minded to be of any earthly use." Lewis thought the problem was quite the opposite.

"If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. The Apostles themselves, who set on foot the conversion of the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English Evangelicals who abolished the Slave Trade, all left their mark on Earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth "thrown in": aim at earth and you will get neither."

– *Mere Christianity*

Being far too easily pleased

"If you asked twenty good men today what they thought the highest of the virtues, nineteen of them would reply, *Unselfishness*. But if you had asked almost any of the great Christians of old, he would have replied, *Love*.

"You see what has happened? A negative term has been substituted for a positive, and this is of more than philological importance. The negative idea of *Unselfishness* carries with it the suggestion not primarily of securing good things for others, but of going without them ourselves, as if our abstinence and not their happiness was the important point. I do not think this is the Christian virtue of *Love*.

"The New Testament has lots to say about self-denial, but not about self-denial as an end in itself. We are told to deny ourselves and to take up our crosses in order that we may follow Christ; and to nearly every description of what we shall ultimately find if we do so contains an appeal to desire. "If there lurks in most modern minds the notion that to desire our own good and to earnestly hope for the enjoyment of it is a bad thing, I suggest that this notion has crept in from Kant and the Stoics and is no part of the Christian faith. Indeed, if we consider the unblushing promises of reward and the staggering nature of the rewards promised in the Gospels, it would seem that our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak. We are half-hearted creatures, fooling around with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased."

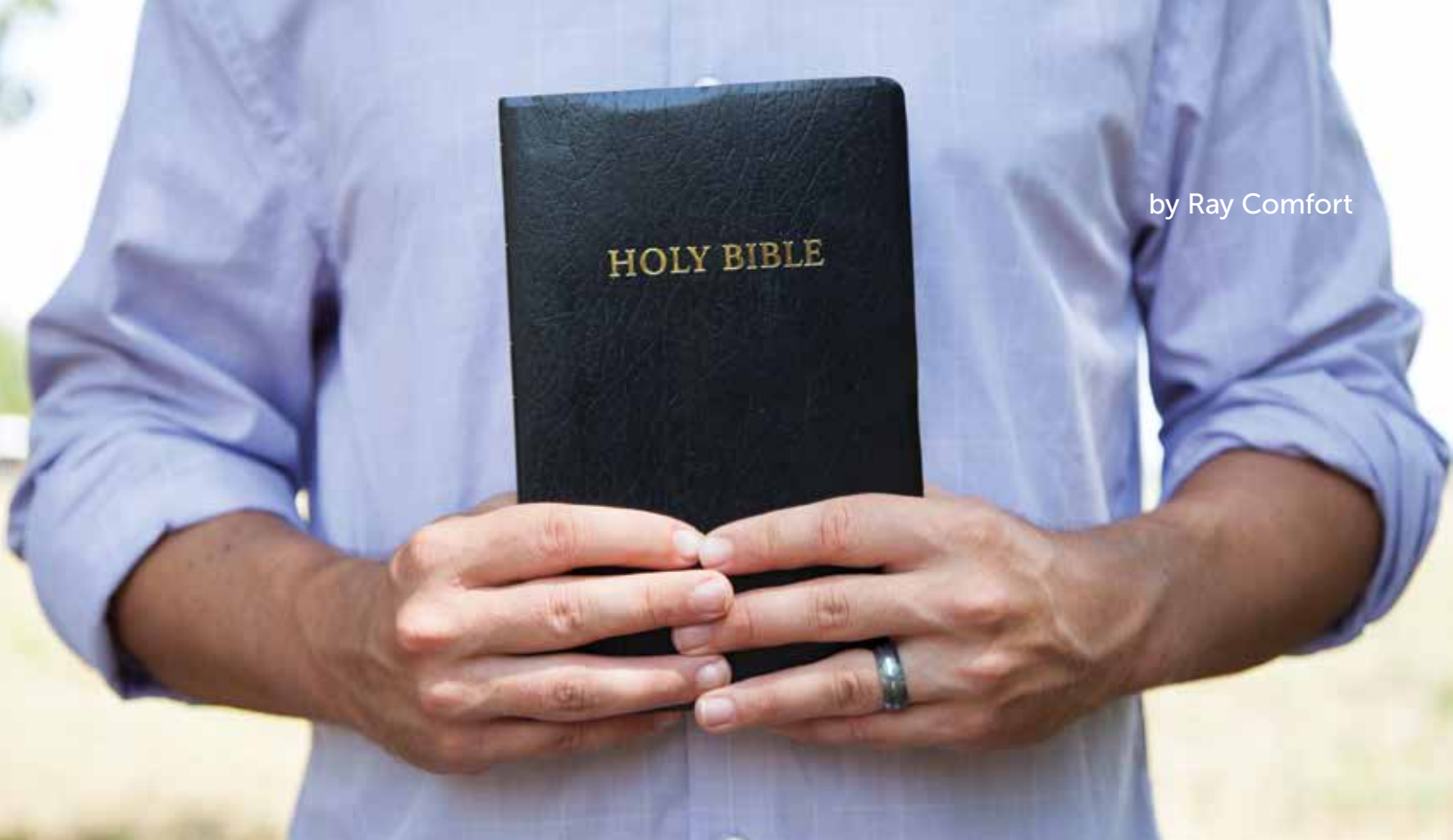
– *The Weight of Glory*

On being and becoming humble

"Do not imagine that if you meet a really humble man he will be what most people call 'humble' nowadays: he will not be a sort of greasy, smarmy person, who is always telling you that, of course, he is nobody. Probably all you will think about him is that he seemed a cheerful, intelligent chap who took a real interest in what you said to him. If you do dislike him it will be because you feel a little envious of anyone who seems to enjoy life so easily. He will not be thinking about humility: he will not be thinking about himself at all.

"If anyone would like to acquire humility, I can, I think, tell him the first step. The first step is to realise that one is proud. And a biggish step, too. At least, nothing whatever can be done before it. If you think you are not conceited, it means you are very conceited indeed."

– *Mere Christianity*



by Ray Comfort

WAS ST. FRANCIS A SISSY?

What do you think of:

**"Feed starving children. Where necessary, use food"?
The same applies to the gospel.**

One hundred and fifty thousand children had been on the brink of starving to death, but thanks to the kind gift of a very generous billionaire, every child now had enough food to keep him alive. That gift had arrived in the form of one big check. The horror was now over. It was finished. It was just a matter of distributing the food using the few relief workers we had. Without them to get the food to the children, there would have been many more deaths.

Some days later, a frantic worker burst

into the camp and cried, "Some of the relief workers have stopped distributing food. Masses of children are dying!" Why would the workers stop when there was plenty of food? It didn't make sense.

The distraught man said, "It's because one of them held up a sign that said, 'Feed the starving children. Where necessary, use food.' That has caused some of the workers to simply befriend the starving children without giving them food. It's insane!"

I'm sure you have heard of Saint Francis of Assisi. The first time I ever heard him was back in 1965. It was during the surf movie *The Endless Summer*. Four surfers who were chasing the sun discovered the perfect wave, at a place in South Africa called "Cape Saint Francis." The sight of the perfect wave excited me beyond words.

The next time I heard of him was when I heard that he said:

“Preach the Gospel at all times.
Where necessary, use words.”

That statement upset me beyond words, because it was a philosophy that I knew sounded deeply spiritual... to those who were spiritually shallow. It made as much sense as “Feed starving children. Where necessary, use food.”

On July 16, 1228 Francis of Assisi was pronounced a saint by Pope Gregory IX. That’s a long time ago, so it’s a little late for questions, but if I could I would like to find out why anyone would say such a strange thing? Was it because he was fearful to use actual words to preach the truth of the Gospel? Or was it because he thought that people would see that he had good works and hear the message of salvation without a preacher, something contrary to Scripture’s:

“How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?” (Romans 10:14).

Whatever the case, 800 years since Francis we have many who profess faith in Jesus, and are no doubt using this popular philosophy to justify being speechless. To them salvation truly is an “unspeakable” gift.

Recently someone told me about a conference where 100,000 Christians gathered to worship God. When I asked if they were exhorted to go out and preach the Gospel to every creature, it was no surprise to me that they weren’t. Instead, they were exhorted to live a life of worship. Again, that sounds spiritual, but you can’t worship God without obedience to His Word, and His Word commands us to preach the Gospel to every creature.

I regularly meet those who think they can obey the Great Commission without using words. When they hear the Gospel preached they are usually offended and say things like, “I appreciate what you are saying, but I don’t like the way you are saying

it.” With a little probing, they are the relationship folks, who think preaching the Gospel means building relationships with the lost, and never mentioning words like “sin,” “Hell,” and “Judgment Day.” They think that real love is to withhold the Bread of life from those that are starving to death.

Remember that Jesus said, “Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels” (Mark 8:38).

According to the dictionary, a “sissy” is “a timid or cowardly person.” From what I understand of Saint Francis, he was no sissy. He was a loving man who was not afraid to use words when he preached. He wasn’t frightened to preach repentance to a sinful world.

However, there have been times when I could have been called that name. I have felt the grip of fear and have wanted to drop words such as sin, Hell, repentance and Judgment Day when I have preached to sinners. I don’t want to come across as being unloving or judgmental, but I fear God more than I fear man. So when God’s Word tells me to use words, I use words, despite the consequences. Listen to the Apostle Paul’s sobering warning to his hearers:

“Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God” (Acts 20: 26-27).

Perhaps he spoke about being free from their blood because he was familiar with God Himself warning Ezekiel of his responsibility to warn his generation:


“When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand.” (Ezekiel 3:18).

When someone thinks that they can feed starving children and not use food, that’s their business. But when their philosophy spreads throughout the camp, it becomes an unspeakable tragedy. If we become passive about the Great Commission because we are more concerned about ourselves than the eternal well-being of others, we may be able to hide our motives from man, but not from God. He warns,

“Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say, ‘Surely we did not know this,’ does not He who weighs the hearts consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?” (Proverbs 24:11-12).

There’s an interesting irony to this story. After a little research I came across a quote about the famous saying. It is from someone who had been a Franciscan monk for 28 years—and had earned an M.A. in Franciscan studies. He contacted some of the most eminent Franciscan scholars in the world to try and verify the saying. He said, “It is clearly not in any of Francis’ writings. After a couple weeks of searching, no scholar could find this quote in a story written within 200 years of Francis’ death.”

So if it wasn’t Saint Francis who said not to use words, who was it? Who is it that would like to see the truth of the Gospel hindered from being preached to every creature? That doesn’t need to be answered.

The time is short. The laborers are few. Please, cast off your fears and equip yourself to preach the Gospel with words. They are necessary. 

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SLIP SLIDING AWAY

When Spain tried to snuff it out, God used ice, and flying Dutchmen, to preserve the fledgling Reformation in the Netherlands.

by James Dykstra

Paul Simon once sang that *the nearer your destination, the more you keep slip sliding away*. While it's a song about your journey through life and the places you visit, it's also a sentiment that anyone in a northern, icy, country can understand. As a Canadian, I can confidently say we understand ice. It's something that defines us in a way that's hard to explain. The waters of the North are covered in ice much of the year. The ground in many areas is frozen with permafrost. The highways in the winter are either covered in treacherous black ice, or in some areas ice itself acts as the winter road. In the cities we learn to walk stiff legged like a penguin to avoid sliding on the ice. And we've even made ice our ally, playing hockey or figure skating to turn ice from foe to friend.

Though we Canadians may know ice, we're not the only ones. The Dutch have a reputation as speed skaters par excellence, having won bronze, silver and gold at the 2014 Sochi Olympics. In English literature, the familiarity of the

Dutch with skating has survived as the tale of *Hans Brinker* or *The Silver Skates*. Though the Dutch may not know the snowfalls that can leave you trapped in your house for days, or the blizzards that can leave you unable to see more than a couple of feet in front of you, they do understand ice and maybe in a way the rest of us never will.

Historically, for the Dutch skating has not been a sport or a play time activity, but a practical way of getting around. Much of the Netherlands is located below sea level and large chunks of the country have even been reclaimed from the seas. This is a country with a lot of experience dealing with water. Not surprisingly, it's also a land crisscrossed by canals because they're necessary for drainage, and stopping the sea from taking back the land stolen away from it.

ZIP VS. SLIP

Come winter, and especially the cold winters that the Netherlands frequently experienced in the 1500 and 1600s, these canals freeze. With that many canals,

that's a lot of ice. And since there's relatively few bridges spanning the rivers and canals, knowing how to skate gave you a really fast way to get around. You could get anywhere you wanted, and could get away from anywhere you didn't want to be.

Starting in the 1560s, the Dutch began to battle their colonial overlords, the Spanish. With on-again, off-again battles raging over the years, the troubles came to a head near Amsterdam in 1572. The small Dutch fleet, highly maneuverable against the much larger Spanish vessels, was frozen into the ice in the port of Amsterdam. Though the Dutch fleet was immobile, the cold weather had brought the Spanish similar problems and they were unable to attack the Dutch city with their fleet.

Forced to disembark, the Spanish started to cross the ice to the city on foot, and this was their fatal mistake. Walking gingerly in the penguin walk that natives of northern climates know well, the Spanish made slow progress



CHARGE OF THE DUTCH SOLDIERS ON SKATES.

The Dutch, as it were, could still skate circles around their foe.

towards the city.

Yet as the Spanish struggled, coming at them with unbelievable speed were the Dutch soldiers. They would swiftly skate just within musket range, fire, and then skate away to reload. The speedy attack and retreat gave the Dutch incredible striking power and left nothing for the Spanish to fire at in return.

The Spanish commander, the infamous Duke of Alva, was grudging in his respect for the Dutch. He ordered

a swift retreat back to the Spanish boats (or as swift a retreat as the ice would allow), having suffered hundreds of deaths at the hands of the Dutch.

The Duke did manage to kill a few Dutch soldiers and capture their skates. Acknowledging the innovative tactics of his enemies, he sent skates back to Spain and ordered that 7,000 pairs be made. From then on, soldiers posted to the Dutch frontier were all given skating lessons. It gave the Spanish increased mobility, but learning to skate and to skate well is not the work of a few lessons but of years of practice. The Dutch, as it were, could still skate circles around their foe.

THE ICE-ING ON THE CAKE?

While ice played a factor in the Dutch eventually winning their independence from the Spanish after 80 years of war, there were other factors, too. They formed alliances with other powers, and

the women learned to shoot and guard the city walls while the men attacked the Spanish. But throughout that long war, strategic flooding of the lowlands, and its winter time counterpart of skating played a role that the Spanish never could overcome.

Though there were a lot of reasons that the Dutch beat the Spanish, it certainly helped that the Spanish learned a bit of what Paul Simon would later sing about: *The nearer your destination, the more you keep slip sliding away.* **RP**

This article is taken from an episode of James Dykstra's History.icu podcast, "where history is never boring." You can check out other episodes at History.icu or on Spotify, Google podcasts, or wherever you find your podcasts.

FILMS

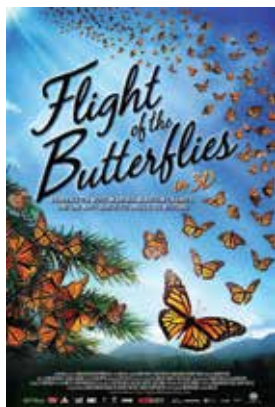
DOCUMENTARIES WORTH WATCHING MORE THAN ONCE

By Jon Dykstra

FLIGHT OF THE BUTTERFLIES

DOCUMENTARY

2012 / 44 MINUTES **RATING: 7/10**



Equal parts detective story and nature documentary, *Flight of the Butterflies* tells the story of "Dana" and her offspring, beautiful monarch butterflies making their way across the United States. It also showcases the investigative work of biologist Fred Urquhart and his wife Norah, who spent their lives trying to discover where the butterflies were going on their yearly migration.

The nature half is simply stunning, and deserves a widescreen TV viewing. We get to follow Dana as she flutters from plant to plant, laying her more than 300 eggs, and get to tag along, too, as she flies as much as a mile up into the heavens.

The mystery half is fun as well. Gordon Pinsent (*The Red Green Show*) plays Fred Urquhart who recruits the help of regular folk – "citizen scientists" – to help him tag and then track the butterflies' flight paths. After gathering this information for decades he can tell they fly south towards Texas, but where do these millions go afterward? I won't spoil things: you'll have to watch it to find out.

While there is a quick nod to Darwin at the beginning of the film, the brilliant design evident in the monarch's lifecycle and their remarkable migration far outshine this mar.

Our review at ReformedPerspective.ca includes a link to watch it for free.

LONG SHOT: THE KEVIN LAUE STORY

DOCUMENTARY

91 MINUTES / 2012 **RATING: 7/10**



This is the story of how a one-armed young man beats the odds to make it onto a Division 1 college basketball team. His disability alone would make Kevin Laue a "long shot" but then he also lost his dad at age 10. What the film celebrates is Laue's determination, but what it also captures is the enormous hole left when a father is missing. Laue does have a father figure, a fantastic high school coach in Patrick McKnight, who was willing to "put a foot in his butt" when Laue needed it. Laue also has a family that loves him, including a grandmother who has to be in the running for his #1 fan.

Cautions would include a couple of f-bombs and one "gosh." We briefly see Kevin in the shower, through an only somewhat opaque glass door. The more notable caution would be that while the importance of fathers is highlighted, the importance of God is overshadowed: the Laues' Christian faith only comes up in spots. So a discussion question for our kids might be: *who do you think is the "god" – the most important person or thing? – in this film? Is it dads or God?*

Sports-minded teens and parents will enjoy this equally. And our online review has the link to watch it for free.

SECRETS OF THE CELL

VIDEO / DOCUMENTARY

30 MINUTES / 2020 **RATING: 7/10**

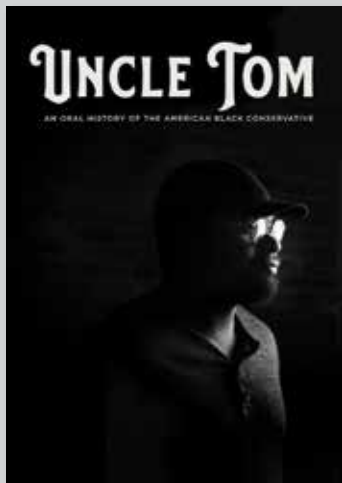


When Darwin first published *On the Origin of the Species*, the science of his time saw the cell as an uncomplicated organism. That's quite the contrast with what we've learned in the 150 years since: the deeper we delve into life on the smallest scale, the more we find there is yet to discover.

In his "Secret of the Cell" series of five short videos, Dr. Michael Behe shows how evolution's random mutation and time simply can't account for the magnificent design we find even on the cellular level. In each 4-7 minute episode, he uses helpful analogies and computer animations to introduce key concepts.

Behe is one of the principal figures behind the Intelligent Design (ID) Movement, which argues that Nature gives evidence of being intelligently designed. Creationists would agree, but the two groups part ways on who gets the credit. ID proponents refuse to name their Intelligent Designer, leaving room in their tent for Muslims, Moonies, Christians, and even agnostics. Meanwhile, creationists give glory specifically to God for how wonderfully we have been made. Thus these ID videos don't bring us to the Truth, but do a fantastic job of exposing the evolutionary lie.

You can watch them for free at ReformedPerspective.ca and share them from there with family and friends who'd benefit.



UNCLE TOM: AN ORAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN BLACK CONSERVATIVE

DOCUMENTARY

2020 / 106 MINUTES

RATING: 8/10

"Uncle Tom" is an insult thrown at blacks by other blacks for supposedly being too eager to get approval from whites. It's leveled at Larry Elder, Thomas Sowell, Walter Williams, Candace Owens, Allen West, and the many other black

conservatives who aren't willing to unquestioningly back the Democratic Party and the policies that it pushes.

This conservative group is a small minority – in the US, blacks are a cohesively liberal voting block, with 9 out of 10 casting their ballot for the Democratic presidential candidate in the last election. But, as this documentary shows, the conservative minority is willing to wear insults as a badge of honor. They aren't going to stay silent about the damage that's been done to their black communities by government welfare policies, and by a victimhood narrative that tells blacks they can't succeed because the system is stacked against them.

Uncle Tom is conservative commentator Larry Elder's project, and offers his perspective, which is, ultimately, a very hopeful one. Yes, he details the bigotry that has existed and continues to exist but he also notes that real progress has been made, and that "this is not your grandfather's America." President Obama is shown echoing that point, speaking of Martin Luther King Jr. and his generation as being "the Moses generation" that "took us 90% of the way" and the task for today's "Joshua generation" is to work on that last 10%.

Elder contrasts that hopeful message with the scaremongering Democrats (including Obama) are running with now, where Republicans are caricatured as so racist that electing them will threaten black voting rights. The argument Elder makes is that it isn't a racist system, or racist boogie men that are blacks' biggest enemy, but the victimhood narrative. And he counters that narrative by showing and celebrating the successes of a broad assortment of black entrepreneurs and leaders.

CAUTIONS

Some of the exchanges we see are not polite ones, so there are language concerns, including the uses of the n-word (from blacks directed at other blacks), and quite a number of f-bombs, as well as some other words that we might not want our young children to know.

CONCLUSION

While there are Christians in the film, and some Christian perspective is offered, we never really get a concise summary of why the victimhood narrative is sinful (though lots of clues are offered). Parents watching this with their older teens might want to discuss:

- Is the victimhood narrative about raising victims up, or about assigning blame and guilt? Can any forgiveness be found in a victimhood culture?
- The victimhood narrative is sometimes used to justify shameful behavior – the current rioting is supposed to be understandable because of systemic racism. But do two wrongs make a right?
- How is blame being assigned? Is it based on actual sins committed, or is it on the basis of skin color? What does the Bible say about that?
- Are the charges leveled about specific instances of wrong or are they often generalized accusations of systemic racism? Can we address unspecified wrongs? How about specific wrongs?
- How does the hope offered in this film – that if you work hard you can get ahead – deliver, and how does it fall short?

Uncle Tom offers a conservative perspective that, even as it doesn't always line up with the Christian perspective, still offers genuine insight into so much of what's going wrong in race relations. I'd recommend this for ages 13 or up, based primarily on language concerns. But it is a film that demands discussion afterwards – it has to be unpacked and cross-examined to be of any use.

You can rent the film for \$8 US at UncleTom.com. If you enjoy it, you can get a closer look at two of these black leaders in their own documentaries: *Walter Williams: Suffer No Fools* and the upcoming *Thomas Sowell: Common Sense in a Senseless World*.



READY TO REASON

Is apologetics even necessary?

by Greg Bahnsen

A surge of pious agreement overcame me the first time I heard someone confidently assert that "The word of God no more needs defense than does a lion in a cage. Just let the lion loose, and it will take care of itself!" There seemed something very right about that sentiment. It almost appeared irreverent to disagree with it.

Well, something about that assertion is indeed right. God is certainly not in need of anything - much less the puny efforts of any particular man or woman to defend His word. He is the Creator of heaven and earth, almighty in power, and sovereign in controlling all things. The Apostle Paul, when reasoning with the Athenian philosophers, made that very point: he declared that God is not worshiped with men's hands "as though He needed any thing, seeing that He gives to all life and breath and all things" (Acts 17:24). If God were ever to hunger, for instance, He would not need to tell us since the fullness of all creation is His (Ps. 50:12)! He depends upon nothing outside Himself, and everything outside of Him depends upon Him for its existence, qualities, abilities, accomplishments, and blessings. "In Him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17:28).

So it is obvious that God does not need our inadequate reasoning and our feeble attempts to defend His word. Nevertheless, the pious-sounding remark with which we began is still

mistaken. It suggests that we should not concern ourselves with efforts at apologetics¹ because God will directly take care of such matters Himself.

NEED? NO. REQUIRE? YES.

The remark is just as mistaken as saying that God does not need us as evangelists (He could even make the stones to cry out, couldn't He?) - and therefore efforts at evangelistic witness are unimportant. Or, a person might misguidedly think that, because God has the power and ability to provide his family with food and clothing without "help from us," he does not need to go to work tomorrow.

Thinking like this is unbiblical. It confuses what God Himself needs from us and what God requires of us. It assumes that God ordains ends, but not means to those ends (or at least not the instrumentality of created means). There is no need for God to use our evangelistic witness, our daily work for a paycheck, or our defense of the faith - but He chooses to do so, and He calls us to apply ourselves to them. The Bible directs us to work, although God *could* provide for our families in other ways. The Bible directs us to evangelize, even though God *could* use other means to call sinners to Himself. And the Bible also directs us to defend the faith - not because God would be helpless without us, but because this is one of His

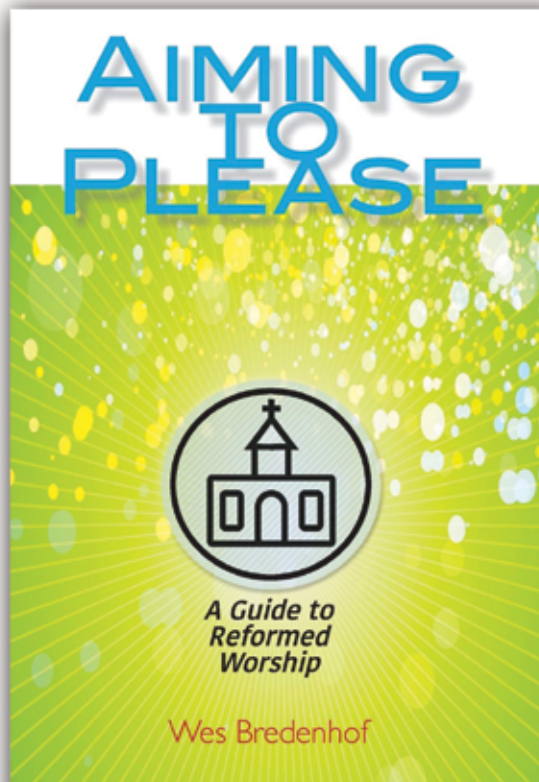
ordained *means* of glorifying Himself and vindicating His truth.

Christ speaks to the church as a whole through Jude, commanding us to "contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). False and heretical teaching was threatening the church and its grasp of gospel truth. Jude very well knew that God was in sovereign control, and indeed that God would in time directly deal with wicked teachers, consigning them to everlasting condemnation. Still Jude *also* urged his readers themselves to contend with the error of false teaching, not sitting back and expecting that God would simply take care of it Himself.

Paul wrote to Titus that overseers (pastors and elders) in the church are required to be especially adept at refuting those who oppose the truth of God (Titus 1:9). However this is not merely the assigned task of ordained men. All believers are commanded to engage in it as well. Addressing himself to all members of the congregation, Peter penned the following command:

"sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to give an answer to anyone who asks from you a reason for the hope that is within you, yet with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15).

It is God Himself, speaking through Peter's inspired words, who calls upon



Some of the questions addressed include:

- Do we hold to the Regulative Principle of Worship?
- Do our children belong in the worship service?
- Why do we read the Ten Commandments every Sunday?
- Is there a biblical warrant for singing hymns?
- Can we sing all the psalms?
- Should we sing whole psalms or just selected stanzas?
- Should we pray with uplifted hands?
- Can a woman lead in the reading of Scripture in the worship service?
- Why do we have collection bags?
- How can we do the offertory in an increasingly cash-less society?
- With baptism, should the sprinkling be done once or three times?
- How often ought we to celebrate the Lord's Supper?
- Should we celebrate the Lord's Supper at tables or in the pew?
- Can we use non-alcoholic wine or grape juice for the Lord's Supper?
- Can we administer the Lord's Supper to shut-ins?
- Why do we worship twice on the Lord's Day?
- Does church architecture matter?

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The necessity of apologetics is a moral necessity: God has chosen to do His work through us and called us to it.

us as believers -- each and every one of us -- to be prepared to defend the faith in the face of challenges and questions which come from unbelievers -- any one of them.

The necessity of apologetics is not a divine necessity: God can surely do His work without us. The necessity of apologetics is a moral necessity: God has chosen to do His work through us and called us to it. Apologetics is the special talent of some believers, and the interested hobby of others. But it is the God-ordained responsibility of all believers.

WHAT 1 PETER 3:15 ISN'T

We should look at 1 Peter 3:15 again and notice a few things that it does not say.

1) Not a call to arrogance

It does not say that believers are supposed to take the initiative and start arrogant arguments with unbelievers, telling them that we have all the answers. We do not have to go out looking for a fight. We certainly should not sport or encourage a "I'll prove it to you" spirit, an attitude which relishes refutation. The text indicates that we offer a reasoned defense in answer to those who ask for such from us, whether they do so as an opening challenge to the integrity of God's word or as the natural response to our evangelistic witness.

The text also indicates that the spirit in which we offer our apologetic answer is one of "gentleness and respect." It is not pugnacious and defensive. It is not a spirit of intellectual one-up-manship. The task of apologetics begins with humility. After all, the fear of the Lord is the starting point of all knowledge (Prov. 1:7). Moreover, apologetics is pursued in service to the Lord, and "the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle

toward all, apt to teach" (2 Tim. 2:24). Apologetics is not a place for vain flexing of our intellectual muscles.

2) No guarantee of persuasion

Another thing that 1 Peter 3:15 does not say is that believers are responsible to persuade anybody who challenges or questions their faith. We can offer sound reasons to the unbeliever, but we cannot make him or her subjectively believe those reasons. We can refute the poor argumentation of the unbeliever, but still not persuade them. We can close the mouth of the critic, but only God can open the heart. It is not in our ability, and not our responsibility, to regenerate the dead heart and give sight to the blind eyes of unbelievers. That is God's gracious work.

It is God who must enlighten the eyes of one's understanding (Eph. 1:18).

"The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot know them because they are Spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14).

Until God in His sovereign grace changes the sinner from within, he will not see the kingdom of God or submit to the King. Jesus taught this to Nicodemus, reminding him that "the wind [same Greek word as "Spirit"] blows where it will... So is every one who is born of the Spirit" (John 3:8). Our task is to present a faithful and sound witness and defense. The task of persuasion is God's. That is why apologists should not evaluate their success or adjust their message on the basis of whether the unbeliever finally comes to agree with them or not.

3) Not based on a supposed "neutrality"

Yet another thing that 1 Peter 3:15 does not say is that defending the faith

has a different ultimate authority than does the task of expounding the faith. It is a common mistake among evangelicals to imagine that the authority of God and His word is the basis for their theology and preaching, but the authority for defending this faith must be something other than God and His word -- or else we would be begging the question raised by unbelievers.

Accordingly, believers will sometimes be misled into thinking that whatever they take as the ultimate standard in apologetical thinking must be neutral and agreed upon by believer and unbeliever alike; and from here they go on to make the second mistake of thinking that something like "reason" is such a commonly understood and accepted standard.

These ideas are quite obviously out of accord with Biblical teaching, however. Does apologetics have a different epistemological² authority than expounding theology? Our theology is founded upon the authority of Christ, speaking by His Spirit in the words of Scripture. 1 Peter 3:15 teaches us that the precondition of presenting a defense of the faith (apologetics) is *also* that we "sanctify [set apart] Christ as Lord in your hearts." It would be a mistake to imagine that Peter is speaking of the "heart" here as though it is our center of emotions over against the mind with which we think. In Biblical terminology the "heart" is the location of our reasoning (Rom. 1:21), meditation (Ps. 19:14), understanding (Prov. 8:5), thinking (Deut. 7:17; 8:5) and believing (Rom. 10:10). It is just here -- in the center of our thinking and reasoning -- that Christ is to be consecrated as Lord, when we engage in apologetical discussion with inquiring unbelievers. Thus theology and apologetics have the same epistemological authority -- the same Lord over all.

REASON AND REASONING

Believers who aim to defend their faith make a serious mistake when they imagine, then, that something like "reason" should displace Christ as the ultimate authority (Lord) in their

thinking and argumentation. They also fall into very sloppy and confused thinking due to misunderstanding over the word "reason."

Christians are often befuddled about "reason," not knowing whether it is something to embrace or to eschew [avoid]. This is usually because they do not pinpoint the precise way in which the word is being used. It may very well be the most ambiguous and obscure word in the field of philosophy.

On the one hand, reason can be thought of as a tool – man's intellectual or mental capacity. Taken in this sense, reason is a gift of God to man, indeed part

of the divine image. When God bids His people "Come let us reason together" (Isa. 1:18), we see that we, like Him, are capable of rational thought and communication. God has given us our mental abilities to serve and glorify Him. It is part of the greatest commandment of the law that we should "love the Lord thy God... with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37).

REASON NOT ULTIMATE

On the other hand, reason can be thought of as an

ultimate and independent authority or *standard* by which man judges all claims to truth, even God's. In this sense, reason is a law unto itself, as though man's mind were self-sufficient, not in need of divine revelation.

This attitude commonly leads people to think that they are in a position to think independently, to govern their own lives, and to judge the credibility of God's Word based on their own insight and authority;

SPURGEON, ON LETTING THE LION OUT

Charles Spurgeon is often credited with the lion/gospel comparison that Dr. Bahnsen addresses in his article. The supposed Spurgeon quote goes like this:

The Word of God is like a lion. You don't have to defend a lion. All you have to do is let the lion loose, and the lion will defend itself."

Bahnsen takes issue with this comparison as it is expressed in this form, seeing it as diminishing the importance of apologetics. But would he have the same problem with it *as Spurgeon actually expressed it?*

Elliot Ritzema shares on his blog "All is Grist" that Spurgeon used the comparison multiple times. In the first example he lists, Spurgeon introduced the comparison by way of a lament that:

"There seems to me to have been twice as much done in some ages in defending than Bible as in expounding it..."

The second example shared is from Spurgeon's June 10, 1886 sermon "Christ and His Co-workers":

"A great many learned men are defending the gospel; no doubt it is a very proper and right thing to do, yet I always notice that, when there are most books of that kind, it is because the gospel itself is not being preached. Suppose a number of persons were to take it into their heads that they had to defend a lion, a full-grown king of beasts! There he



is in the cage, and here come all the soldiers of the army to fight for him. Well, I should suggest to them, if they would not object, and feel that it was humbling to them, that they should kindly stand back, and open the door, and let the lion out! I believe that would be the best way of defending him, for he would take care of himself; and the best 'apology' for the gospel is to let the gospel out. Never mind about defending Deuteronomy or the whole of the Pentateuch; preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. Let the Lion out, and see who will dare to approach him. The Lion of the tribe of Judah will soon drive away all his adversaries."

Was Spurgeon attacking apologetics? Or was his point more a matter of encouraging the need for preaching? Were Spurgeon and Bahnsen to discuss the topic of lions, preaching, and apologetics (and maybe they now have), I suspect they would agree much more than they'd disagree. – JD

SOURCE: Elliot Ritzema's "Spurgeon's 'Let the lion out of the cage' quote" posted to ElliotRitzema.com July 31, 2012.

We should study and prepare to give reasons for our faith when the faithless ask.

more dramatically, this attitude deified Reason as the goddess of the French Revolution. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools," as Paul said (Romans 1:22).

This view of reason does not recognize that God is the source and precondition of man's intellectual abilities – that reason does not make sense apart from the perspective of God's revelation. It does not recognize the sovereign and transcendent³ character of God's thought: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are . . . My thoughts higher than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:9).

REASON AS GOD'S GIFT

Should Christians endorse the use of reason? Two equal but opposite mistakes are possible in answering that question.

- 1) Believers can recognize the appropriateness of using reason, taken as their intellectual faculty, but then slide into endorsing reason as intellectual *autonomy*.
- 2) Believers can recognize the inappropriateness of reason as intellectual *autonomy*, but then mistakenly think this entails rejecting reason as an intellectual *faculty*.

The first group honors God's gift to man of reasoning ability, but dishonors God through its rationalism. The second group honors God's ultimate authority and the need for obedience in all aspects of man's life, but it dishonors God through anti-intellectual pietism.

Paul counterbalances both of these errors in Colossians 2. He writes that "all treasures of wisdom and knowledge are

deposited in Christ" (v. 3). Accordingly we must "beware lest anyone rob you through philosophy, even vain deceit, which is after the tradition of men, after the elementary principles of the world, and not after Christ" (v. 8). This exhortation is not a diatribe against the use of reason or the study of philosophy.

Paul makes it clear that believers have the advantage of the best reasoning and philosophy because Christ is the source of all knowledge – *all* knowledge, not simply religious matters or sentiment. Moreover, if there are many philosophies which are not "after Christ," there is also that philosophy which is. Anti-intellectualism throws the baby out with the bath. It destroys true wisdom in the name of resisting foolishness.

On the other hand, it is equally plain from Colossians 2 that Paul does not endorse reasoning and philosophy which refuse to honor the ultimate authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is in Christ that wisdom and knowledge must be found. Any alleged wisdom which follows the traditions of men and elementary principles of the world – rather than Christ – is to be rejected as dangerous and deceitful.

The Bible teaches us, therefore, that "reason" is not to be taken as some neutral authority in man's thinking. It is rather the intellectual capacity with which God created man, a tool to be used in serving and glorifying the ultimate authority of God Himself.

SHARPENING THE TOOL

Reason properly understood (reasoning) is to be endorsed by believers in Christ. In particular it is to be employed in defending the Christian faith. This is one of the things which Peter communicates to us when he wrote that we should always be "ready to give a defense to anyone who asks from you a reason for the hope within you" (1 Peter 3:15). A word of explanation and defense is to be offered to those who challenge the truth of our Christian faith. We are not to obscure the glory and veracity of God by answering unbelievers with appeals to "blind faith" or thoughtless commitment. We are to "cast down reasonings and

every high thing exalted against the knowledge of God" (2 Corinthians 10:5), realizing all along that we cannot do so unless we ourselves "bring every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."

In 1 Peter 3:15 Peter uses the expression "always ready." This is significant for those who wish to honor the Biblical necessity of engaging in apologetics. What the Lord asks of us is that we be *prepared* to offer an answer in defense of our faith, whenever anybody asks us for a reason. We are to be "ready" to do this – indeed, "always ready." And that means that it is imperative that we reflect on the questions that unbelievers are likely to ask and challenges which are commonly laid down to Christianity. We should study and prepare to give reasons for our faith when the faithless ask.

Christians need to sharpen the tool of their reasoning ability so as to glorify God and vindicate the claims of the gospel. We should all give our best efforts in the service of our Savior, who termed Himself "the Truth" (John 14:6). Every believer wants to see the truth of Christ believed and honored by others. And that is why we need to be "ready to reason" with unbelievers. This study and those which follow are intended to help us become better prepared for that necessary task. RP

ENDNOTES

1. "Apologetics" is the term commonly applied to the defense of the Christian faith against the intellectual opposition and objections of unbelievers.
2. "Epistemology" refers to one's theory of knowledge (its nature, sources, limits). When we ask "How do you know that to be true? (or how could you justify that claim?)," we are asking an epistemological question.
3. Whatever originates beyond man's temporal experience or exceeds that finite experience is said to "transcend" man.

This article was first published in the December 1990 issue of Penpoint (Vol. VI:12) and is reprinted with permission of Covenant Media Foundation, which hosts and sells many other Dr. Bahnsen resources on their website: CMFnow.

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Dr. Robert Graham
President, Redeemer University



AT THE HEART of your classroom is an integrated Christian worldview that weaves its way through the entire Redeemer experience. You'll ask the difficult questions together with your faculty and classmates and discover how faith impacts life and learning. You are part of a community of believers who gather together regularly both on and off campus to learn and to serve.

FAITH

COMMUNITY

CONNECT WHAT YOU'RE learning with what you love to do. Clubs, on-campus events, varsity sports and extracurriculars - there's something for everyone, and the variety of student interests creates a unique campus culture and community.

The City of Hamilton is dynamic and diverse, with plenty of opportunities to volunteer, explore, and foster relationships. Redeemer students are actively involved on campus, in the city, and in their churches, giving you plenty of opportunities to find your niche, build lifelong friendships, and make a lasting impact.



R|U READY TO VISIT

Take that first step and experience Redeemer's one-of-a-kind community like never before. Visiting campus - whether in-person or online - is the best way to figure out if Redeemer is the right fit for you. With a variety of visit opportunities available, we're sure you'll find a day that suits you and your interests.

WE CAN'T WAIT TO MEET YOU!

INDIVIDUAL VISITS Schedule a personalized tour of campus and a one-on-one meeting with an admissions counsellor. Individual visits are offered regularly throughout the week to accommodate your schedule.

SCHEDULED VISITS Our scheduled visits are pre-planned days that are specially catered to the different interests of each student, providing an opportunity to hear from different staff and faculty at Redeemer to see how you'll find your place in our one-of-a-kind community.

VIRTUAL VISITS While an in-person visit to campus is not always possible, a virtual visit is a great option to get to know Redeemer. Connect with an admissions counsellor, tour the school, or tune in to an information session webinar... all from the comfort of your own living room!

SELF-GUIDED TOUR Can't wait until our next in-person or live virtual tour? Get a glimpse of our campus through the a series of short video clips. Take note of any questions you have along the way and connect with our admissions staff when you're ready to take the next step!

redeemer.ca/visit

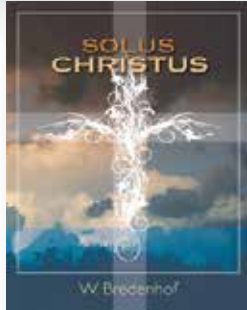
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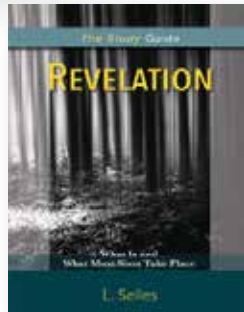


Solus Christus W. Bredenhof

Though many affirm Christ as Saviour, Christ as the only Redeemer is harder to accept. Rev. Bredenhof deftly helps the reader understand what *Solus Christus* means, why it is important, and how to respond to those who deny it or undermine it. *Includes discussion questions.*

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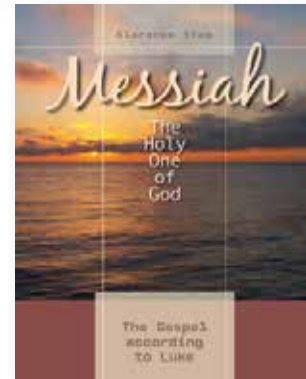
Revelation (Study Guide) L. Selles (2-in-1 book)

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Messiah Cl. Stam

In this chapter-by-chapter look at the book of Luke, Rev. Stam shows from Christ's words and deeds that he truly is the Messiah, our perfect Redeemer.

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