

REFORMED

Perspective

A MAGAZINE
FOR THE
CHRISTIAN
FAMILY

Volume 27
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What's inside?

The serious
side of comics

Changing
Charities

Elections,
Australian style



WHERE HAVE ALL THE CHILDREN GONE?



**20
years ago
this month,
all restrictions
on abortion were
eliminated in Canada**

Why the Run is wrong

The Terry Fox Run is one more charity that doesn't deserve our support

Editorial

by Jon Dykstra



He wanted money for the bus, but he was drunk and it seemed likely any money he got wasn't really going to go to a bus token. But I didn't know that for certain. So while I didn't give him money I did give him a token. He thanked me for it and walked off towards the nearby bus stop. . . where he then started trying to sell the token for half price.

Giving can be complicated. It isn't just a matter of generosity; it may also require serious thought and research. To the best of our ability we have to ensure our money, given with the best of intentions, is actually being used for good, rather than ill.

One of the best examples of just how complicated giving has gotten is the Terry Fox Run.

Noble start

Terry Fox was a Canadian young man who, when he was only 18, lost his right leg to cancer. While recovering in the hospital he met many other cancer patients and was inspired to run across Canada to raise money for cancer research. He started running on April 12, 1980 but a reoccurrence of cancer forced him to quit his run only halfway across the country. He died June 28, 1981, but his run inspired an annual event which to date has raised more than \$400 million for cancer research.

A nasty turn

Terry Fox was an inspiring young man, and the annual run that bears his name has done some great work. But the Terry Fox Run sends all money raised to the National Cancer Institute of Canada (NCIC) and since 2002 the NCIC has funded embryonic stem cell research. Embryonic stem cell research kills unborn children.

Here's where things get complicated. Many Christians were involved with the Terry Fox Run and didn't want their money to go to this research. They complained to the Run's organizers and, in response, the Run asked the NCIC not to use Terry Fox money for embryonic research. The NCIC agreed.

This seemed to address the problem so Christians continued to donate and raise money for the Run.

But appearances were deceiving – this issue is more complicated than it seems and only a deeper look reveals the true moral implications. The Fall 1993 issue of the *Human Life Review* (as it was cited in the Sept. 15, 2006 issue of *LifeSiteNews.com*) contained an illustration that showed clearly why it's wrong to donate to the NCIC, even if they promise to " earmark " the money to non-offensive projects:

"A man who asks for money to buy his son a baseball bat. . . should not be given support if it is known that the man intends to use the bat to beat his wife. While the example is disturbing, pro-lifers point out that abortion is equally if not more disturbing than wife abuse. The argument extends to include providing funds ' earmarked ' to non-offensive projects. Giving the money to the man if he says he will use the money to buy dinner, and that way can use his own money to purchase the bat to beat his wife, is also obviously unacceptable."

The NCIC has promised they will only use Terry Fox money to buy "dinner" – they'll buy their "bat" using their own money. But the end result is still lethal. And we're still responsible.

Complicated indeed

This underscores just how difficult responsible giving can be – this is a complicated issue, the likes of which our parents could never have prepared us for, because we're dealing with an issue they couldn't have even imagined.

We can, however, prepare our own sons and daughters. In the past some of our children have been involved with raising funds for the Terry Fox Run. Clearly this must stop, but there is an opportunity here that shouldn't be missed. This mistake can be used as a powerful teaching point for discussions on just how complicated responsible giving can be. The situation isn't going to get any simpler in the future and our children need to be taught that much research and effort can be necessary to ensure their donations will be used for good rather than ill.

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Change of Address):
Premier Printing
One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg,
Manitoba, Canada R2J 3X5
Telephone: (204) 663-9000
Email:
subscribe@reformedperspective.ca

Editor: Jon Dykstra

Address for Editorial Matters
(Letters and Submissions):
Reformed Perspective
3573 McKinley Drive,
Abbotsford, BC, Canada V2S 8M7
E-mail:
editor@reformedperspective.ca

Managing Editor:

Wilhelm Gortemaker

Regular Contributors:

Sharon Bratcher, Jane deGlint,
Christine Farenhorst, Margaret
Helder, Johan Tangelder,
Rene Vermeulen, Michael Wagner

Board of Directors:

John Voorhorst, Chairman;
James Teitsma, Secretary/Treasurer;
Peter DeBoer, Wilhelm Gortemaker,
Henk VanderVelde, Theresa Weessies

Secretarial Address

(Board Matters):

James Teitsma
449 Almey Avenue, Winnipeg, MB
Canada R3W 1P6

Contact Address for South Africa:

Arie Roos, Box 584
Kuilsrivier
7580 Republic of South Africa

Contact Address for Australia:

Pro Ecclesia Bookshop
PO Box 189
Kelmescott, W. Australia 6111

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Conclusion

Supporting the Terry Fox Run after 2002 was a mistake. To continue to do so in the future, now that we know better, would be a sin. The Run has changed, so we have to channel our money and effort elsewhere.

Of course the Run isn't the only charity to change. Just last year Amnesty International, a group best known for its advocacy work on behalf of prisoners of conscience, decided to advocate for the decriminalization of abortion around the world. And almost every month brings news of another medical charity turning its back on its original missions to help and heal; one after another is getting involved in the slaughter of the unborn for their stem cells. We want no part of this.

So charitable giving is more complicated than ever, but there is still no shortage of worthy charities – groups that need our money and will use it for godly and God-honoring purposes. May we then continue to give generously. . . and give with discernment.

For a list of three concrete ways we can ensure our donations go to only good charities, and a list of alternative charities see the article "Giving 'til it hurts" in the September 2006 Reformed Perspective.

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SOCIAL AND POLITICAL

Nota Bene

News worth noting

by Sarah Meerstra

CHP under investigation by Human Rights Commission

The Christian Heritage Party and its leader Ron Gray are under investigation by the Canadian Human Rights Commission after complaints filed against them about anti-homosexual material on their party website.

Gray stands by the material, which denounce the homosexual lifestyle as abnormal and unhealthy, refer to homosexuality as a "treatable disease," and speak of the dangers posed to children in homosexual marriages. And he argues that this material shows love rather than malice towards gays: "Who truly loves you, someone who tells you the truth even when it hurts, or someone who will tell you you're okay even when you're headed down the wrong road? . . . The Scripture says 'Faithful are the wounds of a friend, and deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.'"

Gray believes that the decision made in this case will set an important precedent: ". . . if an agency of the government . . . can tell a political party what it may and may not include in its political statements we have gone way down the road to totalitarianism."

Stem cell breakthrough

Scientists in Japan and the United States have made a breakthrough that could end the ethical debate over stem cell research. These scientists have successfully made human skin cells behave like embryonic stem cells. Should this technique be perfected, it could eliminate the current creation and destruction of human embryos for their stem cells.

Moreover, this technique has the potential to be very effective. "It's potentially huge because you could, in principle, . . . take somebody's own cells and potentially grow them new cells," said Dr. Kelly McNagny, a stem cell researcher at

the University of British Columbia. "They'd be perfectly matched."

Even though researchers warn that this discovery is still in its earliest stages, pro-lifers, who have long objected to embryonic stem cell research, feel vindicated. Dr. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, of the National Catholic Bioethics Center, said of this new breakthrough, "These new strategies remind us . . . it is never necessary for laboratory researchers to cross fundamental moral lines in order for science and medicine to advance."

Protecting unborn children

Conservative MP Ken Epp has introduced a Private Members Bill to Parliament that would allow for criminal charges to be laid when a fetus is killed or injured when the mother is the victim of a crime. Polls show that this bill, known as the Unborn Victims of Crime bill, is supported by nearly three quarters of Canadians. Conservative MP Leon Benoit proposed similar legislation last year, but the Conservative government blocked it before it was able to come before Parliament for a vote.

Human cloning

Experts at the United Nations' Institute for Advanced Study are warning that human cloning may soon be a reality, and that the global community needs to take a stand on this issue, either banning reproductive cloning, or passing legislation to protect the rights of cloned individuals.

There is currently no international ban on human cloning, as UN talks on the topic broke down in 2005 over a disagreement on whether or not to permit "research" (also called "therapeutic") cloning, which could potentially be used to treat such diseases as diabetes and heart disease. There is only one notable difference between reproductive cloning and therapeutic cloning – reproductive cloning is done with the intent of bring the baby to term, while therapeutic cloning is done with the understanding that cloned child will be destroyed before it comes to term. While many in the world finds reproductive cloning more offensive than thera-

peutic cloning – they are scared at the idea of clones walking among us – Christians should realize that therapeutic cloning, which requires the murdering of clones, is actually the greater evil.

Fifty countries have so far banned human cloning, including Canada, but more than three times as many have not, leaving many places for scientists to pursue their research.


China's One Child policy

The Chinese government has announced that it will be implementing a program of rewards for families who have adhered to the country's One Child policy. These families will receive housing, health, education and poverty-alleviation benefits not available to families with more children. The country continues to support this population control policy, with an allowance for two children if both are girls, despite its contribution to forced abortion, prostitution, a pronounced gender gap, and a rapidly aging population.

At the same time, studies are finding that children who have grown up under this one child policy, which was implemented in 1979, are experiencing significantly higher divorce rates. Experts say children who have grown up in this "me" generation are accustomed to having doting parents who granted them their every whim and are unable to sustain interpersonal relationships with their peers. "This generation faces a completely different set of reality versus their parents," says a Beijing psychiatrist, "They are very much self-oriented, not other-oriented or social-oriented."

Spanking

The American College of Pediatricians has issued a position statement on the use of spanking as a form of discipline for children. It states that spanking can be "a useful and necessary part of a successful disciplinary plan" for children, especially from ages 2-6. The ACP has also released a handout for parents, "Guidelines for Parental Use of Disciplinary Spanking."

Despite such statements and scientific evidence showing that the use of reasonable corporal punishment can be beneficial to children, the United Nations continues to push nations to ban spanking. 



Democracy, Australian style

There's more than one way to elect a politician

By the time you read this Australia will have had its Federal Election. This means that both the House of Representatives and the Senate have a fair number of new members. However, it still being three weeks before the election, I can't tell you much about what our government will look like, although if the current opinion polls are a guide it looks like it will be a Labour government, led by one Kevin Rudd.

I may not be able to tell you much about the results of this election, but I can tell you about Australia's electoral system. It is quite different from both the American and Canadian systems. As many seem to be talking about electoral reform these days, and changing the way they elect representatives, you may be interested in just what we Australians do.

A different sort of democracy

In Australia the legislative power is vested in a bicameral parliament, as it is in many democratic countries around the world. That means there are two parliamentary bodies – in our case a Senate and a House of Representatives.

Our Senate consists of 76 members, 12 from each state and 2 from both the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory. The latter is the legislative name for Canberra, Australia's capital city. Senators are elected to six-year terms.

According to the Australian constitution, the House of Representatives should have about twice as many members as the Senate. The number of members from a state is proportional to its population, but must be at least five for any original state.

The Northern Territory is represented by one member and the Australian Capital Territory by two. The House has 150 members, popularly elected using our proportional representation system.

What is that you ask? Well, a proportional representation system means that to be elected a candidate must get at least 50 per cent of the votes cast. That's easy to do when there are only two candidates but what happens when there are 4 or even more? It does make things more complicated. What happens is that each voter allocates numbers to each of the candidates. Number 1 would be his first choice, number 2 his second choice and so on. Then, the first time the ballots are counted, they look only at the first choices of each voter. If the result is that one candidate receives more than 50 per cent of the votes then that candidate is elected. But if no one receives at least 50 per cent, then the candidate who received the least number of votes is knocked off the list, and his votes are distributed to the second choice listed on those ballots. And so on and so on.

There are two very interesting things to note here about our system. First, in Australia it is *compulsory* to vote. The second thing is that our system means Christians can readily vote for candidates from Christian parties without any fear their vote might be "wasted." Such votes are never wasted – one can allocate one's first choice to a candidate from the Christian party while at the same time giving one's second choice to the party one would have voted for if there was no Christian candidate. If the Christian candidate receives a goodly number of votes but hardly enough to be

elected there is the opportunity to remind the person elected that his electorate has a good number of Christians who hold firm opinions on some matters.

A different sort of party

This has encouraged the growth of the Christian Democratic Party (CDP), the foremost Christian party in Australia. In my own state everyone has an opportunity to vote for a CDP candidate. Most of these candidates are from conservative evangelical churches. Its leader is Gerard Goiran, a member of the Christian Reformed Churches in Western Australia.

In addition to Gerard there are at least a couple of other Reformed candidates. Two Free Reformed Church members are standing for election to the House of Representatives. While these men have little chance of being elected they are able to bring the Christian perspective to their electorates.

I might be permitted to mention these two men. The first is Kevin Swarts, a registered builder. He writes: "My objective in politics is to provide an alternative vote so that Christians are able to vote for a candidate who can properly protect the church and its ministry."

The other member is John Lewis who emphasises that his electorate (his riding) is sadly one of the areas in Western Australia with the highest rate of abortions, an area with an ever increasing substance abuse and crime problem, and an area in which the legalization of prostitution will have a devastating effect. John passionately believes that the CDP must play a leading role in finding solutions to these issues.

A different sort of leader

You might ask how this party started. For that we need to go back to 1981 when one Reverend Fred Nile stood as an independent for the New South Wales Parliament. Fred Nile has published an autobiography from which we will, with permission from the book's publisher, now quote extensively.

The Fred Nile story is interesting indeed. The cover of his book says that he came from humble origins as the son of a Kings Cross (Sydney) taxi driver and waitress. His conversion to Christianity at the age of seventeen and his work among skinheads, bikers and surfers at Sydney's Wesley Central Mission was regarded as innovative.

Fred Nile was a member of the Congregational Union which together with the Methodist Church and the Presbyterian Church formed the Uniting Church in 1977. He studied at the Melbourne Bible Institute and later at the Congregational Theological College at the United Faculty of Theology. On arriving there he said to the acting principal, "I have a first class diploma in theology from the MBI. What credits will you give me? The principal retorted angrily, "After studying at that place we should add two years to your five year course!"

At this college he had to constantly fight against the total rejection of the Bible as the Word of God. He writes: "Eventually, despite all the obstacles, I finished my five years of study. When I went to discuss graduation, the principal said, 'I'm sorry – you have to do another year of study.' I pointed out that Bible subjects were my highest marks – an average of 92 per cent. He replied, 'No – it's because you still believe the Bible is true.'"

For another twelve months he experienced intense small groups and tutorials as the teachers tried to destroy his evangelical faith. "But, praise God, they completely failed. In due course they had no choice but to reluctantly graduate me and approve my ordination."



An Australian ballot – more complicated than a Canadian one, but not too difficult.

During the following years Rev. Nile pastored a church and also became involved in the organisation of the Billy Graham crusade. Later he became involved with something called the "Festival of Light." The Festival started in England in 1971 and had as one of its spokesmen Malcolm Muggeridge, author, television personality, converted agnostic and former devil's advocate. The Festival was concerned with what it saw as a rot permeating English society, and with what could be done about it. Through Festival of Light activities Rev. Nile was able to break into the media with a newspaper column and radio show. This led in 1981 to his election to the New South Wales state Legislative Council, the upper house of the New South Wales Parliament.

At that point the state parliament was in the control of Labour and they didn't like him. On being elected he was not even given an office, nor an official seat in the Council. He was there because the electors had responded to his campaign to stop the evil that was being promoted by various Labour politicians, most notably one Lionel Murphy, an avowedly atheist politician.

Rev. Nile relates that many people considered that he should not have stood for

parliament – that this was inappropriate for a minister of religion. However, Nile thought there were many indicators showing he should indeed be there. The one that struck me most strongly was what Rev. Nile wrote himself:

"I had another unusual experience that confirmed God was with me in Parliament. One day when I was first elected, I was walking through the Parliament House administration area where the Hansard offices are located and a senior Hansard editor came towards me. As he did so he raised his finger. I thought he was going to tell me off for being a busybody or ask suspiciously, 'What are you doing here?' Instead he said, 'I voted for you.' I was completely surprised. Fancy an experienced officer of Parliament voting for me, a complete novice! But he asked pointedly, 'Why are you surprised? You're like Elijah, who thought he was all alone and God rebuked him: 'Don't you know I have reserved seven thousand men in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal?' (1 Kings 18:18). Again I was encouraged to continue as God's servant in Parliament. I still remember the loud-mouthed Australian Labour Party member who interrupted one of my first speeches. He kept interjecting, 'Anyhow, where is your parish?' I finally replied, as God gave me the words, 'Right here, brother! Right here!'"

Later Rev. Nile's wife Elaine and the mother of their four children joined him as a Member of Parliament. It would take too much to tell his whole story. May what I have recounted so far suffice to give you some idea of the origins of the Christian Democratic Party. . . and what godly men can do in politics.

Fred Nile's autobiography is entitled Fred Nile, An Autobiography and is published by Strand Publishing in Sydney, New South Wales, Australia.





Guiding the Depressed Child

by Jane deGlint

When a depressed child suffers, so does the parent. To a parent the child is an extension of himself. A father protects and instructs his child with a passion that is based on a healthy and natural sense of ownership. A mother nurtures her child from the time she sheltered him at her breast till death parts her from the fruit of her womb. Parents delight in the development of their child. They take personal pride in the smallest accomplishment and the greatest feat of their offspring. The child's joy is their joy. The child's pain is their pain.

On the one hand this bond forms a solid foundation for the healing of the depressed child. If a depressed adult needs another person as an anchor for his tormented soul, even more so a depressed child. His parents are his lifeline. His relationship with them functions as an umbilical chord through which he draws his strength. Parents look after his physical needs. They provide emotional support. They help their child maintain his spiritual strength. Whether the child is aware of this strong bond or not, it is there.

On the other hand the parental bond can become a burden to the child. Parents may feel so connected to their child's troubles that they become depressed as well. As their child loses his interest in life, the parents lose all the expectations they had for their child. They had hoped that he would be at least as financially secure as they are. They had wished that she would be as capable and accomplished as her mother, or more so. They had envisioned him at least as respected in his chosen career as his father. Suddenly all these hopes grow dim. In severe cases the parents may hold their disappointment up as a grudge against their child. At that point the parental lifeline becomes counterproductive. Instead of provid-

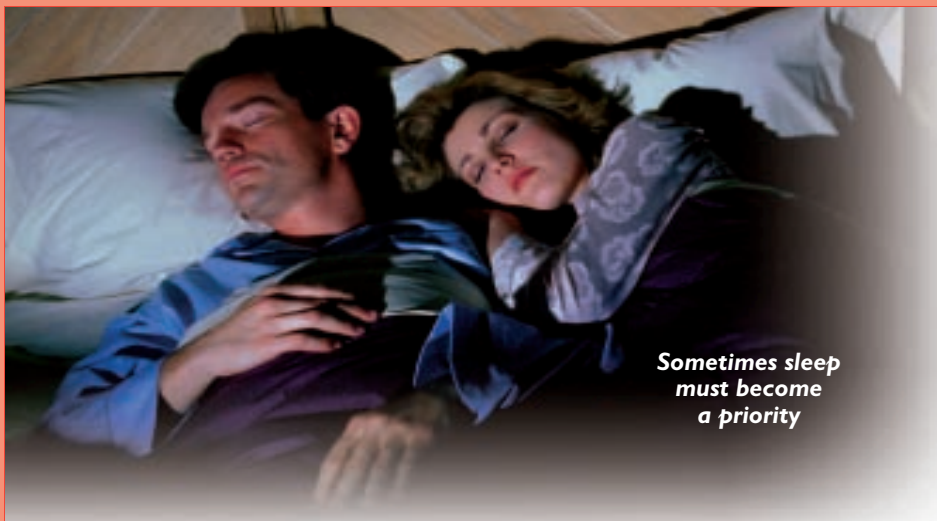
ing strength it becomes a source of aggravation, which, ironically, may lead to a weakening of the bond.

It is of paramount importance that the lifeline between the parents and the depressed youngster be restored. Any obstruction of love and care will confirm the youngster in his growing conviction that he is useless, his parents clueless and the world hopeless. This crisis in parenting cannot be resolved by the child. Children might observe that their parents hurt, and they might even understand that they are the cause of their parents' pain, but they are not able to restore their parents' mental imbalance. This is the responsibility of the parents themselves. As soon as the parents have realized that they must become strong before they can help their child, the first step on the road to recovery has been taken.

Worn-out from the worries, parents may not immediately have the mental energy to put things in perspective. They need peace of mind to obtain an objective focus. Like their depressed child, they crave the guidance of a parent. In some cases they still have access to the wisdom and experience of their own parents. But all believers have access to the perfect Parent: the heavenly Father. He is the source of strength to all who call on him in their trouble. We can find rest in God; our hope comes from him. He alone is our rock and salvation; he is our fortress, we shall not be shaken. All anxieties can be cast on him; he will sustain his children (See Psalm 62:5-6 and 55:22). This reassurance may not immediately provide all the solutions, but it does unburden the parents. The Lord is their strength. He will give them insight. He will show them the direction. He will provide the ultimate perspective: we do not live to obtain a desirable position, but to glorify God and serve the neighbor.

As parents regain their spiritual strength, they realize that they have to look after themselves physically as well. This does not only include good eating habits, but also a sufficient amount of sleep. Often many parents of depressed children feel the understandable need to talk with each other till deep into the night. Without all the regular distractions of the day, the enormous concerns about their child take the centre stage of their minds. However understandable the need to talk is, it is much wiser to put the case to rest for the day and go to sleep oneself as well. A nightly conversation would only wear out the troubled parents further. Moreover, it increases the anxiety and guilt of the depressed child, who more than likely is wide awake and tuned in to the conversation of his parents as sound travels easily through the walls of the quiet house. It is more beneficial to take the serious concerns to the throne of our Father and ask for the blessing of a good night's rest.

The importance of good health becomes apparent as soon as the parents embark in earnest on the road to help their offspring. They need to be spiritually and physically strong to deal with the behavior of their troubled child. If they thought that their child would show appreciation for the rescue mission, they might be mistaken. Many depressed children refuse any form of help quite adamantly. They might deny that they are sick, and if they do acknowledge their condition, they still prefer the state of withdrawal over the hustle and bustle of a full life. Some parents take the refusal of help as rejection, especially if they are still worn from worry. However, the child rejects the method, not the parent. As stated above, the child needs the parental bond to start functioning again. At



**Sometimes sleep
must become
a priority**

this crucial beginning of the rescue the parent must insist with love.

This love is dramatically put to the test by the continued lack of cooperation from the child. In fact, this lack of cooperation often borders on disobedience. The refusal to be guided can take several forms. There is the outright and obstinate protest. With aggressive behavior the child tries to manipulate his parents into retreat. On the other hand, there is the quite, passive resistance. The child promises to cooperate and commits himself to an action plan. However, he or she does not come through on any essential parts of the agreement. He still does not do his homework and she still stays up very late; he loses his soccer schedule and she keeps on forgetting to fill in her forms for college enrolment and scholarships.

A deadlock seems inevitable. On the parents' side: devastating frustration. On the child's side: devastating desperation. And yet, there is the underlying bond that ties the parents and the children together. In spite of their own misery they are sensitive to the other's hurt. They are caught up together in a circle of suffering.

The key to unlocking the impasse seems elusive. Yet, it will present itself when our eyes of faith are opened. Our initial response may be a shout of agony.

"God, what do I do with my child? Your child! Do I punish him? Should I deny her a privilege? Should I accommodate him? Should I buy her a new outfit? But, God! You know I tried all that. It did not help! What am I doing all this for? What is the purpose of my son's life? Why do I want my daughter to thrive? For myself? For their sake? For your sake. . . ."

As our thoughts are now guided to the Lord and his will for our lives, we suddenly see a glimmer of hope. There is more to life than the flat picture of the present with its human standards. There is the dimension of eternity. Our children are created for an eternity of serving the Lord. They are called to be saints. Their weakened emotions are unable to propel them into action. But the perspective of divine assignment and spiritual equipment can motivate them into taking up their task. It is not about their feeling, but about their calling.

***All believers have
access to the
perfect Parent:
the heavenly Father.***

This perspective does not only motivate our child, it also take the pressure off our own involvement. If we work in the same direction as the Lord, we feel guided ourselves as we guide our child. Our frustration can dissolve quicker as we learn to look away from ourselves to what the Lord asks of us and our child. Casting our cares on the Lord does not take our responsibilities away, but it helps us to think constructively towards solutions with the reassurance that the Lord will provide both the strength to continue and the peace of mind to relax. As we learn to think away from ourselves, we in fact become an example of wholesome living for our depressed child.

Looking at our child in the light of the covenant, we see clearly what we have to do. We have to provide him with reassurance and structure. These two components are connected. With the reassurance that the Lord will sustain comes the understanding that structure is needed in the execution of our task. The depressed child has often lost all structure. He may sleep in the day and be awake at night. Instead of eating at mealtimes she may nibble a little here and binge a little there. Procrastination has taken the place of structured work ethics. As the structure disappeared, so did the participation in life. More than likely our depressed child will not immediately accept the need for structure. But when structured working patterns are placed in the perspective of calling, they will be seen as an essential ingredient for productive service to the Lord.

It may be that our child is not able to work with the healing components of reassurance and structure, even though he or she is willing. In such serious cases of depression professional help is needed. Usually this form of help is two-pronged. With medication obsessive thoughts can be relaxed and dark moods can lighten up. Under proper supervision both the fear for addiction and the danger of abrupt withdrawal can be avoided. The other prong consists of counseling. A trained counselor is able to teach coping techniques and often can identify triggers and trouble spots.

Understanding the basic concepts of guiding depressed children is still not enough. Often there is a big gap between knowing and acting. We might know that physical exercise will help our depressed teenager, but how do we get him to move? We want to talk with our daughter about her task in the Lord's Kingdom, but is she ready for that? Yet, when we doubt we are not very convincing and we make the fundamental mistake of focusing more on feeling than on calling. But there is no reason for doubt. We can be confident that at the right time we will receive the spiritual fortitude and discernment to rekindle in our youngsters the awareness of their calling. Our wholesome confidence will be a beacon of light for our child.

"The Lord comfort us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God." 2 Corinthians 1:4



I stood one night and watched the yellow glow of the light outside my window
catch a thousand snowflakes while the wind blew and tugged at them.

(January 1980)

All go to one place; all are from the dust, and all turn to dust again.

– Ecclesiastes 3:30

MOMENT IN TIME

by Christine Farenhorst

A time for birth, a time for death,
Our life is but a slender sigh,
As flakes of white with wind bedight,
Ghosting a moment but to die.

As thousands die, thousands are born,
Lamp-glow embraces breathing snow.
Reaching for light they, oddly bright,
Fall; disappear; and quickly go.

So we, small beings, placed on earth,
Dance briefly in a short sojourn,
Our candlestick, a one-day wick,
Is dust and to that dust returns.

And the dust returns to the earth as it was, but the spirit returns to God Who gave it.

– Ecclesiastes 12:7

The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God, and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, with every secret thing, whether good or evil.

– Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

Giving Birth to Healing

Why All Prospective Parents Should Consider Donating Cord Blood

by Mark Penninga

Blood – it’s in us to give. Many of us donate blood because it is an easy way to help those in need. But few are aware that every time a baby is born, the umbilical cord and placenta are filled with a most precious type of blood that can also be donated.

Generally referred to as cord blood (i.e. from the umbilical cord), this blood is rich in stem cells. Because stem cells are capable of developing into many types of cells, tissues and even organs, they have a potential to be used for cures to many health defects. Unfortunately, cord blood is usually discarded. In the past, when stem cells were not yet discovered, this was understandable. But now that we know just how rich a treasure they are, it would be wise to consider donating cord blood.

The science and ethics of cord blood

The research sciences are making some amazing discoveries. This is especially the case with a field of technologies associated with biology and human reproduction. The discovery of stem cells by Canadian scientists back in the 1960s has been one of the most significant finds in the field of biotechnology in recent decades. That is because these cells have the ability to differentiate into many types of cells which allows them to provide healing where cells have been damaged or destroyed because of cancers, strokes, and many other health problems.



Reformed families tend to have many children... much higher than the national average birth rate of 1.5 children per couple. What an amazing impact we would have if we donated cord blood with every birth.

Millions of dollars have been spent in the past few decades to discover how these cells could be used to bring healing. Sadly, most of the attention has been devoted to using stem cells from human embryos because scientists thought that they had the most potential and also realized that there is an abundant supply because of abortion.

After years of hype and many unborn children used for research, these embryonic stem cells have led to very few results. In contrast, those stem cells which are found in non-embryonic sources, such as cord blood or adults, have led to some amazing discoveries. Carrie Gordon Earll, Focus on the Family’s senior policy analyst for bioethics explains that, “Embryonic stem cells have not cured or successfully treated a single patient. Contrast that with the more than 70 conditions that are treatable using non-embryonic stem cell therapies.”

The primary use of stem cells from cord blood in Canada seems to be directed towards cancer treatment which would otherwise require bone marrow transplants. In fact, a recent CBC News article stated that cord blood is fast becoming the preferred alternative to bone marrow transplants for children with cancer. The Cord Blood Bank of Canada explains that any “disease/condition which requires the regeneration of tissue (due to injury or disease) is a potential candidate for stem cell therapy.” Some examples include osteoporosis, leukemia, and Hodgkin’s Disease. If you are interested in learning more about the successes of cord blood stem cells and other “adult” stem cells and how they compare to embryonic stem cells, go to www.stemcellresearch.org or www.citizenlink.org and click on bioethics/sanctity of human life.

Donating Cord Blood in Canada

Reformed families tend to have many children. I am unsure if a survey has ever been done to measure the average number of children in our families, but it is much higher than the national average birth rate of 1.5 children per couple. What an amazing impact we would have if we donated cord blood with every birth. The same CBC article states that the majority of cord blood used in Canada has to come from other countries. There is a real need for more donations. Furthermore, if an abundance of cord blood was available, it may direct the researchers away from unethical embryonic research and towards this ethical use of adult stem cells.

The following list of questions and answers is meant to help you decide whether donating cord blood is an option for your family. For more information, check out the websites listed beside this article.

What are the options for giving or preserving cord blood?

In Canada there are two main options for banking cord blood. You can go with one of almost a dozen private blood banks and be guaranteed that the blood will be available for the use of your family in the future. Or you can go with a public bank which will donate the blood to anybody in need rather than keeping it for your family. The only public banks are the Alberta Cord Blood Bank (ACBB) and one provided by HEMA Quebec. The ACBB is available for people from all parts of the country. Canadian Blood Services is currently lobbying governments to create a public national cord blood bank.

What conditions need to be met if I want to donate cord blood to the ACBB?

Almost any mother with a healthy pregnancy may donate cord blood to the ACBB. To donate blood, the parents must fill in a donor registration form which asks a series of questions which may make some

families ineligible to donate. This form must also be signed by a family doctor or obstetrician. The ACBB must receive your registration form (available online – see below for website) before the mother's 34th week of pregnancy.

How much does this cost?

The ACBB is free because the cord blood is accepted as a donation rather than storing it for your use only. However, the private banks come with a fee of about \$1000-1500 plus \$120 per year for storage.

What happens if the ACBB accepts my registration?

You will receive a cord blood collection kit in the mail about a month before the due date. This kit must be taken to the hospital at the time of delivery. Two samples of the mother's blood will also be taken for testing. The kit and samples will be delivered to the ACBB in Edmonton. The Cord blood will be frozen and can be preserved for 10-15 years. However, it will likely be used prior to then.

Can donating cord blood be harmful to the mom or child?

No, collecting cord blood does not interfere with the delivery. The ACBB states that cord blood can only be collected after the mother and child are safe.

Can the cord blood be used for unethical purposes?

The purpose of donating cord blood is to help others who suffer from disease or disability. Since no harm is done to the mother or the baby, and since it results in such help to others, donating cord blood is very ethical. However, the ACBB does note that some cord blood donations are not suitable for donation due to factors such as contamination. Some of these cells are used for research. The ACBB does not specify what type of research is done on these cells but they make it clear that they will not be used for cloning and that experimentation must follow strict guidelines. If you are concerned about experimentation on the stem cells that you donate, give them a call to discuss this and consider the options.

SOURCES:

This article made use of information from the above organizations as well as *CBC News* ("National Cord Blood Bank Recommended", June 1, 2007), *The Toronto Star*, ("Canada Needs Cord Blood Bank, Experts Say", June 3, 2007), and Focus on the Family's *Citizenlink* website (Carrie Gordon Earll, "Adult Stem Cells: It's Not Pie-In-The-Sky," available at citizenlink.org)



For more information

To learn more you can contact the following organizations or visit their websites:

Alberta Cord Blood Bank (public banking)
www.acbb.ca (phone: 780-492-2673)

Canadian Cord Blood Registry (associated with ACBB)
www.ccbcr.ca (phone: 780-439-8606 or 1-888-818-2673)

Cord Blood Bank of Canada (one of many private banks)
www.cordbloodbankofcanada.com (phone 905-943-4933)

NOT WITHOUT A FIGHT

THE HISTORY OF THE PRO-LIFE MOVEMENT IN CANADA

by Michael Wagner

Pro-life activists perform an important role in society. They help to remind people about what is perhaps the most pressing political issue in our country, namely, the legally-sanctioned killing of unborn children. This killing is often justified as being the consequence of a “woman’s right to chose.” In Canada, exterminating the unborn is considered to be a “human right” supported by all levels of government and all of the major political parties. But this phrase, “a woman’s right to choose,” is simply a euphemism for the killing of unborn babies. It’s a clever choice of words to hide the reality of abortion.

Of course, abortion is a worldwide phenomenon, not a specifically Canadian one. All of the Western countries allow abortion, although Canada is unique among them in having no legal restrictions on abortion whatsoever. But it is helpful to see the abortion controversy in its international context. The Canadian pro-life movement has not been successful in stopping abortion in Canada, but the same is true of pro-life movements in the USA, Australia, and elsewhere.

It’s not that Canada’s pro-lifers have failed to find the right tactic – some silver bullet that would put an end to the killing. Rather, the Canadian situation reflects a worldwide embrace of abortion by cultures that want to separate sexual activity from its consequences. A history of the abortion fight in Canada demonstrates that the Canadian pro-life movement has been very

adept, thoughtful, strategic and thorough in their various attempts to stop abortion. But despite the movement’s best efforts, it was not able to stem the tide.

It began in 1969

In Canada, the push to legalize abortion came on strong during the 1960s. Towards the end of that decade Parliament was looking into the matter, and in 1969 the Liberal government of Pierre Trudeau passed a bill easing the Criminal Code restrictions on abortion.

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***Canada remained
without any legal
restrictions on abortion.
This is still the situation
today.***

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Although the new law did not completely decriminalize abortion, it made abortion more easily available. Hospitals could each have a therapeutic abortion committee (TAC), and the committee could approve an abortion after three doctors confirmed that a pregnancy would likely endanger the life or health of a particular woman. Women seeking abortions were normally approved for the procedure.

The pro-life movement in Canada emerged in response to the 1969 law. By the mid-1970s there were dozens of pro-life groups across Canada. The main national organization was the Alliance for Life headed by Dr. Heather Morris. In 1973 the pro-life groups gathered a petition of 352,000 signatures requesting a stricter abortion law. This petition was presented to Prime Minister Trudeau. Then in 1975, the Petition of One Million campaign managed to get over a million signatures on a petition opposing abortion. Yet, despite this tremendous effort, it was not successful in leading to any legislative change.

Two key figures

In 1978 a new pro-life group called Campaign Life was formed. It represented the more conservative and militant segment of the pro-life movement and continues today as the leading pro-life organization in the country. In the national debate about adopting a Charter of Rights in 1981, Campaign Life’s legal counsel, Gwen Landolt, accurately predicted the negative consequences that would result from the Charter.

Another major pro-life figure was Joe Borowski, a former Manitoba cabinet minister in that province’s NDP government of the early 1970s. In 1978 Borowski launched a court challenge to Canada’s abortion law, arguing that it violated the Canadian Bill of Rights which guaranteed the right to life.

There was considerable legal wrangling over whether Borowski even had the right to launch such a challenge, and it wasn't until 1983 that his case was finally heard. By this time the Charter of Rights had been adopted, so his challenge was modified to argue that the abortion law violated the Charter's guarantee of the right to life. Borowski lost later in 1983, but he continued to press his case and the Supreme Court of Canada agreed to hear it in 1988.

Morgentaler starts fighting

In the meantime, another significant case was winding its way through Canada's courts. From the early 1970s on, Henry Morgentaler, the leading abortionist in Canada, was in and out of the courts for violating the terms of Canada's abortion law. Morgentaler opposed the abortion law because he thought it was too restrictive. The law only allowed abortions to be performed in hospitals, whereas Morgentaler wanted to be able to perform them in abortion clinics. He was ultimately successful in operating a clinic in Quebec where public sentiment strongly supported abortion rights.

When Morgentaler opened a clinic in Toronto in 1983 (the first abortion clinic in English Canada), he was charged with performing illegal abortions. He fought this charge all the way to the Supreme Court of Canada which heard his case in October 1986.

Pro-lifers were very active during this period. In some locations across Canada, pro-lifers were able to get elected to local hospital boards and shut down that hospital's TAC. Thus the hospital would no longer be able to perform abortions. This was an especially effective tactic in the Maritime provinces.

There were also numerous protests and demonstrations in front of Morgentaler's Toronto abortuary. Occasionally some pro-life activists would attempt to block the steps leading to the "clinic" and would be arrested. An organization called Choose Life Canada was formed by Baptist



Gwen Landolt knew it was a mistake for pro-lifers to focus all their efforts on just one court case.

minister Ken Campbell, and it managed to set up its office right next to the Morgentaler facility. This office was called The Way Inn and it was in a perfect location to dissuade women from proceeding with their abortions.

20 years ago

Then, on January 28, 1988, the infamous Morgentaler decision was handed down by the Supreme Court, striking down Canada's abortion law and consequently eliminating all legal restrictions on abortion in the country. However, this decision did not create a "right" to abortion in Canada. Instead, the law had been struck down for violating the procedural fairness required by the Charter. Thus the way was left open for Parliament to enact a new law restricting abortion.

Pro-life organizations could likely have intervened in the Morgentaler case but had chosen not to. They were active in supporting Borowski's case and did not think they had the resources to also be involved in Morgentaler's. At the time, Gwen Landolt argued that this was a mistake. As usual, she was right.

The mistake became clear to all when the Supreme Court heard Borowski's case in October 1988, months after the Morgentaler decision. Borowski was challenging the very abortion law which had previ-

ously been thrown out in the Morgentaler decision. So, since the law had already been thrown out, in March 1989 the Supreme Court ruled that the case was moot. The pro-lifers lost again.

In the wake of the Morgentaler decision, pro-life groups organized a massive letter-writing campaign urging members of Parliament (MPs) to pass a restrictive abortion law. But there were deep divisions even within the governing Progressive Conservative caucus of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, so despite some attempts, nothing was accomplished.

The infamy of 1988 – when free trade trumped life

A federal election was called for the fall of 1988, and pro-life groups were very active in trying to elect pro-life MPs. However, the central issue in this election campaign was the proposed Free Trade Agreement with the USA, so the abortion issue did not really receive a lot of attention. Nevertheless, some new pro-life MPs were elected.

Many pro-lifers were becoming increasingly frustrated by the lack of any legal restrictions on abortion in Canada and therefore became involved in an American-based organization called Operation Rescue led by a theologically charismatic minister, Randall Terry. The "rescuers," often in large numbers, would use their bodies to block the entrances to abortuaries so that women could not enter them. It was hoped that this would prevent abortions from being performed. The police, of course, would move in and arrest the rescuers. Most of this rescue activity took place in the first half of 1989.

When is moot not moot?

By the summer of 1989 the courts were back in the center of the abortion fight. In July an Ontario court and a Quebec court each issued an injunction preventing a woman from having an abortion, both at the instigation of former boyfriends. The Ontario injunction against Barbara Dodd,

however, was quickly overturned by the Ontario Supreme Court so she went to the Morgentaler clinic for an abortion.

But in the other case, the Quebec Superior Court upheld the injunction against Chantal Daigle, and two weeks later the Quebec Court of Appeal also upheld the injunction. This latter decision went so far as to declare that unborn children had a right to life! Can you imagine?! Anyway, Canada was now in the midst of a full-fledged national crisis. The achievements of the pro-abortion camp were severely threatened by the Quebec Court of Appeal decision. An emergency session of the Supreme Court of Canada was called, and organizations from both sides of the abortion debate were granted intervener status, including Campaign Life and REAL Women of Canada.

During the court proceedings Daigle's lawyer announced that she had gone to the US and had an abortion there, making the case moot. Despite being moot, the Supreme Court proceeded to strike down the injunction against Daigle. This makes for a very interesting contrast. When Joe Borowski's case became moot, the Supreme Court refused to deal with it for that reason. But when Chantal Daigle's case became moot, the Supreme Court decided the issue anyway. It appears that the Supreme Court is willing to proceed with a moot case, but only as long as doing so will further the pro-abortion cause. This is "justice" in Canada.

A law both sides hated

In November 1989 the Mulroney government introduced Bill C-43, a new proposed abortion law. It made abortion a criminal offence, except where the pregnant woman desired to have one for reasons of physical, mental, or psychological health. Although the pro-abortion camp opposed the bill because it technically criminalized abortion, many conservative Christians saw the loopholes in it as basically enshrining abortion on demand. People such as Ken Campbell, Ted Byfield of *Alberta Report*, and Gwen Landolt of REAL Women opposed the bill on these grounds.

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***The culture of the
Western nations, is a
basically pro-abortion
culture.***

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Some other pro-life organizations, such as the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada, supported the bill for pragmatic reasons, arguing that it was better to have a faulty law with some restrictions on abortion than no law whatsoever.

Despite strong opposition from both the pro and anti-abortion camps, the bill passed the House of Commons in May 1990. However, it still had to pass the Senate, so opponents had another chance to block it. The Senate vote in January 1991 was a tie, and ties count as a loss by Senate rules. Thus the abortion bill failed and Canada remained without any legal restrictions on abortion. This is still the situation today.

Situation today

The pro-life movement has remained active since that time, but no Canadian government has even attempted to bring in an abortion law since the failure of Bill C-43. The current Conservative government has promised not to introduce any abortion legislation, and the other major parties are all whole-heartedly pro-abortion, despite a handful of pro-life MPs in the Liberal caucus. Realistically, there is unlikely to be any abortion legislation in Canada for the foreseeable future.

We have work to do

The pro-life movement in Canada has lost all of its major battles. In this respect it looks like a failure. But viewing it that way would be a mistake. As mentioned earlier, the abortion fight is a worldwide phenomenon and even the USA, with strong conservative Christian and pro-life movements, basically has a situation of abortion on demand. If the American movement, with its prominent and powerful Christian activist groups, and sympathetic politicians (including President Bush and most Republican congressmen), can't hold back the pro-abortion tide, can we really expect the Canadian pro-life movement to do any better?

The fact is that Canada's pro-lifers have fought valiantly, using the best means at their disposal. Getting over one million signatures on a pro-life petition in the mid-1970s is quite an achievement. (Remember, they had to do this the old-fashioned way – they did not have the Internet.) But the petition was ignored. Working for the election of pro-life MPs is a reasonable



strategy. But every government caucus has contained some pro-life MPs, and yet look at the situation we are in today.

The pro-life movement has tried to use the courts to protect the unborn, with Joe Borowski being the best example of this. But with a judiciary dominated by abortion supporters, this didn't work either. And as a last resort, courageous pro-lifers joined Operation Rescue to use their own bodies to block entrances to abortuaries. And what did they get? Fines and jail time. So it hasn't been for a lack of trying.

The pro-life cause will ultimately prevail and abortion will be outlawed in Canada once again. But it will be a long road, and it will be easy to become discouraged in the meantime. The struggle against abortion needs to be seen in its worldwide context so that the setbacks on this issue in Canada are seen as part of a pattern of setbacks for the pro-life movement around the world. It may be an embarrassment that Canada has no legal restrictions on abortion, but many other Western nations also have high abortion rates so they aren't much different from Canada, really. Their pro-life movements have also "failed" in this respect.

It's not like the pro-life movement is simply missing a winning strategy, and once that strategy is discovered the pro-life side will finally prevail in Canada. The situation is much worse than that. The culture of the Western nations, at least among the controlling elites, is a basically pro-abortion culture, and there will need to be a change at the cultural level before the law is changed. Canada and the other Western countries need to be re-Christianized. Failing that, it's likely that abortion will continue unabated.

Michael Wagner first book, entitled On Guard For Thee: the Past, Present and Future of Canada's Christian Right is available now at www.ecpcentre.org.




CAN A T-SHIRT CHANGE THE WAY PEOPLE THINK ABOUT ABORTION? PROBABLY NOT. BUT BY THE GRACE OF GOD, A WEBSITE CAN.
(AND T-SHIRTS ARE A GREAT WAY TO GET PEOPLE THERE!)

There's nothing new about "pro-life" T-shirts. They've been around for years. Some of them look great, and others look...less great. But almost all of them share one thing in common. They express an opinion, without providing any facts. Since it's virtually impossible to communicate something substantive on a few square inches of passing fabric, most pro-life shirts have had to content themselves with offering mere slogans. But what are the chances someone will read "Choose Life" or "Abortion Kills" on a T-shirt, and then suddenly think to themselves, "Oh, I guess abortion is wrong.?"

Here enters Abort73.com.

Instead of relying on a T-shirt to do the educating (something for which it's ill-equipped), our shirts point students to a place where they actually can be educated about abortion (taking them straight to the science of the matter). By uniting provocative phrases with an intentionally ambiguous URL, our shirts serve as front doors instead of dead ends. And since Abort73.com provides what may be the most engaging abortion education in the entire world, wearing some of our shirts would be a very good thing!!

ABORT73.COM
EDUCATE YOURSELF. EDUCATE YOUR WORLD.

Beyond Archie Andrews

Why it's worth taking a closer look at comics

by Jon Dykstra

When *Reformed Perspective* has featured a comic or two in the past it's prompted the same questions: Why'd we waste ink on something so juvenile? And what do comics have to do with a Reformed perspective? With a dozen pages devoted to comics in this issue, this is the time to answer those and a few other questions.

Deeper

Comics deserve our attention because most of our assumptions about them are wrong. Comics today aren't like the simplistic fare we read as a kid: *Richie Rich*, *Donald Duck* and *Archie* (and even *Archie* deserves some scrutiny – after all, its red-headed “hero” dates one girl, strings along another, and lusts after every other). The genre has become more sophisticated, allowing it to reach new heights as well as new lows. It is tackling tougher, deeper material and that means when it is good, it can be great, and when it is bad it can be absolutely filthy.

Bigger

Comics also aren't insignificant – this is a rapidly growing genre with subjects as diverse as physics, history, ethics and the 9/11 Report getting graphic novel treatments. They impact adults in a bigger way than we realize. *Dilbert* strips cover cubicle walls, adding to office cynicism. Johnny Hart's Easter and Christmas *B.C.* strips, with their explicitly Christian messages, always got people talking. Political comics like *Doonesbury* regularly impact political affairs on a national scale. And recently

we've seen how editorial comics – if they happen to portray Mohammed – can even cause an international furor.

They are also a bigger part of our kids' lives than ever. The *Hardy Boys*, and *Nancy Drew* books we read as kids have now been transformed into comics for this next generation. Public libraries are doubling and tripling the size of their graphic novel sections to encourage reading among boys. And Manga – a Japanese style of comic – has exploded among North America teens in the last few years. These comics deserve our attention because even if our kids aren't reading them, their neighborhood friends are. Your local Barnes & Noble or Chapters bookstore will have hundreds of different Manga titles, some meant for boys, others for girls, and even some for adults. A disturbing element to Manga is how similar the artistic style is from title to title. Whether it's the kid's G-rated titles, or the pornographic Manga marketed to adults, the characters all look vaguely child-like, with huge moon faces and wide innocent eyes. So parents shouldn't judge these books by their covers.

Possibilities

Finally, comics are worth taking a closer look at because this is one more artistic medium that Christians have left unexplored. There have been some Christian comics but while the comic genre as a whole has grown in sophistication, Christian comics are still infantile and obvious. We've produced fluff. The fault is a

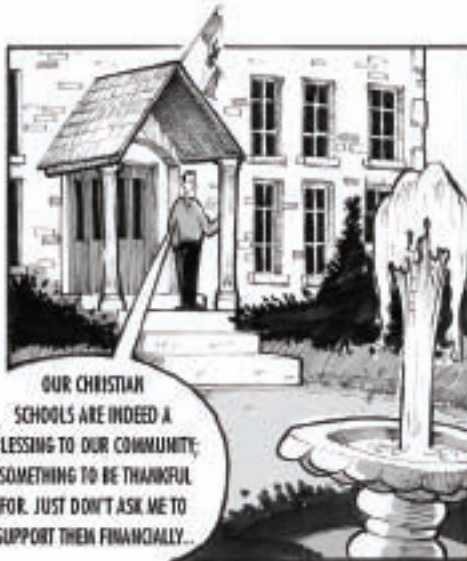
theological one – too many Christians think of their faith as sugar rather than salt; they seemed to be ensnared by a version of the “Prosperity Doctrine” and believe that being Christian means never having to deal with anything truly difficult or disturbing. So the work they produce is “nice” – pleasant to look at but devoid of power or punch.

Does it have to be this way?

Of course not. Secular artists have used the pairing of pictures and text to tackle topics as imposing as 9/11, the Riel Rebellion and even the Holocaust, so they've proven comics can convey depth. The potential is there. We Christians just have to open ourselves up to the possibilities. We can honor God with this medium.

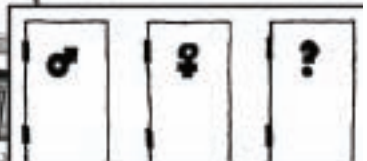
And a few adventurous sorts already are. In this issue we've included a seven-page comic by Jesse Hamm that explores the bankrupt philosophy behind abortion. The very next comic, by Kevin Frank, uses a more humorous approach to talk about pornography and possible Christian responses. Near the back of this issue we also review a couple of graphic novels that tackle the subject of evolution from very different directions. These cartoonists, in each one of these examples, have used a very different artistic style, a different approach, a different tone, and yet all have depth. They are works of excellence, and in their excellence they honor God.

We're just scratching the surface here ladies and gentleman. But maybe there's a budding artist or two in our community who will take things further. . . and deeper.



A PICTURE IS WORTH A THOUSAND WORDS

Some of the best comics from *Reformed Perspective* through the years



SIGN OF THE TIMES



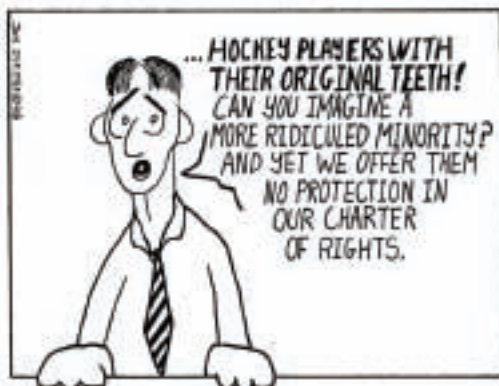
The Gideons, moments before their breakthrough

AFTER EDEN

by Dan Letha



Even the largest full-grown creatures were once small!

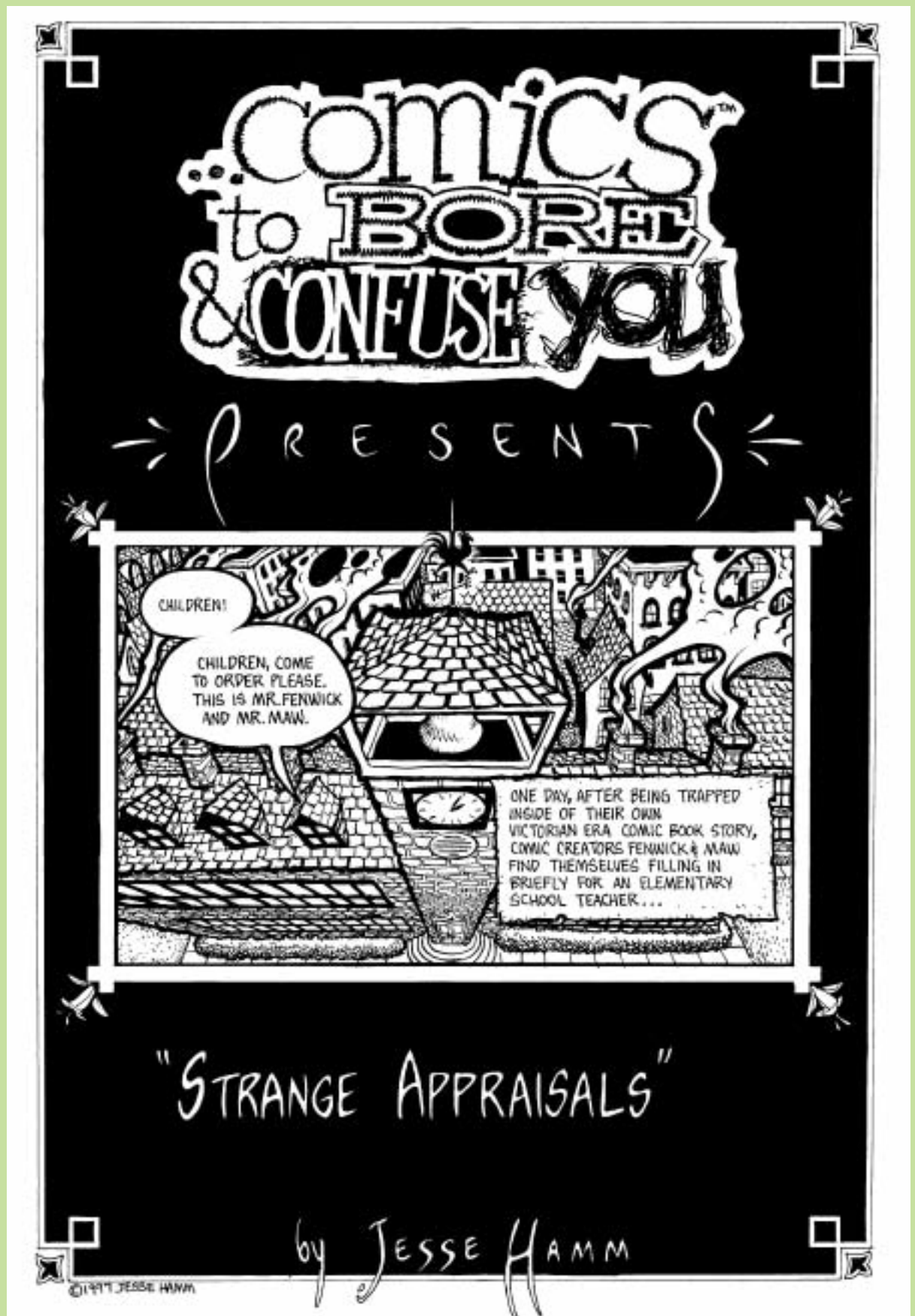


DENTAL ORIENTATION: IT'S TIME TO ENSHINE

CARTOON CREATIVITY

Explaining a joke is a painful process – if you have to explain a joke it's not going to be funny, and isn't getting laughs the point? Doing commentary for a comic would seem to have a similar sort of futility to it. . . but that's only because we think of all comics as fluff. Doing commentary on fluff would be pointless, but Jesse Hamm's 7-pager here is anything but easily digestible. It's about abortion; it's about public education; it's about indoctrination. With this sort of topic matter, a few extra words here and there – to expand on and explain Hamm's points – won't be out of order.

The two main characters, Fenwick and Maw, appear regularly in other Hamm comics.





Everything about these characters is ugly; their hideous features are only outdone by their monstrous ideas.

While the comic's theme is on the bankruptcy of pro-abortion thought, and it is aimed mostly at non-Christians, Hamm has something to say to believers too. In this comic Christians are represented by Mrs. Church, the foolish teacher who entrusts the young children under her care to two men she knows nothing about. Hamm's point is clear: when the Church abandons its children to the influence of ungodly characters (whether that be public school teachers, the TV, the Internet, etc.) it is acting foolishly.

CARTOON CREATIVITY

Fenwick and Maw's "personhood fairy" is such a ridiculous argument it seems like a cheap shot at abortion advocates. We know they're wrong, but surely their arguments aren't this foolish! And yet, Maw's "location, location, location" is exactly what determines the unborn's legal status: Canadian law views it as nothing but a worthless blob of tissue until it is free of the womb. Then it magically (though without the aid of any fairies) becomes human. Hamm's version is ridiculous, but so is reality. This is no cheap shot.

The lifeboat dilemma was first proposed in 1974 by Garret Hardin and repeated in classrooms all over America soon afterwards.





Garret Hardin used his illustration to argue that the world's poor should be "kicked out of the lifeboat" to ensure that Earth doesn't become overpopulated. In classrooms across the states the lifeboat dilemma was used as the basis of a game meant to teach children "values clarification." The illustration often differed in detail, but always involved a large number of people trying to get into a small boat. If everyone was allowed in, the boat would sink, so after teachers presented the problem to their classes they asked students to decide who should be allowed into their boat and who should be kicked out.

CARTOON CREATIVITY

The children were given no guidelines on how to deal with this dilemma and whatever solution each child came up with was just fine – each was entitled to their own morality.

The panel with the little girl standing up on her chair is Hamm at his most obscure – it's a pop culture reference that can only be fully understood by talking to the cartoonist. Fortunately Hamm was willing to explain: "In Dr. Seuss's *The Grinch That Stole Christmas*, Cindy Loo Who confronts the Grinch in the midst of his theft and asks him why he's stealing everyone's gifts. She functions as a sort of gentle accuser against the Grinch,





so I referenced the character in *Strange Appraisals* to serve a similar function: she's pointing out a fatal flaw in Fenwick's argument. The four aces represent a winning hand, suggesting that her point is victorious."

The picture of little Billy with a gun to his head is deliberately shocking but there is still subtlety here. Billy's plight clearly parallels that of the unborn; he's been denied his personhood, just as they have been denied there, and Hamm manages to evoke some of the horror of abortion without portraying any of its gore.

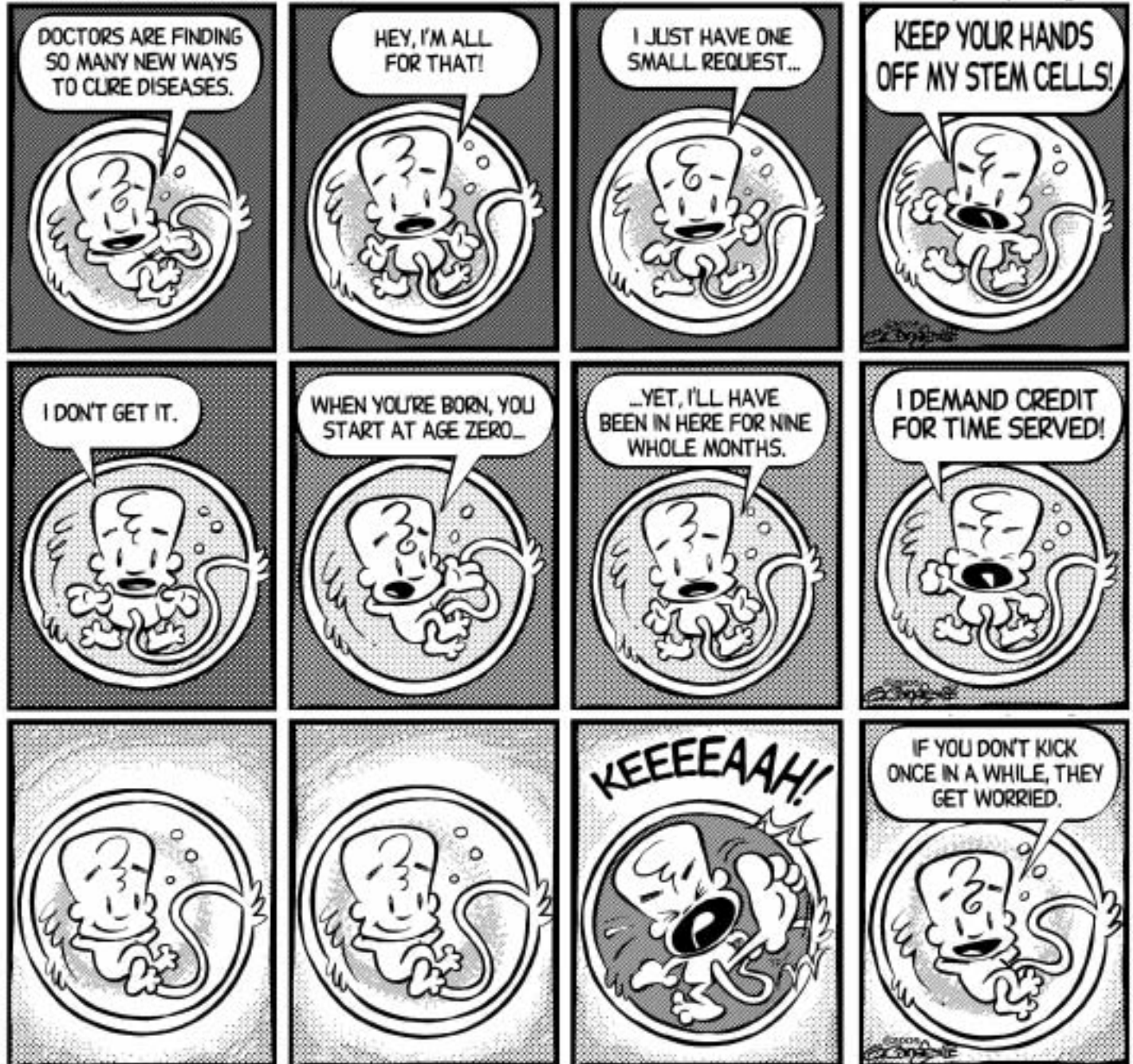
CARTOON CREATIVITY

When Mrs. Church returns Hamm uses her to save the day (and little Billy) but he also uses her to showcase once more Christians' naivety and foolishness. Like us, Mrs. Church is equipped with the Truth (so she knows that the little girl Imogene is of immeasurable worth) but she "can't imagine" how Imogene came to have such strange thoughts. She doesn't understand the extent of the world's influence on her young charges' thinking. May God make us more aware and forgive us for our ignorance.



Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



Introducing "Umbert the Unborn"

Abortion is a huge issue, a grave moral offense, and an issue Christians must never forget about.

But how do we continually keep it in mind without simply growing depressed, tired or even cynical about this issue?

Well, "Umbert the Unborn" is here to help.

This cartoon will be an ongoing feature in the magazine starting this month.

The comic is sometimes cute, other times quite political, but always reminding readers about the humanity of the unborn.

We hope you'll enjoy a regular monthly dose.

by Kevin Frank



www.kevinfrank.net



First catch their attention. . .

Two comic books weigh in on the origins debate

by Margaret Helder

Have you ever noticed how hard it is to persuade young people (or anybody for that matter) to read useful or improving literature? If it isn't on the course, and if it doesn't count for marks, few people will even open a book's cover. This is one of the reasons for the rise in popularity of audio/visual material. It requires less commitment to view something for an hour. The visual impact may also be more memorable, making the message easier to comprehend and remember.

But videos have a major disadvantage; they are very skimpy on details.

Books, on the other hand, provide more elaborate discussion and they are more easily consulted. Technology comes and goes, but books last. The only problem then is to communicate information and/or a message in a format attractive enough to interest readers whose interest in an issue may be lukewarm at best.

An obvious choice for such a format is the comic book. Comics are certainly painless to read. A marginally interested individual is more likely to dip into such a book and to proceed farther than a person might in a book with prose and illustrations.

The operative question then is whether such a format can usefully communicate information to teenage and twenty something age readers. Two Christian books have attempted to discuss origins in a comic book format. They are, however, very different in scope of the discussion, in appearance and overall objectives.

What's Darwin got to do with it?

In the year 2000, InterVarsity Press published the book *What's Darwin Got to DO with it? A Friendly Conversation about Evolu-*

tion. The comic book format features dynamic scenes and upbeat dialogue between Professor Teller, a well-known Darwinist lecturer, and Professor Questor, a proponent of Intelligent Design. The grey haired Prof. Teller, with glasses and beard, looks suitably academic. Prof. Questor, however, is a young lady, blond and confident. Her grasp of the issues seems more precise than that of the older professor.

This comic book, in a zippy introduction, presents some hotly contested issues of recent times. These include technology and music stars – issues certain to catch the attention of young readers. We then sidestep nimbly into the pressing issue with which this book deals: Darwinism vs. Intelligent Design. The plot involves a forum on evolution, which has been set up on campus. However, only one side is to be represented in the forum: Darwinism. When Prof. Questor volunteers to represent intelligent design, she is accused of being a troublemaker. She replies, "Since when is it making trouble to test a scientific theory?" Her friend then asks how she can argue against all the evidence. Prof. Questor replies that it is not the facts, but some conclusions that she has begun to question. Thus already by page 5, an important point has been made.

Prof. Questor is very careful to define terms. She does not want to be classified as a creationist. While this is regrettable, it certainly is wise to define all relevant terms so that everyone is talking about the same thing. Events proceed apace. The two professors discuss contrasting views of science. Is there room for the actions of a supernatural creation in science explanations or not? One professor says yes, the other says

no. Then we look at breeding experiments as an analogy for natural selection leading to the design we see in living organisms. A prose section entitled "Thinking about the story" introduces the reader to rules of logic and shows how Prof. Teller has committed some logical errors (fallacies) in his evolution-based conclusion. Next Prof. Teller introduces the popular topic of the peppered moths, and again, it seems, he commits another fallacy, this time an unwarranted extrapolation. The terms may sound big, but the drawings make the meaning absolutely clear.

The story then proceeds to an amusing illustration of the roles of random mutations and selection in the appearance of new life forms. Then the issue of homologous structures (translated as "similar shanks") is presented. Some discussions feature amusing personification of issues such as random mutations (the tough guy Mutaman) and his attractive sidekick Selecta (natural selection). Also we see Mr. E. Rosion (erosion) and custodian Pop Small (small populations). The most amusing illustrative vignette involves Inspector Snikwad who tries, without examining the evidence, to prove that the butler committed the crime. The name Snikwad seems closely reminiscent of a famous British evolutionist (Dawkins).

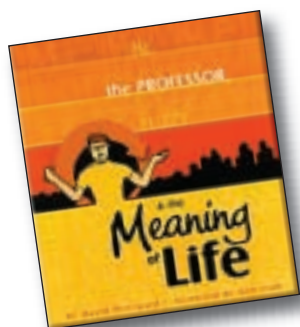
This book does a good job, in my opinion, of introducing in painless fashion, many points where evolution theory is found sadly lacking. The book does not really provide any alternative view of origins except that the prose introduction declares that one's view of origins is critical to one's whole worldview. Despite its shortcomings, I really liked this book because it is fun

Me, the Professor, Fuzzy & the Meaning of Life

by David Pensgard

Answers in Genesis, 2002

213 pp; Paperback \$12 US

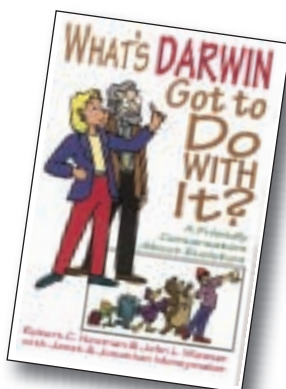


What's Darwin Got to DO with it? A Friendly Conversation about Evolution

by Robert C. Newman &
John L. Wiester

InterVarsity Press, 2000

146 pp; Paperback; \$12 US



to read and because it introduces the reader to good information on evolution. Of course this is just an hors d'oeuvre. It is to be hoped that the reader, now well introduced to some of the issues, will proceed on to other more detailed books.

Fuzzy & the meaning of life

The other book – *Me, the Professor, Fuzzy & the Meaning of Life* – is an altogether different kind of book. Published by Answers in Genesis in 2002, it attempts by means of logic, and some minimal consideration of nature and of the Bible, to proceed from the point of “I think, therefore I am” to the whole gospel message. Needless to say, this is quite an undertaking, but the presentation flows quite seamlessly. It takes about one hour to read the entire book.

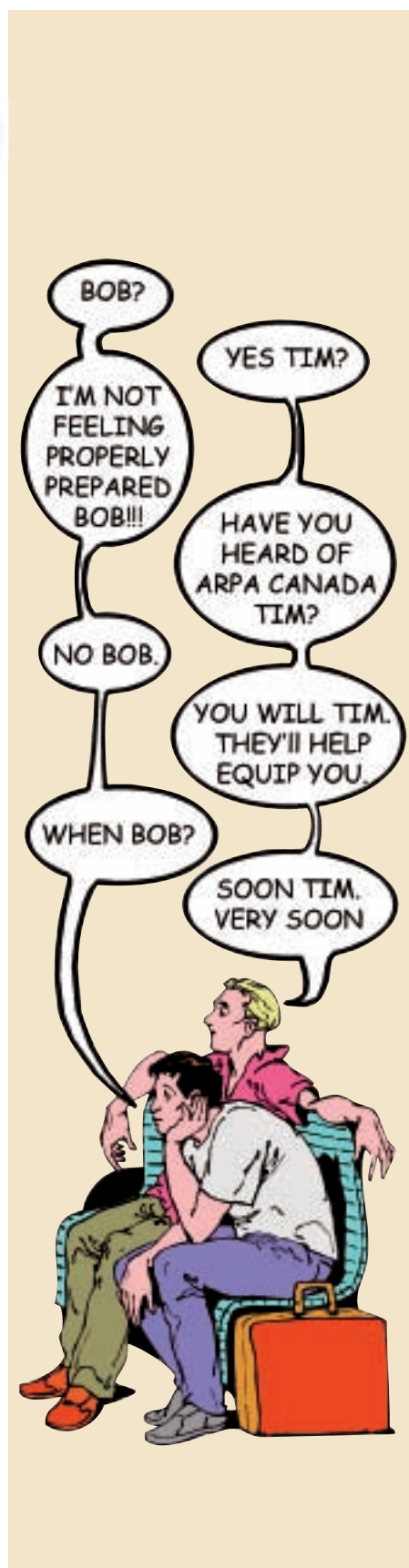
The appearance of this comic book is much more restrained than in the intelligent design book. Nevertheless the narrator does assume different poses, standing on his head, flying through the air, climbing between pages of a book etc. Each time the narrator makes a point, he piles a huge block with a suitable inscription, on top of blocks which came before. Thus it is easy to review where we have come from in the way of ideas. The first blocks are inscribed, “You are thinking” and “Those who think exist.” From there we proceed to “Your thought requires the passage of time” and “The outside world exists” and “All events are caused.” The final result of this reflection and thinking is a column labeled General Revelation, which points to God, and a column labeled Special Revelation which

points to Jesus. Indeed Christ’s cross joins the two columns.

This book includes a small section on evolution under the title “Evolution, Blind Chance and the Question of God.” Otherwise the issue of origins does not really arise in this second book. The objective of the Answers in Genesis book thus is to introduce the reader to the importance of Christian faith rather than to discuss details of origins theory.

While both books seek to turn the attention of the reader towards God, the Creator, the second book is much more focused on this issue. Since the scope of the book is so ambitious, and the presentation somewhat dry (how could it be otherwise?), one wonders how many minimally interested readers will actually proceed to the end of the book. This book is interesting, however, for the fact that it demonstrates how clearly all creation testifies to the work and person of God. That makes it worth reading by all who are interested in truth. Thus while the format of a comic book seems a little superficial to the important issues at hand, nevertheless, there is a place for this genre when its function is to capture the attention of a new audience and in this way lead to more in depth researches.

Me, the Professor, Fuzzy & the Meaning of Life is available to read online in its entirety at www.thebigmystery.com and if you wish to purchase a paper copy it can be had at www.answersingenesis.org. *What's Darwin got to DO with it?* can be purchased at any good online bookstore.





Tidbits relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

What kind of impact will you have?

An election seems imminent in Canada – if it doesn't happen this spring it seems certain that it will happen some time this year. And in the US the presidential primaries are already started. So how can we have an impact on the results of these elections?

Well, last year occasional *Reformed Perspective* writer Tim Bloedow passed on a strategy he'd gleaned from one Dr. Glenn Martin. The professor was convinced that every serious Christian should try to influence the vote of at least 100 people. He himself wasn't satisfied unless he attempted to influence at least 1,000. He would write these 1,000 people and tell them how they should vote and why.

So this next election are you going to have that kind of impact? Why not?

Joke of the month

Johan had left Edmonton to go up northward, near Neerlandia, for a bit of skydiving. Late Sunday evening he was found in a tree by a farmer.

"What happened?" asked the farmer.

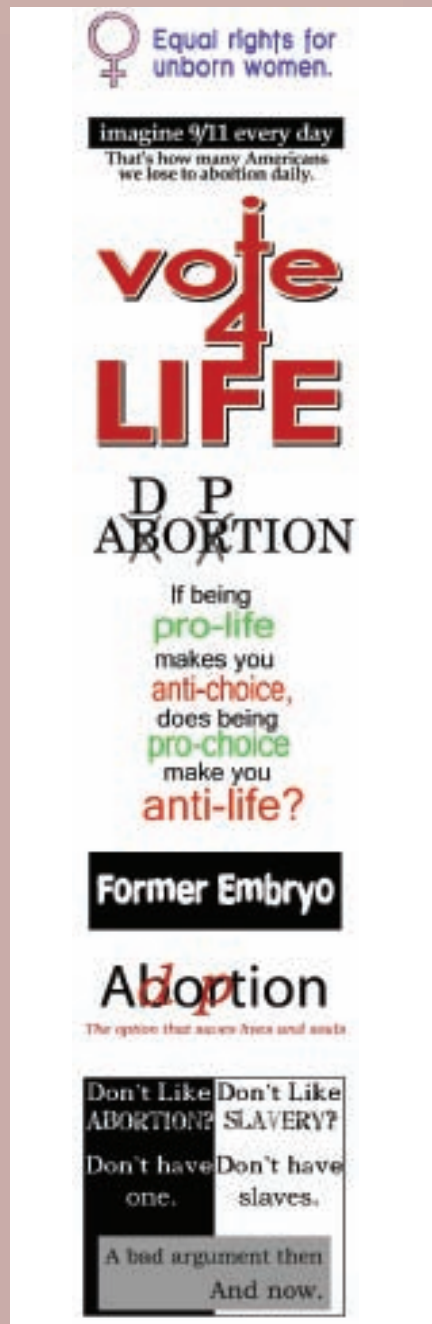
"My parachute didn't open!" Johan replied.

"Of course not," said the farmer, "Nothing around here opens on Sunday."

Abortion: God-given hope

This month's theme is a dour one, and Michael Wagner's article on the history of the pro-life movement in Canada doesn't have many positive highlights. In fact, the situation seems hopeless.

That's how it seems but that's not how it is. God is giving us reason to hope on many fronts. The more science investigates



the miracle of conception, and life in the womb, the more it backs up the pro-life positions and shows the humanity of the unborn. In the US numerous small legislative steps are being taken – partial birth abortions have been banned, parental notification laws and informed consent laws have been passed, and the unborn child has been recognized as a person, another victim, when his or her mother is killed. Some states have even tried to pass legislation that bans abortion altogether, though the success of that particular endeavor is still to be determined.

In Canada fewer steps have been taken, but there is reason for hope here too. In November, Conservative MP Ken Epp proposed a bill – Bill C-484 – that would recognize the unborn as a second victim in any assaults that occur to its mother.

And we can also do our part, by supporting Ken Epp, by continuing our prayers, by donating to local crisis pregnancy centers and by regularly confronting our culture with a pro-life message. We need to talk more, and we need to talk about this issue with people outside our own circles – we're all already pro-life, so we need to reach out if we're going to change minds. Wearing a pro-life T-shirt with slogans like the ones shown here is one possible way to speak up for the unborn. Of course, we don't all have to wear pro-life t-shirts but we do all have to do *something*.

Check out cafePress.com for these and other pro-life shirts.

Quote of the month

"Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself. Be sure of that." Charles Spurgeon





Soup & Buns

The “Status Quo” is not the Only Option

by Sharon L. Bratcher

“Some men see things as they are and ask, ‘Why?’ I dream things that never were and ask ‘Why not?’” – Robert Kennedy.

These words encapsulate the very essence of creative thinking, a process that is truly a gift from God.

Throughout history man has created many inventions, and discovered scientific truths too numerous to mention. I wonder how many years it was before someone came up with the concept of the wheel? I’m very glad for running water and electric lights! People have always taken a look at their circumstances and tried to improve them. Why not?

I like the way that a Mexican restaurant chain, Taco Bell, puts it when they encourage us to “Think outside the bun.” “Try something different,” they say. Don’t just do the “usual.” For them, of course, that means “try us!”

Taking stock

So here we are at the beginning of another year. It’s an excellent time to take stock of our lives and our actions and to decide what we might want or need to do differently. But how do we do so, especially if we seem to be “stuck in a rut”?

It’s important to consider three aspects regarding making changes before we will be able to do them: when, why, and how.

Step 1

First of all, it’s important to realize that as the famous “serenity prayer” states, we need serenity to accept the things we cannot (or should not) change, courage to change the things that we

should, and the wisdom to know the difference. For example, if I am married, I should not be looking to change my marital status. And there may be God-given responsibilities, laws, or rules that we have to accept. We will need the grace of God to help us endure difficult circumstances with patience, love and gratitude rather than whining or anger.

It is also true that there are projects and procedures all around us which we may dislike or just think that we could improve upon. I confess to living many years before beginning to realize that when a project is not mine to control, I should cease trying to change it. All of my helpful intentions – even from the best of motives – often ended in making others’ lives more difficult because I was so certain that my ideas would instantly be acclaimed as the superior way to proceed. And so to the question of “when?” we should answer: make changes when it is truly your right-ful business to do so.

Step 2

Second, we can look at “why?” Maybe there’s a sense of unease in some area of your life, where things just aren’t as good as they might be. This might relate to any relationship, or to your employment or to your living conditions. When we take a good hard look at everything about us, often we will find something disagreeable.

Analyze it. What’s bugging you about it? Write on a notepad an exact description of how things are and what you dislike about them. Once you can look at it in black and white, you can assess it better. The main point is this: the status quo is *not* the only option. Just because you have

not gotten along well with so-and-so in the past does not mean it has to continue. Just because you have always worked at a particular place does not mean you always must. And just because your house has always been set up/painted/organized a certain way does not mean that you cannot take a fresh look at it and come up with an entirely new way!

Step 3

Third, you can figure out how. Perhaps you can read a book or speak with your minister about how to improve on the relationship problem. You can pray about it and ask God to show you ways to change your own behavior in the situation.

You can determine whether another position in the same company might be worth trying for, or whether there is another way to earn the money to keep your family fed. Maybe you could buy a less expensive house and then accept a lower paying job that allows you more time to actually enjoy your house and your family.

Maybe a couple of friends could help you brainstorm about how you could reorganize your kitchen/living room/shed so that you get more pleasing results. Often other peoples’ ideas can set us thinking. No one has a monopoly on brains or creative ideas.

It might also be true that the changes you make are just in your own attitude, moving the item into that category of “serene acceptance” instead.

So take a little time to look over your life and consider what is “not right” about it. Things don’t have to stay the same as they were last year.

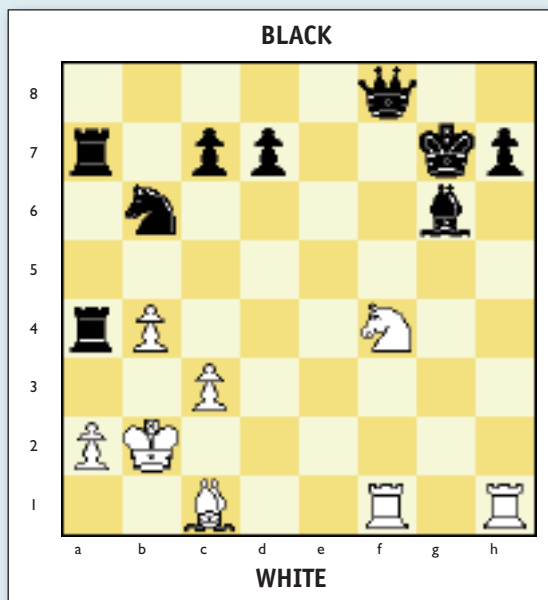
Why not think outside the bun?



PUZZLE PAGE ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

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

Chess Puzzle # 140



WHITE to Mate in 3 Or, If it is **BLACK's Move**,
BLACK to Mate in 2 (Also, **BLACK to Mate in 3**)

NEW PUZZLES

Riddles for Punsters #140 – “Two pair for the price of one?”

Fabian, in ___ pair since his old jeans were beyond ___ pair (they had shrunk and ___ pair ___ his walking), had been pared to pay a lot for a new ____, but he ___ pared prices at different stores and found some jeans ___ par _____ at half price.

Problem to Ponder #140 – “Birth of Christ Words”

Fill in the missing letters of these words related to the birth of Jesus Christ. For example, _ o _ e _ h would be J o s e p h.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) n _ t _ v _ t _ | b) _ a _ g _ r |
| c) s _ e _ h _ r _ s | d) _ n _ e _ s |
| e) I _ m _ n _ e _ | f) _ i _ a _ l _ |
| g) H _ r _ d | h) _ e _ h _ e _ e _ |
| i) M _ g _ | j) _ r _ n _ i _ c _ n _ e |
| k) M _ r _ | l) _ i _ g _ n |
| m) w _ r _ h _ p | n) _ i _ g |
| o) s _ v _ o _ r (OR s _ v _ o _) | |

SOLUTIONS TO THE PREVIOUS (DECEMBER) PUZZLE PAGE

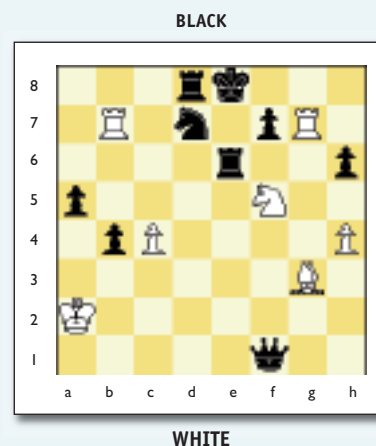
Answer to Riddles for Punsters #139 - “AtTRACKed to the Job”

Why was the writer convinced that he should never follow his dream of becoming a railroad engineer? A c o u p l e of reasons are that distractions made him easily get off t r a c k in his thinking and he would then lose his t r a i n of thought. Some days it was a r a i l problem so he was sure that he should not s w i t c h jobs to become an engineer.

Answer to Problem to Ponder #139 – “Seasonal Rates”

- A) Sally can make meals for 75 homeless people in 5 hours. Samantha can make 55 meals in 3 hours. If both girls start at the same time, but work separately, how long will it take the two of them to prepare enough meals for 200 needy people?
- B) Sam can cut down 22 evergreen trees in 3 hours. Stan can cut down 17 trees in 2 hours. Sven can cut down 29 trees in 4 hours. Working together (without a break), how many trees can they cut down in 12 hours? How many in 8 hours?
- A) Sally makes $75/5 = 15$ meals per hour; Samantha makes $55/3$ meals per hour
Together they can make $15 + 55/3 = 45/3 + 55/3 = 100/3$ meals per hour so in 3 hours they make 100 so **in 6 hours they can make the 200 meals.**
- B) **In 3 hours**, Sam can cut 22 trees so in 12 hours he cuts $22 \times 4 = 88$ trees
In 2 hours, Stan can cut 17 trees so in 12 hours he cuts $17 \times 6 = 102$ trees
In 4 hours, Sven can cut 29 trees so in 12 hours he cuts $29 \times 3 = 87$ trees
Therefore **in 12 hours the three men can cut down a total of 277 trees.**
In $2/3$ that time (so in 8 hours), $277 \times 2/3 = 184 \frac{2}{3}$ trees can be cut, so **184 trees can be cut in 8 hours**, with 1 additional tree partially cut.

SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 139



WHITE to Mate in 2

Descriptive Notation

1. R-KN8 ch N-B1
2. N-N7 mate

Algebraic Notation

1. Rg7-g8 + Nd7-f8
2. Nf5-g7 ++

BLACK to Mate in 2

Descriptive Notation

1. _____ R-K7 ch
2. K-N3 N-B4 mate

Algebraic Notation

1. _____ Re6-e2 +
2. Ka2-b3 Nd7-c5 ++

NOTE: BLACK can also Mate in 3

Descriptive Notation

1. _____ Q-K7 ch
2. K-N1 Q-Q8 ch
3. K-R2 R-K7 mate

Algebraic Notation

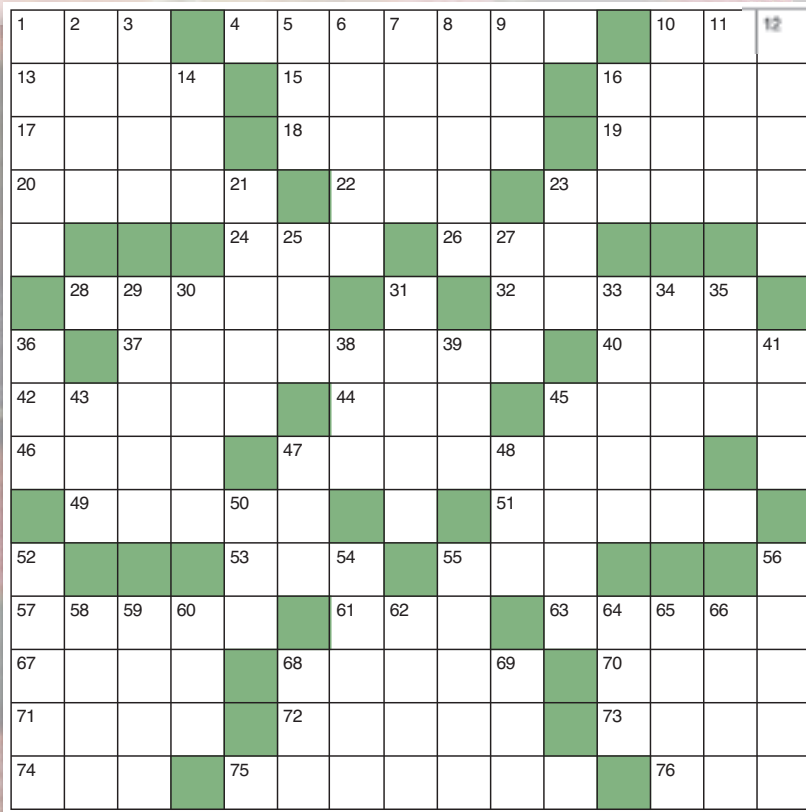
1. _____ Qf1-e2 +
2. Ka2-b1 Qe2-d1 ++
3. Kb1-a2 Re6-e2 ++

Crossword Puzzle

Series 15 No 3

Last month's solution

Series 15 No 2



	1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12
	O	S	A			T	H	E	A		A	B	S	A
13	E		P	T	S		O	E	I	L		V	E	N
17	P	E	R	E	S		E	B	C	E		O	L	A
21	I	R	A	N		22	A	S	R		23	B	E	W
24	S	A	Y		25	S	P	H	E		26	R	E	
28	O	S	I			29	T	O	W	E	R	S		31
32	D	E	N	T		33			E	S	C	R	O	D
36	E	D	G	I	N	37	G				39	Y	A	R
				43	P	A	R	R	O	T		47	R	E
48	P	O	B		51	B	A	I	T	E		52	D	
54	I	R	I	S		56	P	O	T	E	N	T		57
58	R	A	G	T	O	P		59	O	T	A		60	L
61	E	T	T	A		62	L	A	M	E		64	L	I
65	C	O	O	N		66	E	D	A	R		67	I	C
68	T	R	E	K		69	S	A	N	S		70	P	E

Joyce

ACROSS:

1. Friend
4. Music student's performance
10. Papua New Guinea, for short
13. Pocket-sized brand of music player
15. Male given name
16. Just
17. Bargain item tag words
18. Sierra _____
19. Earthen pot
20. Smellers
22. Upward bend in a piece of timber
23. Christmassy colour
24. B.C. Timezone
26. Observe
28. Useful quality
32. Blood carriers
37. Indian people
40. Not sweet
42. Piece of glass
44. Data Availability Acknowledgement (abbr.)
45. Italian love
46. Kind of flooring
47. Tibetan lap dogs
49. One who sews
51. Subterfuges
53. Less; fewer (prefix)
55. Term of respect
57. Large Australian rock
61. Rodent
63. Poe's first name
67. Chap, slangily speaking
68. Large bird
70. Town in Quebec, or female name meaning "kind" in Latin
71. The second station Israelites encamped after crossing the Red Sea
72. Aches
73. Musical composition for two
74. Vietnamese New Year celebration
75. Male or female name
76. Master of Nuclear Engineering

DOWN:

1. Musical instrument
2. Lhaso _____
3. Maternal grandmother of Timothy
5. Slippery sea creature
6. Top of the wave
7. Pressing object
8. Annual theater awards
9. Drink
10. Faded, wan
11. African river
12. Kind of piano
16. Word seen on gift tags
21. Rate of movement
23. Horse's command
25. Pig pen
27. The night before
29. Weighing implement
30. Small mouselike mammal
31. Slow creature, sometimes a delicacy
33. Spasm; contraction (suffix)
34. Snare; rope with a loop
35. Site of ancient port of Tyre
36. Direction in Paris
38. Also known as eth
39. No, slangily speaking
41. Christmassy colour
43. Belonging to him
45. Colour of sky
47. _____ Lanka
48. Three (prefix)
50. Emergency Medical Service letters
52. Army student
54. Impressive musical instrument
55. British guns
56. Shipping box
58. Christmas season
59. Prepare for publishing
60. Sleep mode
62. Dry
64. Parent
65. Unhappy
66. Prayer ending
68. On, or over (prefix)
69. What the TSX used to be known as