

REFORMED

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**A MAGAZINE
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The biblical legacy of Canada's Parliament Buildings



Criticizing like a Christian

“Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain – and most fools do” – Dale Carnegie

by Jon Dykstra

In his best seller *How to Win Friends and Influence People* Dale Carnegie begins with the story of “Two Gun” Crowley, a famous killer from the 1930s. When authorities tracked him down:

...150 policemen and detectives laid siege to his top-floor hideaway. They chopped holes in the roof; they tried to smoke out Crowley, the “cop killer,” with tear gas. Then they mounted their machine guns on surrounding buildings, and for more than an hour one of New York’s fine residential areas reverberated with the crack of pistol fire and the *rat-tat-tat* of machine guns.

Shortly before, Crowley had been parked along a country road, kissing his girlfriend, when a policeman had walked up and asked to see his license. Crowley responded by immediately shooting the officer several times, grabbing the officer’s gun, and shooting the now prone man with his own gun. He then fled to his hideaway where he was soon discovered.

Though completely surrounded, Crowley shot back incessantly, but also found time to write a letter, addressed “To whom it may concern.” In this letter Crowley described himself as a man with “a weary heart, but a kind one – one who would do nobody any harm.” When he was finally caught, convicted and sentenced to the electric chair he continued to think highly of himself. Instead of admitting this was the consequence of his sins he said: “This is what I get for defending myself.”

The moral of this little story? It is human nature for us to avoid admitting to faults. Even when our guilt is clear, we will find ways to justify our actions and convince ourselves that someone else must be to blame. Or as Carnegie puts it “ninety-nine times out of a hundred, people don’t criticize themselves for anything, no matter how wrong [they] may be.”

A solution?

Carnegie has it exactly right. It is human nature to try to elude criticism, and when we can’t manage that, we will at least try to spread the blame around. After all, we know we’re good,

so if we did something bad it must be someone else’s fault.

“...but *you* made me lose me temper!”

“They had it coming.”

“You wouldn’t believe what *she* said first...”

We are all prone to presenting “the devil made me do it” excuses and justifications as if they were valid reasons for our behavior.

Carnegie concludes that because we all hate criticism, and pay so little attention to it, “Criticism is futile.” He suggests that, as a rule, we “Don’t criticize, condemn or complain” and instead focus on the positive and the praiseworthy.

God’s thoughts on criticizing

Most of us could benefit from taking a measure of Carnegie’s advice. But does it work as an absolute? Does it work biblically? Should we *never* criticize?

While Jesus spoke against quick, thoughtless, and hypocritical criticism (Matt. 7:1-5), He also called on listeners to “repent and believe” (Mark 1:15), which is a decidedly critical message. It demands that people stop and turn from the evil they are doing! So, just that quick, Scripture shows us that sometimes criticizing is a necessity.

Thus for Christians it is not a matter of *whether* we should ever criticize, but instead *when* and *how* we should go about doing it. And when we look to the Bible for guidance, we find at least three points to consider.

1. Lovingly

There are so many wrong reasons to criticize – because we are angry or frustrated, because we want to feel superior, because we want to defend ourselves and don’t want to listen to someone’s criticism of us.

That’s why when we are going to criticize it is important to question our motivations. Do we want to build this person up, or tear them down? Are we doing this out of annoyance, or out of love?

In 1 Cor. 13:4-7 we read that love is patient and keeps no record of wrongs. 1 Peter 4:8 communicates a similar thought – love overlooks a multitude of sins. If we are to lovingly criticize

one another this means we will only speak up about something substantial – something that matters – and won't keep a running tally of petty grievances.

Criticizing lovingly also means doing so inclusively – a matter of coming alongside rather than lecturing from high atop our pedestal. As Paul Tripp puts it, we need to make it clear we are “people in need of change helping people in need of change.” How might this look in practice? Street preacher Ray Comfort, when confronted by a homosexual, will talk first about the sins they hold in common. He will ask whether the man has ever stolen anything, ever lied, ever hated someone in his heart. By starting with the sins they hold in common, rather than the sin they do not, Comfort makes it clear he has no delusions of grandeur. He knows he is in need of this same promise of forgiveness he's preaching.

2. Carefully

We should criticize with care. In Matthew 7:1-5 Jesus condemns how quick we are to judge others by standards that we don't measure up to ourselves.

Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, “Let me take the speck out of your eye,” when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

This rules out casual critiques. We too easily evaluate the faults of those all around us, and know just what they should do to fix their hair, their wardrobe, their children or marriage. But this sort of flippant evaluation isn't done out of love. We aren't looking to help our neighbor; we point out their flaws so we can feel superior to them.

It also rules out reactive criticism. Jesus wants us to consider our own problems and sins – the “plank in our own eye.” So when these problems are pointed out to us, it may be human nature to respond in kind with a snap assessment of our critic, but that isn't the godly response.

3. Privately

Whenever possible, we should offer criticism privately. In Matthew 18:15 the first step in correcting a sinning brother involves a private meeting “just between the two of you.” This is the approach Aquila and Priscilla used when they wanted to explain the “way of God more adequately” to Apollos, who “knew only the baptism of John.” They invited him back to the privacy of their home to talk and teach.

None of us like to be criticized but we especially don't like to be corrected publicly. In the spirit of doing unto others as we would like them to do unto us we should offer our criticism privately.

This is just as true for our children. We clearly have to criticize and correct them – that is a parent's God-given role. But we can try to do this in private as much as possible. Spankings can be administered in a room far from guests or other children. Talks, too, can be done behind a closed door, away from the ears of their siblings.

Matthew 18 makes it clear that not all criticism can be done privately, but when it is possible it is best.

Conclusion

We should criticize carefully, lovingly and privately, but we most certainly *should* criticize.

God has put us together in a community so that we can “teach and admonish one another” (Col. 3:16). Sometimes there can be a temptation to stay quiet, even when we have some godly wisdom to offer a brother having problems. We can even fool ourselves into thinking we are simply “minding our own business” (and that our silence has nothing at all to do with cowardice). But minding our own business isn't exactly a Christian virtue - we *are* our brother's keeper and we must be concerned with his welfare. So if we love him, and he is in need of correction, silence is simply not an option.

“My brothers and sisters, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring that person back, remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of their way will save them from death...” – James 5:19-20



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Calvinist Cartoons by EDDIE EDDINGS



The Very Young Sherlock Holmes



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Nota Bene

News worth noting



Canadian Senator: Give 'em enough rope...

by Wes Bredenhof

In early February, Senator Pierre-Hugues Boisvenu caused a minor crisis for the ruling Conservative party when he expressed his opinion that the government could save millions of dollars by throwing a length of rope into the prison cells of convicted murderers. The convicts could then choose whether to live or die.

The opposition made hay out of the comment. In the view of the NDP, this was another peek at the hidden rightwing agenda of the Conservative government, an agenda that includes the re-introduction of the death penalty.

Prime Minister Harper disavowed the comments as being representative of the government and suggested that Senator Boisvenu was speaking out of his personal loss. A daughter of Boisvenu was raped and murdered. Senator Boisvenu himself later apologized for his statement and clarified that he is not an advocate for the death penalty.

It was a curious moment in Canadian politics. The party which includes assisted

suicide in its policy platform was the one most vocally indignant about Boisvenu's proposal. Remember Sue Rodriguez and the support given by then-NDP MP Svend Robinson? It seems the right to choose to die in dignity does not apply to convicted felons – or is it the rope the NDP finds offensive? Would they be more amenable to a syringe and lethal injection? But this was politics. This was more about exposing an allegedly hidden rightwing agenda of the Conservative party than about the government-encouraged suicide of convicted murderers.

Does Boisvenu's proposal have any merit? Who has the right to take away a human life? Does a convicted killer have the right to take his own life? According to Romans 13, the government bears the sword and it cannot relinquish that sword to the killer. He unlawfully took a life before and with Boisvenu's proposal, he will unlawfully take a life again – his own life. Scripture teaches that the government is God's avenger to carry out his wrath on the wrongdoer. This proposal simply presented an easy way out of that calling.



Teens and pornography

by Jon Dykstra

The Internet filter and accountability software company Covenant Eyes (CE) recently released some sobering statistics about how many teenagers are seeing and seeking after pornography. The stats were American in origin, but it seems unlikely the situation is very different in Canada.

The most eye-opening stat showed that it is very rare for teens to make it through their childhood without ever being exposed. Only 3 per cent of male college students, and 17 per cent of female college students reported having never seen pornography. While some of this might



have been accidental exposure, CE also noted that 70 per cent of boys under 18 had spent at least 30 consecutive minutes viewing pornography. That's no accident!

Pornography used to be something you had to go out and purchase. Now it is a single click (whether intentional or accidental) away. Parents, you need to be actively protecting your children's innocence and purity, or they will fall victim to this pernicious evil. To see more of these sobering stats go to tinyurl.com/teenstats. To learn how to protect your kids, go to CovenantEyes.com.

100th grandchild for Canadian couple

by Anna Nienhuis

With 16 kids of their own now grown, Victor and Aneta Urich, from Alberta, can now also claim 100 grandchildren with the birth of a 9th child to their eldest son. The couple, in their early 60s, plan two family get-togethers per year, on each of their birthdays, acknowledging that "it can be hard to get everyone together." As the average Canadian family has fewer than 4 children, according to census reports, this is a family who evidently still believes that children are a blessing, not a burden.

Source: "Canadian couple welcomes 100th grandchild"; news.yahoo.com, Jan. 1, 2012

Print magazines still needed in the Digital Age

by Michael Wagner

An organization called Cardus, which bills itself as “Canada’s leading Christian think tank,” has recently begun publishing a new print magazine called *Convivium*. Its editor claims that print publications have certain advantages over exclusively web-based content. In the inaugural issue he says,

...we are convinced that magazines do something more than just convey information, which the internet does much faster and for far less cost. Magazines retain something of that tangible contact between readers and writers. The magazine enters one’s home and remains, signifying a community to which the reader belongs, or at least takes interest in.



Who needs to prove what?

by Anna Nienhuis and Jon Dykstra

Kitchener Centre’s MP Stephen Woodworth has recently brought the rights of unborn children back to the table for debate. Prime Minister Stephen Harper has been adamant in his refusal to even discuss the issue during his term in office, but Woodworth is presenting a level, reasonable case for an open discussion of human rights as they apply to the unborn. “I’ve concluded that 21st Century modern medical science informs us that children are certainly human beings before the moment of complete birth,” Woodworth noted. And he then challenged those who disagree to produce medical evidence to support their abortion-until-birth position.

His demand for evidence is a good strategic move, and one pro-lifers need to repeat. Abortion is often justified with the argument that, “No one knows when life begins.” Not only is this untrue (it is a medical fact that a new life begins at conception) it wouldn’t justify abortion even if it were true. As the cartoon above illustrates, human life is too precious to leave to guesswork. If the demolition man isn’t sure whether or not human life lies within it is immoral to proceed. And what we all know is true for the demolition man is equally true for the abortionist – he must be positive that what he is destroying in the womb is *not* a precious human being. If he is unsure, he can’t proceed.

So we need to repeat Stephen Woodworth’s demand for evidence, and explain why the burden of proof lies with abortion supporters.

Source: “When are we human? MP Woodworth wants Canadians to review law with 400-year-old roots”; therecord.com, Dec. 21, 2011

Printed content can make a stronger impact in some contexts.

Hundreds of thousands of words can flutter across our laptops and smartphones in a day. Our hope is the words published in this new magazine might hang around a while. And for that, it is useful to employ a medium that might just do that, namely hang around your home or office, inviting you to join a conversation that may build up something of that communion that we all seek.

Of course this reasoning also applies to *Reformed Perspective*, and helps to explain the continuing need for our printed magazine.

Source: *Convivium* preview issue, October 2011, p. 27.

Archie comic features homosexual wedding

by Anna Nienhuis

The popular *Archie* comic book series is covering all the politically-correct bases with the homosexual marriage featured in a January 2012 edition. *Archie* introduced its first homosexual character, “Kevin”, less than a year ago, a white American soldier, who is now marrying his black physical therapist.

Archie CEO Jon Goldwater said the move was made to prevent the comic books from “becoming irrelevant”, which it was feared they were as they failed to reflect the diversity “real world” kids experience. They also see no reason not to advance the storyline, as the introduction of “Kevin” resulted in hundreds of new subscriptions, and a mere seven cancelled subscriptions. From a business standpoint, homosexuality sells.

Source: Drew Zahn’s “All-American comic book hosts ‘gay’ wedding”; wnd.com, Jan. 8, 2012



Choose your mentors carefully

by Jason Bouwman

Last year we lost an iconic product designer, marketing guru and powerful businessman in Steve Jobs. The day after he died I posted a brief tribute on our company blog, admiring him for his tenacity, creativity and accomplishments. But in the time since his death I've learned some more details about the man which has led me to recalibrate my admiration of his values and challenge myself as to which examples I will follow.

It seems Steve's successes came at a great cost: his family. When asked by his biographer, Walter Isaacson, why he finally wanted to do a biography after turning down many publishers previously, Jobs' answer was "So my children will know me."

"I wasn't always there for them, and I wanted them to know why and to understand what I did," Jobs told Isaacson in their final interview at Jobs' home in Palo Alto, California.

It's the start of another New Year. Most of us ended the last year spending a week with the people we care about most in our lives. But now that we're no longer in holiday mode, will our families still be getting the best of our attention and love? Not if we're driven by the prevailing notion that to survive in this hyper-competitive economy we must spend even more time at work.

I don't want to just pick on Steve Jobs.

There are many voices urging us to work harder and longer, to sacrifice more and raise the bar even higher, all in the name of winning. No holds barred. Even our own voice is too often part of the chorus. "If I just work a little harder..."

I believe in working hard. My parents taught me that. The book of Proverbs says, "All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty." No pain,

no gain. I get it.

My question is this: Is business the only game in life worth winning?

When it comes to mentors, I think we need to be critical of those who succeed wildly at business or on the stage or on the ice but who are failing at home. Our heroes need to include stay-at-home moms, dedicated dads, little league coaches, brothers, sisters, pastors and teachers. We need to honor the people winning in their relationships, encourage those who are working hard to be good parents and lend a helping hand to those caring for the neighbor in need.

Near the end of last year my company, Compass Creative, went through an exercise to write down the values that will guide our work life. One of the most important values we identified was family. It means simply that we consider it a failure to succeed at work at the expense of home life.

Of course, there will be times in the coming year when herculean effort is required. There will be times when extra hours will need to be logged at the office or on the jobsite. There will be times when the responsibilities of work will require sacrifices by our families. There may be times when significant learning opportunities will require time away from home. These are times we will need to rise to the occasion. But these times need to be balanced with ample time focused on the people who rely on us most deeply.

Here's hoping that 2012 is a happy and prosperous year for you and your family. By working hard at all of life you'll be making a real impact and leaving a meaningful legacy. I hope one day your family, friends and clients alike will rise and bless you for the impact you had on their life – through the time they spent with you, not by reading about your exploits in a book.



People we need to know:

Henry Morgentaler

Abortion advocates love him, but not as much as he loves himself

by Michael Wagner

Henry Morgentaler was the central figure in the campaign to legalize abortion in Canada. He is the hero of both the Canadian abortion rights and feminist movements. He fought numerous court cases, spent time in jail, and used large amounts of his own money, all to make abortion easily available in Canada. He is the abortion king of Canada.

While Morgentaler remains wildly popular among Canadian feminists, privately there is some recognition that he falls short of what a true feminist hero should be. One important pro-feminist biography is entitled *Morgentaler: A Difficult Hero*. This book, by Catherine Dunphy, praises Morgentaler for his abortion efforts, but as the word “difficult” in the title indicates, it doesn’t give a complete whitewash of his character.

A Holocaust survivor

Henry Morgentaler was born in Poland in 1923 to a Jewish family. After the Germans occupied Poland in 1939, the Jews were rounded up for extermination. Many of Morgentaler’s family members perished in the Holocaust. But he and a younger brother managed to survive, at least in part due to his superior intelligence and resourcefulness. These traits helped him to escape death at the hands of the Nazis, but then were later used to promote abortion in Canada.

In 1950 Morgentaler came to Canada, beginning his new life in Montreal. He wanted to become a doctor and he received

a medical degree from the University of Montreal in 1953.

A humanist through and through

Morgentaler joined the Humanist Fellowship of Montreal in 1963. (Another member of the Fellowship at that time was Pierre Trudeau, the future prime minister).

As Dunphy notes, this group believed that, “people are inherently good and society’s institutions are what cause the evil men do.” That is an excellent summary of the secular humanist view and helps to clarify why it is so wholly opposed to Christianity. In the Christian view, men and women are inherently sinful due to the Fall. Evil is the result of humanity’s sinfulness. Secular humanism, on other hand, believes men and women are inherently good and therefore they don’t need a Savior.

Morgentaler became the president of the Humanist Fellowship of Montreal in 1964, and four years later he helped to found the Humanist Association of Canada. He was the first president of that new national organization.

Morgentaler was named Canadian Humanist of the Year in 1974. The following year he was named Humanist of the Year by the American Humanist Association. And in 1984 he won a Distinguished Humanist Award from the International Humanist and Ethical Union. This information is important because it shows that Morgentaler has been an ideologically committed secular

humanist for many years. His abortion rights activism was motivated by a deep commitment to secular humanism.

A lawbreaker

The government of Pierre Trudeau legalized abortion in Canada in 1969, but there were still restrictions concerning who could receive abortions and where they could be performed. Pro-abortion activists were unhappy with this because they did not want any restrictions at all. Under the law, Morgentaler was not in a legal position to perform abortions, but he did so anyway.

In 1970 Morgentaler was charged with performing illegal abortions. In November 1973, a jury acquitted Morgentaler. By this time he was the icon of the pro-abortion movement and “a hero in the newspapers.” Indeed, Dunphy writes that from this point on the media loved Henry Morgentaler. “It was the beginning of the longest love affair Henry Morgentaler would ever have. That affair with the media lasts to this day.” Much of the mainstream media in Canada is devoted to the abortion rights cause and this commitment is reflected in its coverage of the issue.

The US Supreme Court legalized abortion in the USA with the infamous *Roe v. Wade* decision of January 1973. This event had a major impact on Morgentaler.

The American decision was a signal that times had changed. In Toronto, at the nation-wide conference of the

Canadian Women's Coalition to Repeal the Abortion Law, he made a public statement: he had performed more than five thousand abortions, all of them safe, all of them illegal.

In 1974 the Quebec Court of Appeal overturned Morgentaler's acquittal. He was sent to prison, but he appealed, and was acquitted once more by a jury in 1975. He challenged Canada's abortion law at the Supreme Court of Canada, but in 1976 the Court ruled that Canada's limited restrictions on abortion were legally valid.

Although he lost at the Supreme Court, 1976 didn't turn out to be such a bad year for him. The separatist (and pro-abortion) Parti Quebecois (PQ) won the Quebec provincial election and announced that it would no longer prosecute Morgentaler for his illegal abortions. This meant that Morgentaler's legal problems in Quebec were over.

Back at the Supreme Court

Another event in Quebec would have even more significant consequences. The PQ government held a referendum on Quebec separating from Canada in 1980. Prime Minister Trudeau promised Quebecers that if they voted against separatism, he would change Canada's constitution.

The defeat of separatism emboldened Trudeau to push hard for constitutional changes, leading to the adoption of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. The Charter constituted a profound change in the country's political institutions. Due to the secular humanist philosophy underlying the Charter, this event would mark a turning point in the conflict over abortion, as well as many other social issues. Canada would never be the same.

In 1983 Morgentaler, along with two other abortionists, opened a "clinic" in Toronto to perform illegal abortions. They were all charged for their crimes. However, in 1985, Morgentaler and his accomplices were acquitted by a jury. The acquittal was overturned by the Ontario Court of Appeal, and Morgentaler appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada.

Morgentaler won at the Supreme Court

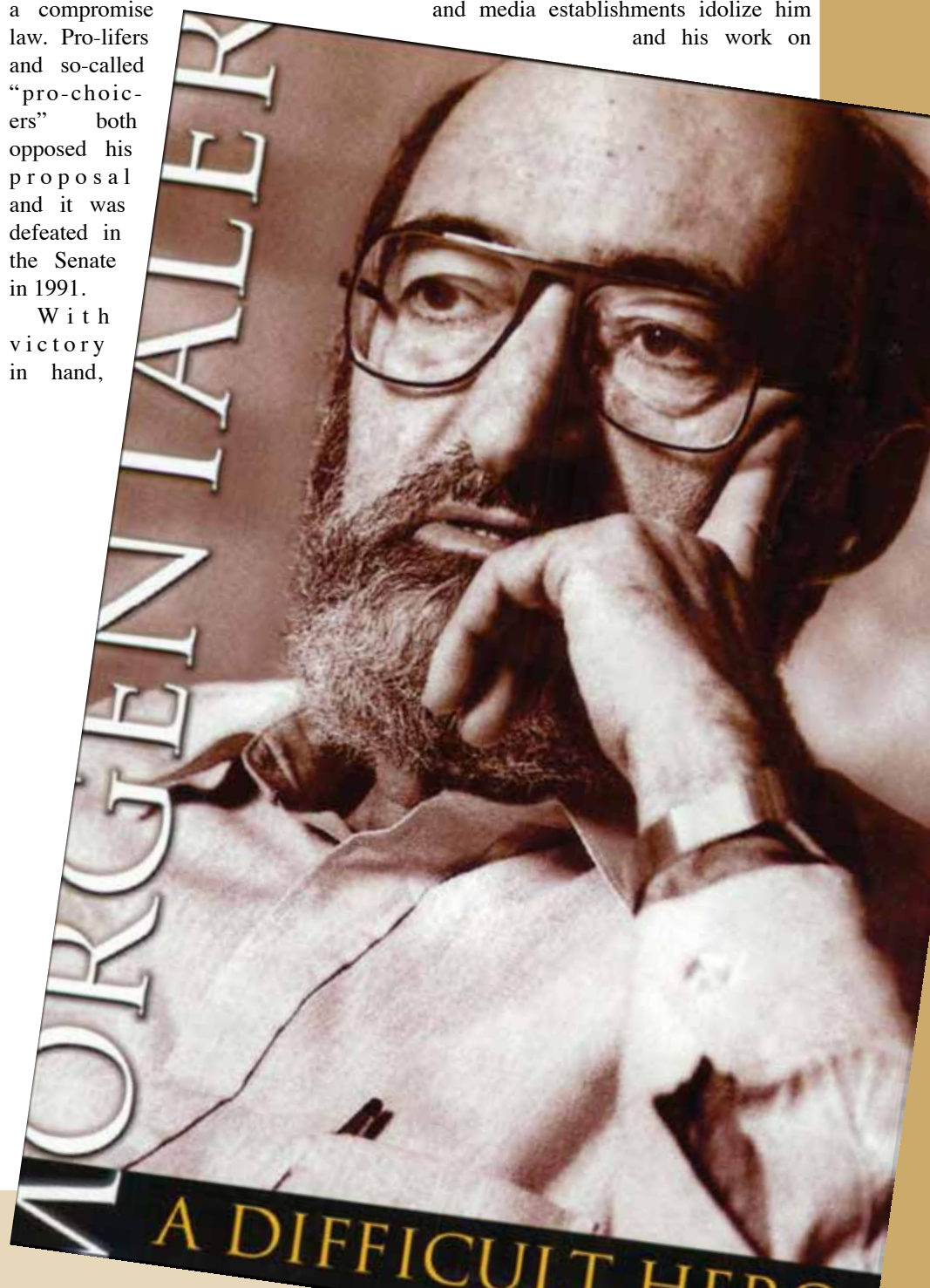
of Canada in January, 1988. This was the infamous *R. v. Morgentaler* decision that struck down Canada's abortion law, leaving the country with no legal restrictions on abortion whatsoever. The decision was based on the Charter of Rights. It nullified the law for procedural reasons (to be clear, the court never ruled that Canadians had a "right" to abortion), leaving the Government of Canada the option of passing another law restricting abortion. The government of Prime Minister Brian Mulroney tried,

a compromise law. Pro-lifers and so-called "pro-choicers" both opposed his proposal and it was defeated in the Senate in 1991.

With victory in hand,

Morgentaler began setting up abortuaries in various other provinces (he already had facilities in Quebec and Ontario). Occasionally he would encounter legal problems with provincial governments, leading to further court cases, but Canada's Charter-empowered courts are friendly to abortion and Morgentaler would generally come out on top.

In 2008 Henry Morgentaler was named to the Order of Canada (a special honor administered by the Governor General) because the Canadian political, academic and media establishments idolize him and his work on



behalf of abortion.

When you are your own idol

So what kind of a person is Henry Morgentaler, this man of impeccable humanist principles who has personally “done more than sixty thousand procedures”? (Throughout Dunphy’s book the word “procedure” is the common euphemism for killing an unborn child.)

Morgentaler hates pro-lifers, of course. In 1982 he stated that, “The people who are against abortions are the spiritual fathers of Auschwitz and the spiritual descendants of Hitler.” The Nazis were pro-lifers? Who knew?

According to Dunphy’s account, Morgentaler is greedy. Despite being a wealthy doctor, he frequently demanded that his supporters raise money for him. “Henry’s principles came gold-plated,” as she puts it.

Dunphy writes that Morgentaler “was not a modest hero. He was never a modest man.” One of his prominent supporters is quoted as saying, “He was a very proud figure. And egotistical.” A former lover of Morgentaler’s told Dunphy, “Sometimes Henry’s so full of himself that he’s unbearable.” And during an hour-long TV interview, Morgentaler himself exclaimed (three times!), “When I look back at what I’ve accomplished, I’m awestruck.”

Among Morgentaler’s worst vices, however, is his treatment of women. Despite his supposed concern for “women’s rights,” he often saw women as playthings for his personal pleasure. His feminist supporters knew this, but most of them were happy to overlook Morgentaler’s lifestyle because he did so much to advance the cause of abortion.

Married three times, Morgentaler was a serial adulterer. Morgentaler’s personal life is basically described this way in Dunphy’s book: he “falls in love” with some woman and begins sleeping with her. Then he “falls in love” with another woman and begins sleeping with her. Then he “falls in love” . . . and on and on and on, over and over again. If you want to know how the secular humanist view

of “love” differs from the Christian view, Morgentaler’s personal life functions as a good case study. His view of “love” seems to be a purely self-centered concept focused on sexual gratification, virtually the opposite of the Christian view in many respects.

Dunphy refers to Morgentaler’s “miscues” such as “a hand straying too far up a supporter’s leg after a press conference in Winnipeg, a sexual overture at the home of a clinic employee,” but he was far too important to the cause of abortion for these kinds of incidents to cause a ruckus. His feminist supporters just overlooked these kinds of things. If he hadn’t been such a hero to the feminists, his behavior would have led to a storm of controversy concerning his treatment of women.

Consistent with his principles

It might seem unfair to present all of this “dirt” about Morgentaler’s life. After all, everyone is sinful and has faults. But the point here is to show how consistent Morgentaler is with his secular humanist principles. For Christians, God is the center of life. For humanists, Man is the center of life – not just any man, but you yourself. In humanism you are, in a very real sense, the god of your own world. You are to glorify yourself and enjoy yourself forever. And your comfort and wellbeing are the most important things of all – other people are just here to meet *your* needs. Thus Henry Morgentaler’s vile lifestyle involved living consistently according to his secular humanist principles.

Referring to the legalization of abortion, Dunphy summarizes Morgentaler’s accomplishment well: “He had helped lead the broad political left and the feminist movement to their biggest victory.” Henry Morgentaler survived the Jewish Holocaust only to later launch a type of Canadian holocaust. But one day abortion will be illegal in Canada again and Henry Morgentaler will be widely recognized for what he really is. That day can’t come soon enough.



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Tuesdays with Oma

God's people shouldn't have a generation gap

by Ashley Groot

The little girl sat on a bed. She was too little to understand how this simple action could make a difference. But her mom did. So, even though this was “one of those days” – busy, chaotic, things needing to get done – Kara’s mother had taken her to visit a sick senior from their church. Kara walked next to her mother through long unfamiliar halls, and passed the coded doors into the senior’s room. That’s when she crawled up on the lady’s bed to sit. When Kara grasped the lady’s frail hand in hers the little girl began to talk. The amused senior wasn’t quite able to follow all her chatter, but what she said wasn’t really what mattered anyway. Kara’s genuine care, love and smile were what the elderly woman needed. And as Kara talked the woman changed; her aged face was now wrinkled in joy.

This simple visit was not particularly challenging, but it was what the senior needed more than Kara and her mother knew on that particular Friday visit. Shortly afterward, God called the woman home. When Kara heard the news she told her mother, “I am sad she died, mommy, but I am glad to have known her.” Kara’s answer made her mother smile as she realized that Kara knew a few moments set aside from a busy, stress-filled day had made a senior feel loved and appreciated.

Popular culture teaches us that it is all about “Me” and that what makes “Me” happy is what matters. Joy is obtained through being self-absorbed. New technologies like Facebook, Twitter and constant status updates feed a self-absorbed craving that can never be fully satisfied – we can never get enough of ourselves.

But our time is limited, and time spent on “Me” leaves little time left over to spend with the elderly - relationships between youth and the elderly are rare today. Sadly the younger generation is robbing itself of an opportunity for precious relationships.

Lessons to be learned

Like the girl Kara, in the story that begins this article, I, at a young age, had the opportunity to visit a seniors’ home. I would visit my great Oma every Tuesday. These visits taught me many important lessons. I learned about the fleeting nature of time – my Oma grew older right before my eyes. I learned also that God is in control and He knows everyone’s last days. And my Oma taught me that life is a blessing and every moment counts. Like many seniors, she had learned that the simplest things in life end up meaning the most. I could see the excitement in the seniors’ expressions as they observed children sitting, playing or walking as quietly as young kids possibly can, down

the long halls. They were bringing more smiles than any of the young children realized. Just by being there, joy was brought to a place where it was needed.

Living our life for Christ

The world thinks our priority is about making “Me” happy. God says something quite different – it is all about Him! As Christians we are placed on this earth to glorify our Creator. He has given us time on this earth and we need to live it all out for Him. Sharing Christ’s love with seniors, who may be lonely or neglected, is an opportunity to do just that.

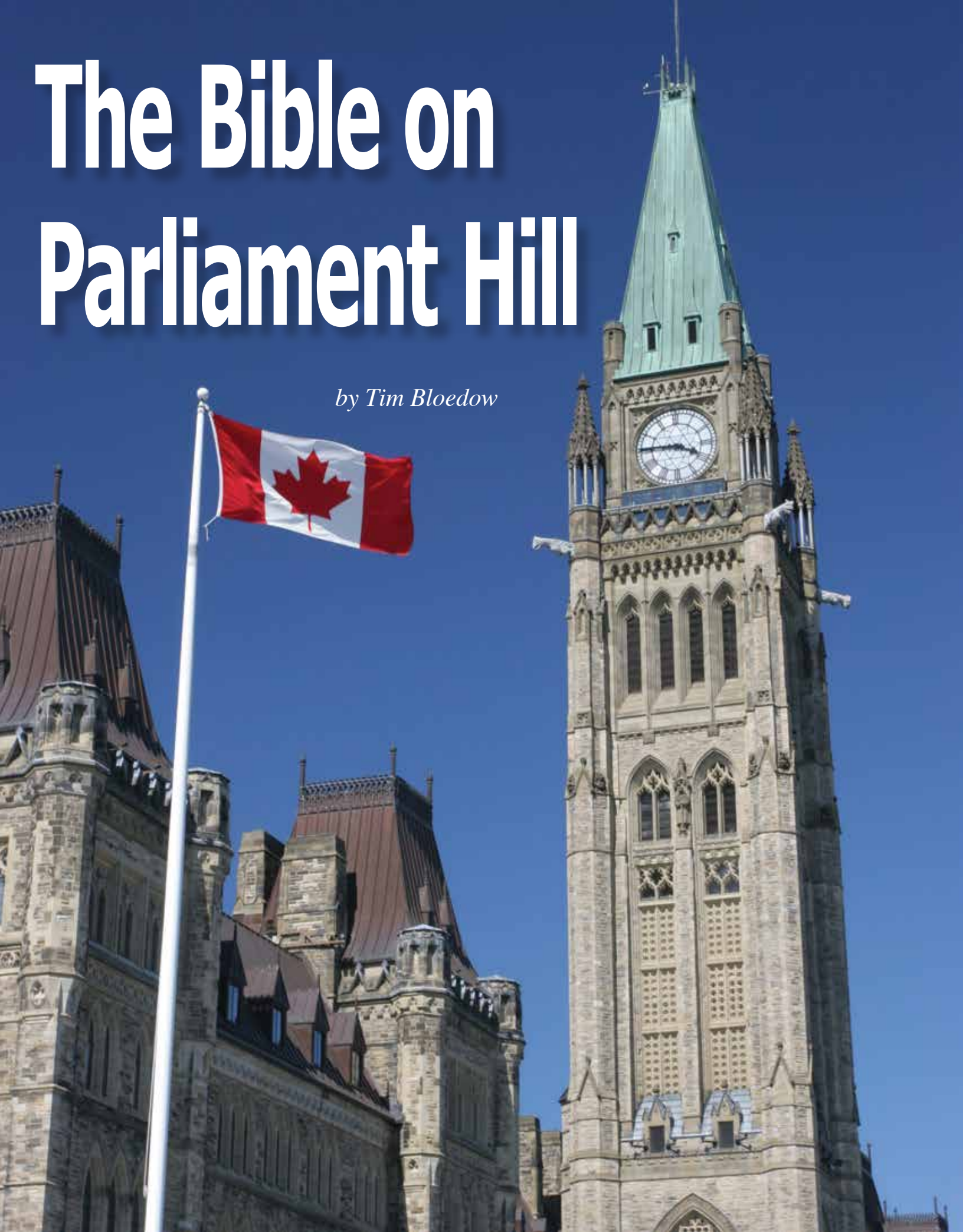
We should also look to them for all the knowledge they have gained through their experiences. As Proverbs 16:31a says, “*The silver-haired head is the crown of glory.*” Take the time to listen to a senior and you will learn about a person made in God’s image. Our time and talents should be used to show Christ’s love and that includes towards the elderly. Christ has showered His love to the undeserving – us. Ought we not to share that love with others?

The relationships God blesses in our lives are either useless or accepted as gifts from Him. The action of sharing a simple smile or a short visit takes little effort, yet can have such an impact. When you can spend your time this well, why would you ever be content with the hum of the Internet or the buzz of the TV?



The Bible on Parliament Hill

by Tim Bloedow



The Scriptures inscribed on the Parliament buildings witness to the significant role Christianity once played in Canada and, the Lord willing, will play again.

A nation which does not remember what it was yesterday, does not know what it is today, nor what it is trying to do.

— U.S. President Woodrow Wilson

Not to know what happened before you were born, is to remain forever a child.

— Cicero

The buildings which house Canada's national government were built during a more Christian era, though not in a fervently Christian period. Following a fire on February 3, 1916, the current buildings were constructed over six years from 1916–1922. The Peace Tower, the most well-recognized component of these Parliament Buildings, was completed in 1926.

The Peace Tower, while it is part of the Parliament Buildings, is primarily a war memorial. It was built to house the Memorial Chamber, which first commemorated the loss of life during World War I. (It now houses Books of Remembrance for soldiers who have died in all the wars in which Canada has participated.) The Peace Tower was built as a free-standing structure, attached to the main Parliamentary building, which is known as Centre Block. The tower, still officially known as the Tower of Peace and Victory, is only secondarily a part of the Parliament Buildings. It is important to respect this historical context when considering the Bible passages engraved in stone and bronze on and in the Peace Tower.

The most well-known Bible passages on the Parliament Buildings are those on the Peace Tower, but there are a few other passages engraved in wood, stone and bronze in the Memorial Chamber and

in the Centre Block. You will also find Biblical imagery in various places.

The Bible on Parliament Hill

Over one of the entrances to the Board Room of the Official Opposition (Room 411-S/415-S Centre Block), you can read: "Fear God, Honour the king" (1 Peter 2:17).

Three Bible verses have been carved in stone onto the exterior of the Peace Tower above the tall, narrow stained glass windows which surround the Memorial Chamber. The most well-known of these three verses is also Canada's motto: "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea" (Psalm 72:8). This is seen on the East side of the Peace Tower. But the verse which most people will see when they approach the Peace Tower, the one carved above the South window, is "Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son" (Psalm 72:1). With verse eight of the same Bible passage carved over the East window, these two verses book-end a powerful section of a very provocative Messianic Psalm. On the West side, you can read, "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Proverbs 29:18). Remember, these verses were carved onto Canada's most famous war memorial, which is also recognized as part of Canada's Parliament Buildings.

Around the interior walls of the Memorial Chamber are several marble panels. Most identify military conflicts. On one is carved part of the Remembrance Day poem, *In Flanders Fields*. On another, in both English and French, is carved Psalm 139, verses 8–10:

If I ascend up into heaven, thou art

there; if I lay down in the bowels of the earth, thou art there! If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me.

The Book of Remembrance for those who died in World War I sits inside a bronze case on top of a large stone altar in the centre of the Memorial Chamber. A ribbon pattern is engraved into the side of this bronze cover, and carved into the ribbon around all four sides of the bronze cover is the text of Ephesians 6:13, a Biblical passage about the armour of God. The verse reads: "Take unto you the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

The armour of God

Verses 14–17 of Ephesians 6, are also represented on the bronze cover. These verses itemize the six pieces of the armour of God. They are represented by images and Latin words engraved onto six blue shields that are part of the bronze cover design.

- The first image, on the west side of the altar, is of a belt with the Latin word *Veritas* for Truth: the belt of truth ("Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth" v. 14).
- The second image is of a breastplate, with the Latin word *Justitia* for Justice ("and having on the breastplate of righteousness" v. 14).
- The third image, on the south end of the altar, is of footwear with the Latin word *Pax* for Peace ("and your

feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace” v. 15).

- The fourth image is of a shield with the Latin word *Fides* for Faith (“above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked” v. 16).
- The fifth image is of a helmet with the Latin word *Salus* for Salvation (“and take the helmet of salvation” v. 17).
- The sixth image is of a sword with the Latin word *Spiritus* for Spirit (“and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” v. 17).

The beautiful stained glass windows in the Memorial Chamber also contain Bible verses:

- “Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory” (1 Corinthians 15:57).
- “Quit ye like men be strong” (1 Corinthians 16:13).
- “Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle” (Psalm 18:39).
- “He maketh wars to cease” (Psalm 46:9).
- “Judgment shall return unto righteousness” (Psalm 94:15).

The Peace Tower is also a bell tower.

It houses one of only eleven carillons, or bell tower assemblies, in Canada. The Peace Tower carillon is made up of 53 bells. The largest bell, bell #53, includes the engraving, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men” (Luke 2:14).

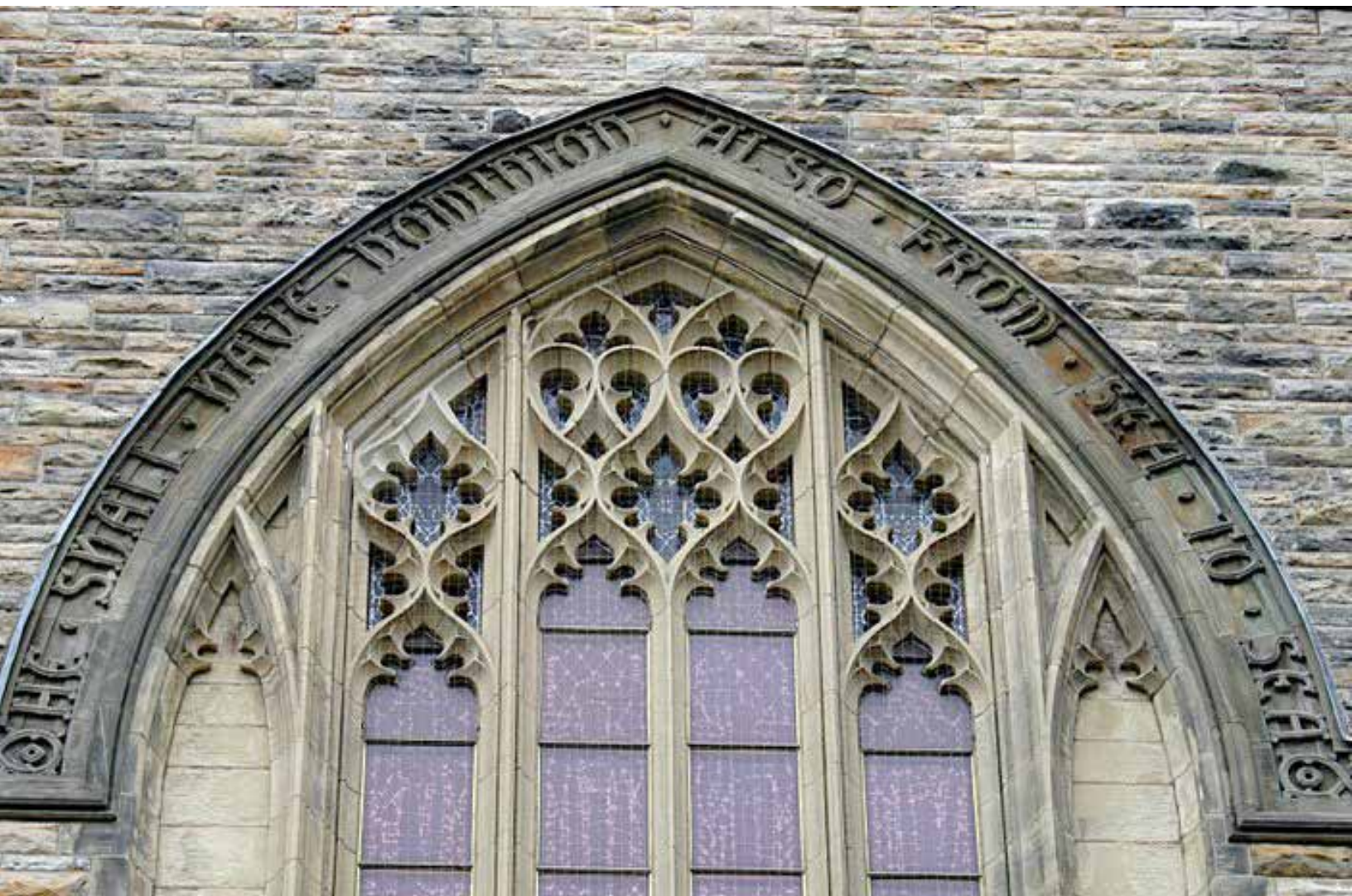
The significance of these Bible references on Canada’s Parliament Buildings and most famous war memorial is not found in sentimentality or nostalgia. These passages of Scripture have very particular meanings in their Biblical context and probably had very particular meanings to those who selected them for use on these buildings. To respect history, we must acknowledge the Biblical context out of which these passages were selected rather than simply grabbing hold of the selections themselves solely for sentimental reasons.

“HE SHALL HAVE DOMINION FROM SEA TO SEA” (Psalm 72:8) - This, Canada’s motto, is one of three Bible verses that have been carved in stone onto the exterior of the Peace Tower above the tall, narrow stained glass windows which surround the Memorial Chamber. It can be seen on the east side of the tower.

Photo credit: Barry Boucher

Inside the Memorial Chamber

Psalm 139 in the Memorial Chamber



uses the context of death and remembrance to bring comfort. It assures God's people that they are secure in His protection, regardless of the circumstance they may face in history, including war and death. A recording angel carved above the entryway/exit in and out of the Memorial Chamber urges viewers to ensure that their names have been recorded in God's Book of Life (Revelation 21:27) as a guarantee of their salvation. It's a reminder, in the face of death, that this life is not all there is. The Parliamentary website says the recording angel is recording the names of those who sacrificed their lives for their country. That's questionable as a full interpretation of the image, and for those who know their Biblical imagery, the carving still takes your mind to the far more important record-keeping of God regarding the eternal destiny of men.

The Ephesians 6:13-17 passage urges visitors, in the midst of solemn reflection on the horrors of war and the sacrifices made, to be men; they are challenged to reflect on spiritual realities, specifically on the fact that there is another war going on, a spiritual conflict. And the message of Ephesians 6:13-17 is that this spiritual conflict is real, involving genuine danger and requiring armour or protection.

Immediately below the Ephesians 6 passage, around all four sides of the altar on which the bronze cover sits, is a quotation from *Pilgrim's Progress*. *Pilgrim's Progress* is an allegory of the Christian life and it records Christian's ultimate victory over the battles and troubles in this life. In other words, it's a vivid depiction of spiritual warfare. The citation, words from the book's character Mr. Valiant-for-Truth, reads:

My marks and scars I carry with me, to be a witness for me that I have fought His battles, who now will be my Rewarder; so he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.

The Scripture passage and the citation from *Pilgrim's Progress* pull people's minds into the realm of spiritual reflection. As real as military combat is, spiritual warfare is more real. As important as victory is in physical combat,



“HE MAKETH WARS TO CEASE” (Psalm 46:9) - Psalm 46 is a message for a war-weary people, pointing them to God for their relief.

“JUDGMENT SHALL RETURN UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS” (Psalm 94:15) - “Many today say they want justice or righteousness, but they want it without a price, and they want it on their own terms. This was not the message of World War I. You could not be equivocal about good and evil in the face of World War I.”

Photo credit: Curtis Alexander (c) - www.churchonthego.ca

it is even more important in the battle against sin and temptation, and against the strongholds of deception in people's hearts and minds. As real as war and its results are in this life, the ultimate reality, which matters so much more, includes the spiritual realm and eternity. The passages from Scripture and *Pilgrim's Progress* on the Altar of Remembrance remind us that there is peace at the end of a just war if we are also victorious in the spiritual battle; if we have peace with Christ.

We are also reminded from Ephesians 6:13-17 that the only weapon required by the righteous to be successful in spiritual warfare is the Bible, the sword of the Spirit. Canadians are reminded that Christian warfare is not about material conquest or forcible conversion; it's about the tearing down idols and false ideas (2 Corinthians 10:3-6); deliverance from ignorance and deception by way of redemption and truth. This is why the Bible is our weapon: Christian warfare is a battle for hearts and minds, not for wealth, political power and military control. This

is part of the Christian message preached to all Canadians from the nation's most famous war memorial.

The stained glass windows

The stained glass windows in the Memorial Chamber do not, in themselves, contain much specifically Christian imagery but they do contain some short quotations, most of them coming from the Bible.

There are two Scripture verses on the South window, called *The Assembly of Remembrance*, and the East window, which has been given the name *The Call to Arms*, contains three verses: 1 Corinthians 15:57, 1 Corinthians 16:13 and Psalm 18:39. And the West window, *The Dawn of Peace*, contains two verses: Psalm 46:9 and Psalm 94:15.

From the passages cited here, and elsewhere on the Parliament Buildings, you can see a mix of Old Testament and New Testament passages, and you can see how popular the Book of Psalms was.

The East Window – The Call To Arms

The East window cites a portion of 1 Corinthians 15:57: “Thanks be to God who gives us the victory.” Standing alone, this verse looks like it has been taken out of context, and it has if its intent is as a call to arms. The complete verse is, “Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory *through our Lord Jesus Christ!*” It follows a verse that reads: “The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.” The passage is talking about the victory over sin and death that was achieved by Jesus Christ when He died and rose again to pay God’s penalty for sin. That victory played out in history can sometimes involve military conflict, but that is by no means the primary meaning of the passage. In the face of military conflict, though, it can be a great comfort to God’s people to remember that, if they die, they will gain eternal life

because that life has been secured for them by Christ. This is the glorious hope for Christians, much more so when they are staring death in the face. The verse comes from one of the most important passages in the Bible for defending, as the central Christian teaching, the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Paul, the writer, in this passage, said that if Christ did not rise from the dead, Christianity is a fraud. But he makes the case that Christ did rise from the dead, that this was a verifiable historical event, and that there is no reason to doubt the power of God and the victory of Christ. What a powerful message to be preached to Canadians from, of all places, our Parliament Buildings!

The second Bible reference on the East window is “Quit ye like men be strong” from 1 Corinthians 16:13. The full verse is, “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit ye like men, be strong.” In modern English, it reads: “Be on your guard; stand firm in

the faith; be courageous; be strong.” It’s a call, not to be strong in war, but to be strong in the Christian faith. This often requires conflict, and sometimes military engagement, but it has a much more comprehensive application. Knowing the context, we see that, in the providence of God, this beautiful stained glass window in the Tower of Peace and Victory is calling Christians to be on guard against enemies, to be strong in their faith, to be courageous, to persevere.

The third passage of Scripture on the East window is “Thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle” from Psalm 18:39. It is also found in 2 Samuel 22:40, where David, the future king of Israel, sings this Psalm as an expression of gratitude to God for His protection. The complete verse reads: “For Thou hast girded me with strength for the battle; Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.” This was a song of thanksgiving for deliverance from a king, King Saul, the first king of Israel. In this context, the victory was one of self-defense in a conflict instigated by a corrupt king.

It may be out of context for World War I, but it’s a word to those who appreciate the fact that human rulers are not supreme; that God’s rule must, and will, always triumph over corrupt governors. God will protect the innocent from corrupt political rule. It’s a reminder to our rulers, politicians and judges alike, that God raises up and brings down rulers, and that even the power of the sword and the authority of civil government doesn’t place a person outside of God’s authority to bless and to curse. It’s a testimony to Canada’s repudiation of the Divine Right of Kings and all other forms of political tyranny.

The principles of division of authority and diffusion of power are fundamental to our Biblical model of decentralized governance or, as some people call it, sphere sovereignty. This verse is a beautiful reminder of the Christian foundation for Canada’s anti-totalitarian form of government, and the necessity of preserving our Christian heritage — in substance, not simply in nostalgia or sentiment — if we want to keep tyranny at bay.

Buy the booklet!

Did you know there are at least 15 Scripture verses inscribed on Canada’s Parliament Buildings? Did you know that they are from well-known New Testament passages as well as obscure Old Testament prophets? Did you know that some politicians considered ordering the removal of the stone inscriptions when they were first added?

You can learn all this and much, much more from ChristianGovernance’s sturdy, full-color 18-page booklet, *The Biblical Legacy of Canada’s Parliament Buildings*. The article in this issue is a shortened version of what you will find in the booklet so if you liked what you’ve read, share it with others!

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The South Window – Assembly of Remembrance

Moving to the South window, The Assembly of Remembrance, we find two Scriptures from the Prophets. They are high up in the window and very difficult to see.

One of these passages is “He shall execute judgment and justice in the earth” from Jeremiah 23:5. Presumably the intent of this passage was to give Canadians the confidence that they were on God’s side in the Great War.

The other Bible verse on the South window is “The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble” from Nahum 1:7a. This statement is an oasis of grace and promise surrounded by a declaration of judgment. Nahum is God’s promise of judgment against the city of Nineveh. God declares his vengeance and wrath against the wicked people of Nineveh. He assures them that he “will not leave the guilty unpunished” (v. 3). He says “He will pursue his foes into the realm of darkness” (v. 8). Yet in the midst of this terrible declaration of judgment against those who are wicked, God issues a promise of great comfort to those who have remained faithful to Him: “The LORD is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.” John A. Pearson took the passage out of its redemptive context and used the first portion to provide comfort and encouragement to those who counted themselves among the Assembly of Remembrance as they reflected on the

harshness of the war they survived. Such an encouragement is legitimate for those on the right side of conflict. We know, however, that true and eternal comfort comes from trusting in God through Christ. It is for such people that God is truly a stronghold in the day of trouble.

The West Window – The Dawn of Peace

Turning to the West window, *The Dawn of Peace*, we find two more Bible references. One is “He maketh wars to cease” from Psalm 46:9. Protestant Reformer Martin Luther’s most famous hymn, “God is Our Refuge” is a very close paraphrase of the Psalm. Psalm 46 is a very eschatological Psalm, compelling us to cast our gaze into the future, to look beyond the troubles and conflicts of today to an unfolding era of quiet and peace. The whole Psalm pulls us in this direction, but especially the verse quoted on the Memorial Chamber window along with the the following verse, 10:

He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow and

cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot with fire. Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted on the earth.

It’s a message for war-weary people, whether burdened by the exhaustion of military conflict or spiritual warfare. The promise of peace is to God’s people, so it’s also a call to faith in Christ, and this from the West window of the Peace Tower that is part of Canada’s Parliament Buildings.

The other Bible reference on the West window is “Judgment shall return unto righteousness” from Psalm 94:15. Many today say they want justice or righteousness, but they want it without a price, and they want it on their own terms. This was not the message of World War I. You could not be equivocal about good and evil in the face of World War I.

This is also not the case with the spiritual warfare taking place today, and this Psalm is strikingly clear with that message. The promise of justice comes in the face of lament over the injustice being exacted on innocent people by wicked men:

“GIVE THE KING THEY JUDGMENTS, O GOD, AND THY RIGHTEOUSNESS UNTO THE KING’S SON” (PSALM 72:1) - This passage clearly affirms the rule of the God over the nation. The Christian God is in view here because the passage is from the Bible.

Photo credit: Curtis Alexander (c) - www.churchonthego.ca



How long shall they utter and speak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boast? They break in pieces Thy people, O LORD, and afflict Thine heritage. They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless. (v. 4-6)

The Psalm begins by asserting God's right to vengeance: "O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth." A more modern translation reads: "The LORD is a God who avenges." And the Psalm concludes by saying that God will cut off or destroy the wicked (this Psalm calls them brutish and fools).

Many people try to claim that God's way of bringing justice and peace is by helping everyone to love each other and to get along. That's not what the Bible teaches. That's not what Psalm 94 teaches. That's not what this beautiful stained glass window in the Memorial Chamber of the

Peace Tower teaches. Justice comes at a price; God fights for His people — the righteous, the peacemakers — destroying, where necessary, the wicked who abuse and violate those who are innocent and vulnerable.

The hope expressed in this stained glass window is that peace will come through justice. The context for defining justice, of course, is the Bible, God's Law-Word. And the expectation reflected in the other Bible passage on this window, Psalm 46:9, is that this peace will be realized, that even wars will cease; that the progress of history will reflect the advancement of the Kingdom of God, and that the Kingdom of God will have a visible impact on the kingdom of this world.

The exterior of the Peace Tower

The two verses from Psalm 72, which greet visitors walking up to the Peace

Tower and the Centre Block of Canada's Parliament Buildings: "He shall have dominion from sea to sea" (v. 8) and "Give the king thy judgments, O God, and thy righteousness unto the king's son" (v. 1) are very significant.

They affirm the rule of the Christian God over nations, over the people and the territory. The Christian God is in view here because the passage is from the Bible, but also because the King's Son mentioned is Jesus Christ. The relevance of these passages to civil government is that, in view of Christ's kingly rule, all people are called to submit to Him, obey His law, and govern their lives accordingly. This is a personal call, but it is also a public call, so it applies to civil rulers as they govern nations.

The complete Psalm 72 stresses the exclusivity of God's claim to rule over nations, and the certain defeat of His enemies. It talks about the importance of

God's providence established this scriptural legacy

by Tim Bloedow

It is important to note that politicians did not commission the carvings and Scripture references found on the Parliament Buildings, so they did not necessarily reflect the thinking of the governments of the day.

There's a nostalgic desire by many Christians to look back to a day when Canada was governed Christianly by God-fearing men who wanted to leave a legacy of consistent Christian governance. The historical record does not bear this out. And it certainly wasn't the case 50 years after Confederation when the current Parliament Buildings were rebuilt. This was during the Prime Ministership of William Lyon Mackenzie King, who was spiritually eccentric, and not a Christian.

Notwithstanding his spiritual condition, by the providence of God, this prime minister is credited with issuing the order for the engraving of "Glory to God in the highest" on bell #53 of the Peace Tower carillon.

The Christian engravings on the

Parliament Buildings and the Peace Tower, however, must be attributed to the chief architect, John A. Pearson. After the engravings on the outside of the Peace Tower were unveiled, there was some discussion in Parliament about removing them, but the providence of God trumped the will of non-Christian men. Following is a relevant transcript on this matter from the May 27th, 1921, House of Commons Hansard, the official transcript of debates in the Lower House of our Canadian Parliament:

MR. McCURDY: ... In answer to a question asked by the hon. member for Middlesex West (Mr. Ross) and the hon. member for Halifax, the words which are being inscribed on the tower, some of which are now visible, are as follows. Facing Wellington street:

"Give the King thy judgement, O God, and thy righteousness unto the King's son." That is taken from psalm 72 as, no doubt, my hon. friend will recognize. On one side there will appear these words:

"Where there is no vision, the people perish." On the other side: "He shall have Dominion from seat to sea." Also from psalm 72.

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): Is that approved by the Parliamentary Committee?

Mr. McCURDY: That detail was not approved by the Parliamentary Committee.

Mr. MACLEAN (Halifax): While one is diffident about expressing an opinion in regard to a matter of this kind offhand, it strikes me as being an absurdity; I do not think it will add anything to the beauty of the tower and it is altogether inappropriate.

Then, on June 4th, the matter was picked up again in Parliament.

Hon. CHARLES MARCH (Bonaventure): I desire to ask the Prime Minister if he does not think that one of the three inscriptions on the tower of this building should be in French, seeing that

justice and peace and coming to the aid of the needy and afflicted, and it emphasizes that only the rule of Christ can accomplish this. That is why it appeals for His rule to extend from sea to sea, to the ends of the earth.

The other Bible verse on the outside of the Peace Tower is “Where there is no vision (or revelation) the people perish” (Prov 29:18). To avoid perishing, we need to know how to be redeemed. What is in view here, then, is God’s revelation of salvation, which is the Bible. The Peace Tower here is affirming the Bible as the true message of redemption, as the source of truth by which people can escape death.

Canada’s Parliament Buildings point us to a better day

These words of God call out to us from Him and from our nation’s history and from the seat of Canada’s national

government. These words are enduring and are not affected by the nature of the individuals who occupy the positions in Parliament at any given time. Those men and women come and go, but the Word of God stands forever. These words call out to us to repent, to repent of our failure to acknowledge God and Christ as Lord over this nation. These words call out to us to do justice and pursue peace in the name of Christ. These words call out to us to believe, to really believe, to be optimistic and enthusiastic for the advancement of the Kingdom of God in history, in Canada. We need to pick up the Biblical vision reflected in these words on our Parliament Buildings; we need to take up the challenge. We need to put on our armor. We need to take up our Sword. And we need to start marching in step with our Commander and King.

All these passages of the Bible in and around Canada’s Parliament Buildings

integrate temporal and spiritual realities within a Christian context. They affirm the importance of, not simply God’s law, but the person of Christ, in the just governing of the nation. The law is again in view with a stone carving of Moses’ head in Confederation Hall. Christ is again in view in the Luke 2:14 reference engraved on bell #53 because that was the declaration given by angels over Christ’s birth. They hint at the impact of Christ’s rule promised in Psalm 72: Peace and justice (good will). Christ is also in view with the quotation from *Pilgrim’s Progress* because the ultimate victory of the lead character, Christian, in his battles through life is dependent on Christ. Also, those entering and leaving the Memorial Chamber pass under the Memorial Cross.

Many of the Scripture passages selected, such as Luke 2:14; Psalm 72; Proverbs 29:18; and Psalm 46:9 have eschatological characteristics and reflect a very optimistic vision for the advancement of the Kingdom of God in history in Canada. We also see this sentiment reflected in the carvings of the four living creatures or beasts (the man, the bull, the lion and the eagle) carved in stone in the House of Commons Foyer. (See Ezekiel 1:10 and Revelation 4:6–7 for the Biblical references to these creatures.)

These famous and prominent buildings call all Christians to a great expectation, a magnificent hope, that their labors for the Gospel, for justice and mercy, for peace, are not in vain. Canadian Christian, if you are discouraged, look up to the Peace Tower and the Parliament Buildings in your nation’s capital.

But do not look there as an act of idolatry, putting your faith in the state for your salvation. Look there to see the gospel message marked out by the finger of God on these buildings. God’s infallible Biblical message of faith and hope is engraved there for you and your whole nation to see.

For more information

www.parl.gc.ca/About/House/Collections/carillon-e.htm
www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/histoire-history/tour-tower-eng.html

French is one of the official languages of this country?

Right Hon. ARTHUR MEIGHEN (Prime Minister): *I may say that my knowledge of this matter of the inscriptions on the tower is meagre. In fact I did not know that there were to be any inscriptions until I found some difficulty in reading one. I will bring the matter to the attention of the minister (Mr. McCurdy) again. I think it deserves consideration.*

MR. SPEAKER: *I am informed that the Building Committee have ordered these inscriptions be removed.*

Mr. LAPOINTE: *That would be the best thing to do.*

Two weeks later, the inscriptions were discussed at a June 16th meeting of the Joint Committee on Reconstruction of the Parliament Buildings. The Minutes of that meeting include the following note:

The question of the inscription on the Main Tower was brought up and reference was made to the statements of the Right Honourable the Prime Minister and the Honourable Speaker of the House of Commons

on June 4th, the day of Prorogation. As the inscription has been completed, the Committee decided that it would not be justified in taking any action in regard to its removal at the present time. A few months later, on October 4, Parliament was dissolved, and the new Parliament apparently did not take up the matter again. Nor was a fresh committee organized to continue the work of the Reconstruction of the Parliament Buildings committee.

As you can see, the inscriptions on the Peace Tower did not originate from the will of our politicians. On the contrary, they were prepared to see them removed. But God used the vision of an architect and the inertia of civil government in His Providence to ensure that these Bible passages would be inscribed in such a visible public place, at our seat of national government. What we do have is the finger of God — the Word of God — carved into the architecture of the buildings which symbolize our national government, notwithstanding the political fancy of the day, and regardless of the particular convictions of the governments and political leaders who come and go.

BEST BOOKS: Creation and design reviewed by Margaret Helder

Building Blocks in Life Science

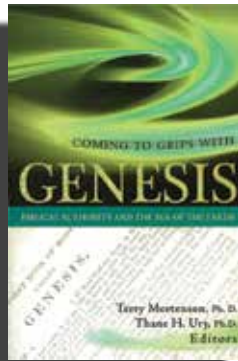
by Gary Parker
2011, 158 pages

Of the many experts who explain nature to us in terms of Biblical revelation, Dr. Gary Parker (once a professor at Dordt College), is one of the most delightful. He is non-confrontational, clearly delighted with the material under discussion, and truly a pleasure to read (or to view on DVD). His new book, *Building Blocks in Life Science*, is no exception.

Do genes, chromosomes and DNA seem way beyond your interests? Gary Parker not only makes them interesting and understandable, he also places the details in the context of Scripture. For example, he demonstrates that chemicals can never on their own form living cells because that requires exquisite organization and the work of God. He also shows how easily the grandchildren of Adam and Eve could have included individuals representing all the major human races. There was no need for millions of years, just simple genetics. And he explains how natural selection serves to protect created kinds; it does not lead to new life forms. He even tells us why we should care about these issues.

Interested adults – even those long frustrated by the complexity of topics like DNA – will find this book user friendly. Dr. Parker provides many helpful drawings of biochemical molecules. These, and numerous other illuminating drawings, enhance the discussion of how DNA works.

Besides adults new to these topics, the book provides excellent supplemental discussion to students who have studied these issues or are about to study them.



Coming to Grips with Genesis

edited by Terry Mortenson & Thane H. Ury
2008, 486 pages

Since Genesis is so foundational, Christians have always paid a lot of attention to it.

This is as it should be. But do we need yet another book on the topic? Well yes, we do. Many Christians are unaware of the situation, but there is an elephant in the room and it is scientific declarations about the age of the earth.

Over the past two hundred years, more and more Christians have come to accept the prevailing scientific views that the earth is millions of years old. Generally these believers consider that the age of the Earth is an issue that should have minimal impact on their Christian faith. They are wrong. This recent book discusses how supporting an ancient Earth view impacts our understanding of the *whole* Bible.

This is a scholarly volume, written for academics and seminary students, but it still accessible to people like you and me. Although only one of the authors is Reformed, the discussion is Biblical and sticks to the issues. My favorite chapters include those on:

- teachings of the church fathers on Genesis
- views of Luther, Calvin and Wesley on the traditional orthodox interpretation
- modern hermeneutical approaches to Genesis 1-11
- a critique of the Framework Hypothesis

Readers may well be surprised at how many aspects of doctrine are impacted by the issue of long ages. But, as the editors put it, “Ultimately what is at stake in this controversy about the age of the earth is the perspicuity and authority of Scripture.”

Signature in the Cell

by Stephen C. Meyer
2009, 611 pages

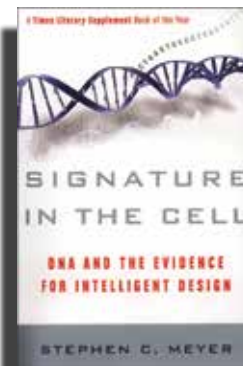
Stephen C. Meyer has written a fascinating book, complete with personal anecdotes and amusing verbal illustrations of the issues involved in unraveling the mystery of DNA.

The author sets out to discover where the information stored in DNA came from and how this information is turned into coded messages which are read and executed by the machinery of the cell. Molecular biologists have sought an explanation for this amazing property of DNA for 60 years. The author demonstrates that their explanations don’t work and that only a conscious mind can generate such information. The majority of scientists, however, claim that it is not scientific to explain these issues by other than through blind processes.

Some Christians agree with secular scientists that science does not allow any appeal to intelligence or a supernatural agency for the origin of anything. Stephen C. Meyer, a practicing Roman Catholic (but not a 6-day creationist), declares that most scientists are wrong. DNA has astonishing properties that provide the signature of the designer.

While we may not all be interested in the field of science, we should all make the effort to evaluate claims about health issues, climate change or origins. It is not good enough to defer to the “experts” – they may have vested interests for taking the stand they do.

This book carefully develops its arguments. At over 600 pages it sometimes gets a little too technical or long-winded. Just skip to the next chapter then. Every chapter has its own interest and you can’t fail to be amazed.”



*Fret not yourself because of evildoers;
be not envious of wrongdoers!
For they will soon fade like the grass
and wither like the green herb.*

The Fading of Captain Blood

by Christine Farenhorst

Talbot Edwards had a unique job. As a matter of fact, it was the only job of its kind in England – the only job, actually, of its kind in the world. Talbot Edwards was the keeper and guardian of the English crown jewels – of which the crown itself was the most notable – during the middle to late 1600s.

Talbot Edwards lived, together with his wife and family, in the infamous Tower of London where the jewels were kept under lock and key. In the early months of 1671, a parson and his wife came to the Tower to view the regalia, by which name the crown jewels were known. This was not unusual. From time to time people came, tourists of a sort, and with Talbot Edwards' permission, they were allowed to look at the historic Tower and its treasures. The parson and his wife appeared to be a sober couple, but very friendly and much impressed with what Mr. Edwards showed them. The parson's wife, as a matter of fact, was so overcome by the splendor of the jewels that she was taken with the vapors. Mr. Edwards, being a compassionate man, conducted the couple to his keeper's lodgings, where he and his wife proceeded to offer the apparently weak woman a comfortable chair and give her a cordial. Surrounded by kindness, she recovered. Shortly afterwards they left, showering Mr. Edwards and his wife with words of thankfulness for their hospitality.

Not too many days later, the parson returned with half a dozen pairs of gloves for Mrs. Talbot, in appreciation of what had happened. From then on, a friendship budded between the two couples and they began to visit back and forth. The

friendship, indeed, blossomed so richly that at one point the parson warmly suggested a matrimonial match between the Edwards' daughter and his nephew. The nephew was described by the parson as a man who possessed two or three hundred pounds a year in land. Talbot Edwards and his wife were both delighted and honored by this suggestion. But after the initial excitement wore off, they realistically asked to be introduced to this nephew.

"Most assuredly," the parson replied, "most assuredly. I rather think that May the 9th would be an auspicious day for the meeting. Shall we knock at your hospitable door at around 7 a.m. for a full day of acquaintance?"

The Edwards both nodded. Their guests arose simultaneously to take their departure.

"Oh," said the parson, turning at the door, "it almost slipped my mind, but I do hope it is agreeable that I bring along two friends as well at that time to

see the regalia? The early morning hours are convenient for them. They are such good friends and just then happen to be passing through London, leaving town in the forenoon. And they have so been wanting to see the crown jewels."

In the days that followed, the Edwards cleaned their lodgings thoroughly. Mrs.



The Tower of London

Edwards fussed over her daughter's best dress, and they spoke in whispers of how happy they should be to see their beloved child settled comfortably with a decent, god-fearing man, as surely the nephew of a parson must be.

In the early morning hours of May 9, 1671, the parson knocked at the door. Talbot hurried to answer. Initially he was not alarmed at seeing his friend, and three others, enter. After all, the parson had requested their company. At the parson's suggestion, the men first trooped up the stairs to view the crown jewels, so that the companions who needed to leave would be at liberty to do so. But when they reached the room where the regalia were kept, it suddenly became distressingly obvious that the parson and the three men with him, were armed to the teeth. The moment Talbot Edwards unlocked the door to the treasures, rapier blades appeared from canes, and daggers and pistols from pockets.

Two of the parson's friends came in, but the third stayed at the entrance as a "lookout." It all happened fairly quickly and took Mr. Edwards completely by surprise. He was seized, pushed into the treasure chamber, bound and gagged. Hissing into his ear, the parson made sure Mr. Edwards was aware that if he made any attempt at escape, it would mean his certain death.

Talbot Edwards, however, was by no means a fearful man, and refused to play along. Bound and gagged as he was, he tried as hard as he could to make noise to alert his wife and daughter. Consequently, he was hit on the head with a wooden mallet until he lost consciousness. A little later, after he had come to, he

heard the men speaking about him as if he were dead. Deeming it prudent to allow them to continue to think this, he feigned insensibility.

The parson, who was not a member of the clergy at all but an Irishman by the name of Thomas Blood, managed to secure the crown under his cloak. One of his companions held onto the orb. The third man had a file and began work to file the scepter into two parts for the convenience of putting it into a bag. The three men would have succeeded in their daring robbery were it not so that the Edwards' son, as well as a son-in-law, providentially arrived at the Talbot's at that precise time. Hearing the noise of their arrival, Blood and his companions decided to leave, opting to take only the crown and the orb with them. As soon as they left the room, Talbot Edwards, who had managed to spit out the gag, began to shout at the top of his lungs.

"Treason!! Murder!! Stop thief!!"

His daughter, by no means an ignorant girl, put two and two together, and ran out into the Tower courtyard. She was all decked out in her best dress. She called out, mimicking her father's words.

"Stop thief!! Stop thief!! The crown jewels are being stolen!"

Blood and his companions had reached the drawbridge by this time, and although attempts were made to stop them, they cleared the bridge and the other gates. Almost making it to the wharf, they were overtaken by a Captain Beckman, Talbot Edwards' son-in-law. Captain Beckman struggled with Thomas Blood who, after a hard fight, was overcome.

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When the crown fell from his grasp, Blood exclaimed: "It was a gallant attempt, however, unsuccessful; for it was for a crown."

In the end, all the robbers were taken back to and lodged as prisoners in the Tower of London.

Actually, it stands to reason that this is the end of the story, but it is not. Charles II, the last Roman Catholic king to rule Britain, was on the throne at this time of the foiled robbery. It was said of him:

*We have a pretty witty king,
Whose word no man relies on,
He never said a foolish word,
And never did a wise one.*

When Charles II heard what had happened, he ordered Thomas Blood to be brought to him. Standing in front of the English sovereign, showing absolutely no remorse, Blood behaved very insolently. He admitted to having tried to kill several nobles the previous year, and he arrogantly stated that, while hidden in the reeds of the river Thames, he had, in the past, had occasion to shoot the king. However, in awe of his majesty, he had relented and had prevented others as well, he said, from shooting the king. Blood further avowed to the king, that he had hundreds of friends belonging to discontented parties in England, friends who would revenge him should something happen to him. This, Blood suggested, would expose the king and his ministers to daily fear of assault and murder.

"On the other hand," he boldly continued on in his tirade, "if your majesty should spare our lives, I might persuade the hearts of many to become loyal to the crown."

Talbot Edwards, and his son-in-law, Captain Beckman, both of whom had staunchly defended the crown jewels, were not interviewed by Charles II. The only rewards they received were grants of the exchequer of some 200 pounds to Talbot and 100 to his son-in-law. These grants they were obliged to sell at half their value, through difficulty in obtaining payment.

On the other hand, the amazing thing is that king Charles II fell for the brazen impudence of Thomas Blood. The man not only received a pardon, but also a grant of land in Ireland, as well as some degree of royal favor. Blood died about 9 years later – an unmerciful, false man, accepted in high society, feared by many, and in residence at Westminster. Nine short years of earthly grandeur – and then? Well, it was still not the end of the story for him, was it?

So quickly

There is an anecdote of a man, one who was inclined to speak very little, who, while riding over a bridge, turned to his servant and asked: "Do you like eggs?"

His servant's responded affirmatively. That is to say, he answered, "Yes."

Nothing more was said. A year later, the two were passing over the same bridge when the master turned to the servant and asked, "How?"

To which the servant instantly replied: "Poached, sir."

The telling of that anecdote does not take long. The lengthy time between forgotten in the quick telling of it.

There is another anecdote of a pastor from Campsie, near Glasgow, whose name was Archibald Dennison. This minister lost his charge in the turmoil of the 1600s and was out of his pulpit for six years. Now just prior to his dismissal, he had begun preaching on Romans 1. Upon his return, he calmly began preaching on Romans 2, remarking: "The times have altered, but the doctrines of the Gospel remain the same."

Conclusion

So it is with anything or anyone who seemingly prospers a long time by doing evil in this world. God's answer to that prosperity will come, and though the time to that answer may appear to be a long time in coming, it is relatively short in comparison with eternity. Neither does His answer change. Wrongdoers soon fade like the grass and wither like the green herb. It is inevitable. And then there is eternity.

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IN A NUTSHELL

Tidbits relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

Sky's the limit

"I had a teacher who was very rude. She said, 'John, the sky's the limit.' Sure, it sounds nice, but I had just told her I wanted to be an astronaut." – John Ramsey

Sermons and sleep

The life of a missionary brings with it challenges big, small, and even comical. What follows is from Dr. Bredenhof's missionary memoir *The Gospel under the Northern Lights*, which is about his time working among natives in northern BC.

One of the lesser challenges was not having a church nursery at Wit'at Reformed Fellowship. We'd gone through that already with Julie. Now she was okay with sitting in church and we started the process again with Emeline. There were moments that I'd be preaching and Emeline was inconsolable. Rose was trying to keep the two oldest in line and comfort a crying baby. It was impossible for her to do it by herself. One Sunday things were so bad that I took Emeline in my arms and held her against me while I was preaching. There she finally fell asleep. That reminded me of an old ditty by Charles Spurgeon. He said "It is an ill case when the preacher

Leaves his hearers perplex'd -
Twixt the two to determine:
"Watch and pray," says the text,
"Go to sleep," says the sermon.

That was probably the only time I hoped the sound of my words would put someone to sleep.

The Gospel under the Northern Lights can be purchased at lulu.com/spotlight/wesbredenhof.

Questions for young men

A few years back Pastor Douglas Wilson passed along 21 questions he might ask potential suitors for his daughters (though both of them are now married). He noted the questions weren't to be used in a "wooden checklist fashion"; instead he was offering them as a source of inspiration for other fathers.

His list can be divided into five categories. There are questions that address the suitor's:

1. **Spiritual life** – "Do you attend worship every Lord's Day" "When was the last time you read the entire Bible" "Have you ever had a period of spiritual rebellion?"
2. **Relationship with family/parents** – "What is your relationship like with your mom?" "Would you agree that this will likely be the way you will be treating my daughter ten years from now?"
3. **Ability to provide + work/financial goals** – "What are your debts?" "How much did you make last year?" "What do you believe God has called you to do vocationally?" "What steps have you taken to reach that goal?"
4. **Regard for your daughter** – "Describe my daughter to me." "Why do you think you would be a blessing to her?"
5. **Sexual/moral conduct** – "Do you have a problem with pornography?" "Live-in girl friend two years before

you became a Christian? Live-in girl friend six months after you became a Christian?"

His questions are shockingly direct – I think very few Christian young men have had to face such a barrage of questions! But once the shock wears off, the value of each of these pointed queries becomes evident. Do we want to let polite niceties get in the way of properly assessing the measure of a man looking to date our daughter?

The questions can also serve as a wake-up call to young men, whether or not a girl's father is involved. They are questions we can benefit from asking ourselves. When is the last time you've read the entire Bible? Why do you think you will be a blessing to this girl you want to date? Are you a leader ready to be the spiritual guide in your families? Are you a godly man? These are good and necessary questions. And if we don't have good answers for them we need to repent and seek God's help to be the sort of men that godly fathers want for their godly daughters.

To see the whole list, visit Pastor Wilson's blog at 21Questions.notlong.com.

Joke of the month

A man was on trial in the city of Whitehorse, Yukon and facing cross-examination. As the man shifted in his chair the prosecutor leaned in aggressively towards him and demanded: "Where were you on the night of November to April?"

SOURCE: Adapted from a Reader's Digest version, September 2009



Where does productivity come from?

Robinson Crusoe shows our economy is driven by work and sacrifice, not consumption

by *Bojidar Marinov*

Several years ago a newspaper in Eastern Europe asked a socialist economist a question: “Why is it that the same worker works the same number of hours in Eastern Europe and in America but they make an average of \$22/hr in America and only \$1.5/hr in Eastern Europe? Where does the 15-fold difference in productivity come from?”

The goal of the chief editor was to educate his readers with a short, easy to understand and illuminating article. The socialist economist replied with a 25-page essay full of religious . . . er, I mean, “professional” language that no one could understand, including the economist himself.

The chief editor filed the article in the round file, and called me, the Protestant missionary. “Bojidar,” he said, “I need an article. I need it quick, and I need it simple, digestible and informing. Do you have one?” I did. A good Reformed missionary always has a simple, digestible and informing article on every aspect of human life and action. If he doesn’t, he must go to his Reformed heritage. So I went to one of my Puritan ancestors in the faith, Daniel Defoe, and his character Robinson Crusoe.

Sacrificing today, for tomorrow

Imagine Robinson on an uninhabited island. He has one immediate problem to solve: He needs to eat. He may have a few tools from the ship, but none of these tools give him any immediate solution. What gives him a solution are the few trees near the beach with fruits on them. There is a problem though: The trees are tall and

difficult to climb. It takes Robinson one whole day of work to gather only as much fruits as to survive, and then go to sleep at night. He can’t do more than that, unless he wants to go hungry for one day.

Well, one day he has an idea and he decides to go hungry for a half day. He spends that half day making a long 20-foot pole to knock fruit down without having to climb the trees. The next day he tries his new production tool, and finds out that it has doubled his productivity: He can knock down the quantity of fruits needed for his survival in a half day instead of one whole day.

So, our first lesson about increased productivity is: It comes from sacrifice, i.e. from forbearing present consumption plus ideas and work. Increasing productivity always comes at a cost.

Half a day to invest

Now Robinson has several options. He can work a half day, have as much as he had before, and sleep the rest of the day. Or he can work one whole day and double his rations. Or he can work one whole day but eat as much as before, and save the rest—dry it and store it. He decides to take the last option. In a few days he has enough saved to be able to survive a few days without work, so he embarks on a journey to the heart of the island to catch a few wild goats. A

week later he returns with two goats. Now he can gather fodder for them one hour a day, and milk them one hour a day, and have even more food than he had before.

Again, his increased productivity came from sacrificing present consumption and using the saved resources to explore and work.

Investing in an “employee”

Then one day Friday comes, and he is a good fisherman, but he has no boat. That’s not a problem because by now Robinson is productive enough to feed both of them and work with Friday for two weeks to build his boat and make his net. Now, with Friday’s productivity increased, they have enough time to apply themselves to even better use of their time. The effect of the original sacrifice can be multiplied many times over if they keep saving and use the savings in the right way – not for increased consumption but for more work and investment.

There is no other way to become more effective, more productive, and wealthier.



Crusoe investing some of his hard-earned time.

This is how America became what it is today: The fathers of modern Americans sacrificed, saved, and worked, forbearing present consumption and looking to the future. America is rich today because it was founded on that Puritan spirit of self-restraint and work ethic, unknown to most European nations. It is as simple as that.

Forgetting what our fathers knew

The editor liked my article, and by the response from his readers, they liked it too. Within a few weeks from its publication the article was republished on many websites and blogs online. Eastern Europe is learning from our American heritage.

The question is: Is America today learning from her own heritage?

She isn't. For the last century Americans have gradually adopted an economic doctrine completely hostile to the spirit of their Puritan forefathers and to common sense in general: That not sacrifice, but consumption is what produces economic

growth. We think we have found the way to both eat the cake and have it at the same time. If we eat more, buy new cars more often, spend more money on entertainment, these will somehow make us richer and more productive.

Our government is operating under that same doctrine more and more. Government projects for "creating jobs," bailouts, "cash for clunkers" programs, printing more money, encouraging unrestricted expansion of money supply and credit – they are all offshoots of the grand illusion that sacrifice is not needed anymore, that utopia will come from unbridled indulgence.

More consumed, less left to invest

If we look at our example above, this is equivalent to believing that Robinson will become more productive and better off by consuming everything he produced the day before, and even more than that, depleting his stores. Even simple common sense

tells us that production for consumption, and investing for economic growth, are two completely different activities, and they compete for our resources. The more we consume, the less we will have to make our life better in the future. And vice versa, the more we sacrifice and save, the more we will have to invest and make ourselves more productive.

We don't want to sacrifice anymore; we don't want to pay the cost for real economic growth.

We need to go back and learn from the heritage of our forefathers. Our indulgence has cost us much so far, and it will cost us more and more. We need to learn to sacrifice our consumption and save. We have paid exorbitant amounts of money to self-destroy ourselves. It is time to start paying for rebuilding. If other nations are willing to learn from our history, we need to learn from it too.

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Counting the cost

When our governments decide environmental policy
have they really considered the cost to their citizens?

by Margaret Helder

Philosophers have long debated whether governments should consult the interests of concerned citizens before instituting a policy. The famous French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau thought that governments should make decisions on their own and afterwards tell their citizens what is good for them. Thus he declared on the issue of democracy: "Were there a people of gods, their government would be democratic. So perfect a government is not for men."

In addition, on the issue of consulting the interests of the general public (the general will), he declared:

The general will is always upright, but the judgment which guides it is not always enlightened... it [general will] must be shown the good road it is in search of ...

Rousseau obviously was not advocate of democracy. He insisted that the general public needs guidance. Today many environmentalists also declare that the interests of the voting public should not be considered in certain important situations. Like Rousseau, many scientists seek to determine the "good road" that society should follow. The only trouble is that many of the measures these scientists propose are directly contrary to anything the people would choose and, besides this, difficult or impossible to achieve.

Nevertheless, billions of dollars will be spent on many of these measures.

Counting the cost

One might imagine that policies advocated by scientists, and undertaken by governments, would have some basis in reality. Consider, for example, the targets on greenhouse gas emissions mandated by the State of California in 2005. By executive order, these emissions must be reduced by 2050 to only 20 per cent of what they were in 1990 (apparently, similar targets have also been adopted in Europe). California, of course, is not a state like all the others. It is rich and populous, and what it decrees has a major impact on the whole country. But questions have arisen as to whether these massive emissions cuts are even possible.

A committee of the California Council on Science and Technology took two years to review the issue. According to their report, piecemeal reductions (the sort of green measures we now see) are not going to work. Only the complete upheaval of every aspect of life as we know it, will bring about the desired 80 per cent reduction. As one member of the committee declared:

"California can't just spend or deploy its way to an 80 per cent reduction or beyond – and neither can anywhere

else" (*Nature* October 27/11).

Having declared that the mandate is basically impossible, the commentator further insisted: "But we are obliged to try to reach it, and we now know what it will take."

So what will it take? Apparently the following measures would not be enough:

- Replace or refit every building to very high standards
- Double the state's entire generation of electricity
- Simultaneously replace generators with emissions-free types such as nuclear and geothermal where possible
- Buses, trains, cars and some trucks would be electric or hybrid

In addition the energy for ships, planes and big trucks would need to be supplied by biofuels. But the biofuel ethanol does not provide enough power so this requirement would have to be met with advanced biofuels that have yet to be developed. The renewable sources of electricity such as solar and wind are not adequate because they are intermittent and something else has to fill in the gaps.

The upshot is that new technology above and beyond all the above measures is required.

Are Californians and Americans

in general prepared for this kind of economic upheaval? How ethical is it for a government to commit its citizens, by executive order, to such a policy without first considering the implications?

Another reality check

We see the same situation in the issue of targets for biofuels to be blended into petroleum products, which many western governments have mandated. On this issue a report in *Nature* (June 23/11) stated:

[European Union] lawmakers are wrestling with a growing sense that targets have been rushed through without full understanding of the wider impacts on land use and food prices.

Consider the situation in the United States as an example. There and around the world, the main biofuel is ethanol.

Ethanol does not meet the requirements of an ideal fuel. It contains only 70 per cent of the energy of petroleum, and it lacks the power required for heavy trucks and aircraft and ships. Production of this fuel requires major inputs of water and energy (from fossil fuels) such that the greenhouse gas emissions involved in the creation of this biofuel may actually exceed those of the fossil fuels it is meant to replace.

In North America ethanol is primarily derived from corn. Indeed between 2005-2010, the production of corn ethanol tripled so that now more than one third of the US corn crop goes to ethanol (*Nature* July 23/11). If the US Department of Energy's biofuel target for 2030 is met using corn-derived ethanol only,

agricultural water use would increase six times. And the US mandate for biofuel consumption (almost all from corn) grows to 57 billion liters in 2015 from 45 billion in 2010. This rate of increase far exceeds possible increases in yield for corn and will obviously result in a restricted supply of corn for food. (*Nature* July 23/11).

Fuel from straw?

The problems with using corn for ethanol production could be greatly reduced if non-edible parts of plants are used to generate the fuel. Cellulose gives plant material strength and bulk. This compound is made up of chains of sugar molecules, so theoretically it should be possible to ferment these sugars.

However the polymers (chains) of sugar that make up cellulose, are extremely difficult to break apart. Various techniques, currently in preliminary stages of development, may achieve the production of ethanol from waste materials like straw and wood chips. The operative phrase, however, is "preliminary stage."

With a view to solving the problems with ethanol derived from corn, a democratic Congress in 2007 passed (and President Bush signed into law) the Energy Independence and Securities Act, which set the target of 946 million liters of cellulosic ethanol to be produced in 2012.

However now the EPA has reduced these targets to 19-64 million liters or 1/15th to 1/50th of the original target of 946 million liters. The new target for cellulosic biofuels represents 0.006 per cent of the total US refined fuel products. Many may wonder how the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) targets could be so wrong. The fact is that production of cellulosic ethanol is very expensive and not yet commercially available.

The American government tried to kickstart the process with legislation and some money, but it did not work.

Tension

We see in the issue of biofuels the tension that exists between the environmental agenda and the practical interests of the citizens. Some efficient biofuels could potentially compare with fossil fuels in their provision of power. However, the production of such biofuels is still a long way off. In that current biofuels are expensive, lacking in efficiency and may increase greenhouse gas emissions, why are governments promoting their use?

The answer, of course, is that the inefficient biofuels are seen as an essential step towards the better class of biofuels. And the objective to drastically reduce carbon emissions is considered, by many in the scientific community, to trump any other interests whatsoever. However targets which are unrealistic, may not serve the environmentalist agenda or any other agenda.

Oops

According to an editorial in *Nature* (November 3/11): "the Montreal Protocol is a shining example of how to get things done on the environment in the international arena." Spurred by concern that chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) were causing major loss of ozone in Earth's outer atmosphere (important for protecting life from the sun's rays), a number of national governments agreed to phase out the use of the CFCs. These inert gases were important in refrigeration, among other industrial uses. New technology and new gases were required for new refrigerators after 1987. The new machines were bulkier and more expensive, but life continued much as before. The new gases used were hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

It is said that the dangerous chlorine-containing molecules which come from the CFCs, have declined somewhat in the outer atmosphere, but during the spring of 2011, the first ever major reduction of the ozone layer in the Arctic was observed. This was 24 years after the signing of the Montreal Protocol. Scientists suggest that it was unusual extreme cold (-78 degrees C) in the outer atmosphere that caused the ozone to be destroyed. Others admit that

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they have only limited understanding of what is going on in the outer atmosphere in the Arctic (*Nature* October 27/11). At any rate, the surprise appearance of a major loss of ozone so many years after the program to reduce CFCs was begun, does not instill confidence in the science behind the Protocol.

HFCs said to be global warming gas

But there is more bad news from the Montreal Protocol. It now transpires that the HFCs, which replaced the CFCs, are major greenhouse gases. The HFCs do not threaten ozone levels in the outer atmosphere, but they do contribute to global warming. At a November 2011 meeting of government representatives in Bali, Indonesia, convened to review the state of the Protocol, a serious new proposal was placed on the agenda. Some advocated that HFCs be phased out using the same procedures which worked so well in the case of the CFCs. Apparently the objections of China, India and Brazil were enough to block any such action at this time. The fact is that at present there is no realistic alternative to the HFCs for refrigeration. The thinking of most of the national participants was that:

... under Montreal rules, industrialized countries would lead the development of alternative chemicals and phase out the most potent gases..." (Nov. 3/11).

Is it responsible for national governments to commit industry and individuals to seek and pay for technology which does not yet exist? We can be certain that any new chemicals will have environmental

costs, just as the previous compounds have had. There is no solution possible without some negative effects. It behooves governments to count the costs of any new measures which they mandate.

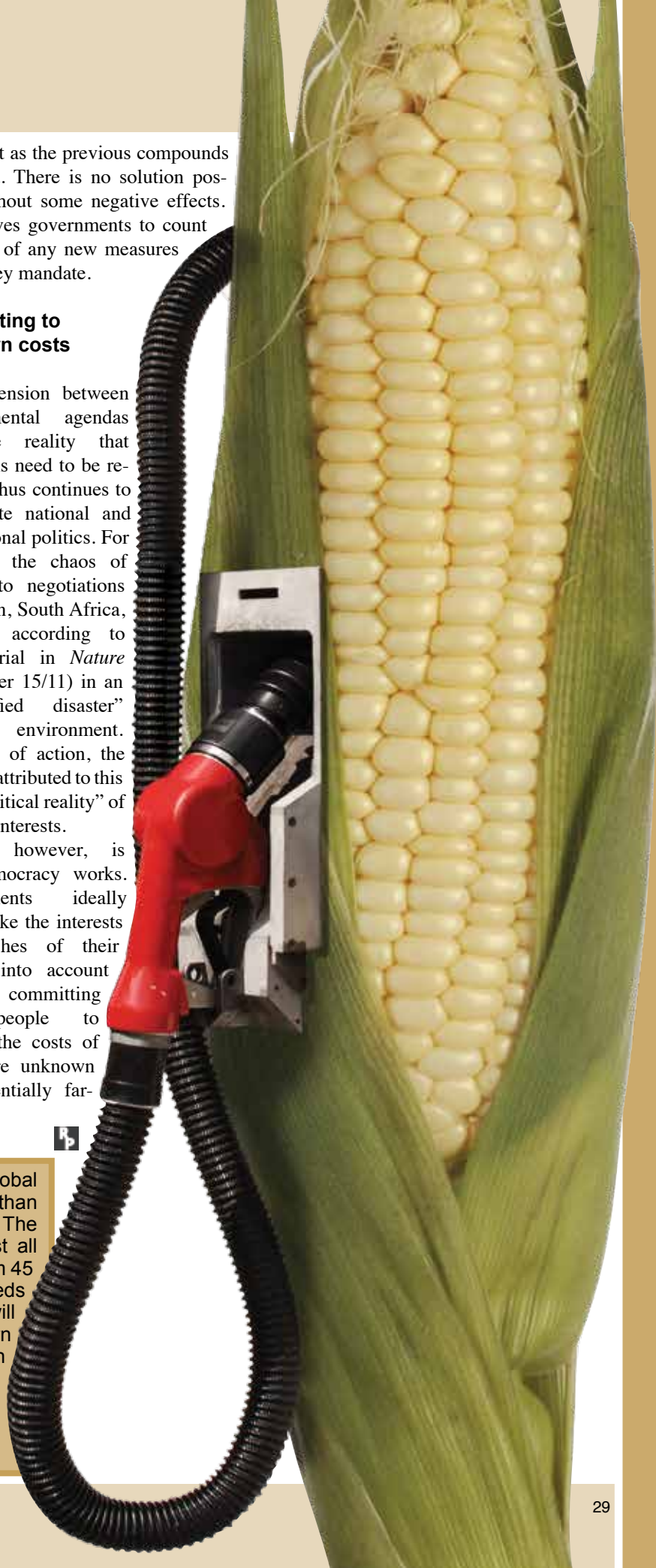
Committing to unknown costs

The tension between environmental agendas and the reality that politicians need to be re-elected, thus continues to complicate national and international politics. For example, the chaos of the Kyoto negotiations in Durban, South Africa, resulted, according to an editorial in *Nature* (December 15/11) in an "unqualified disaster" for the environment. The lack of action, the editorial attributed to this "ugly political reality" of national interests.

This, however, is how democracy works. Governments ideally should take the interests and wishes of their citizens into account before committing their people to actions, the costs of which are unknown and potentially far-reaching.



USING FOOD FOR FUEL? To fight global warming, we are turning food into fuel. More than one third of the US corn crop goes to ethanol. The US mandate for biofuel consumption (almost all from corn) grows to 57 billion liters in 2015 from 45 billion in 2010. This rate of increase far exceeds possible increases in yield for corn and will obviously result in a restricted supply of corn for food. We've already seen this happen - in late January corn futures closed at \$6.115 a bushel on the Chicago Board of Trade what was almost triple the \$2.1175 a bushel for the grain a decade ago.



Has university education become an idol?

by Sharon Bratcher

Is it possible that we think a little too highly of University? Consider these five scenarios (names have been changed).

Books instead of...

- Brad, a 26-year-old acquaintance of mine, died recently. In lieu of flowers, the family asked people to contribute to the scholarship fund of Brad's soon-to-be-born son. To my surprise, they literally meant "university scholarship fund" and not money that would help the fiancée (who had lost her main source of income) to raise the boy.
- Several movies have suggested that "17-year-old Jenny" who has impressive plans for her university should either abort her child or give him up for adoption rather than hinder those plans.
- A Christian couple named Selma and George would like to have more than two wonderful children, but they cannot fathom how they will raise enough money for their university educations.
- Patti and Jed were firmly in love in high school, and wished to marry immediately. Though they had jobs, everyone discouraged them saying that they should go to university first. One might say that by trying to avoid economic difficulties, they signed up for four years of fighting off sexual temptation instead.
- Most Christian school curriculums, as well as secular ones, focus almost entirely on university preparation. While this has merit, practical life skills are greatly ignored. Parents put pressure on our children to qualify for scholarship money. Also, recent statistics cited by Mike Rowe (of the television show *Dirty Jobs*) state that our countries are in great need of more skilled trades people.

Each of these scenarios involves thinking of university education as a necessity, for which much should be sacrificed. In our culture, even among Christians, this viewpoint is held in such reverence as to be nearly indisputable.

There are benefits that can come from a university education. We need Christian nurses, lawyers, teachers, politicians, businessmen, engineers and social workers. But we also need plumbers, electricians, car salesmen, bank tellers, retail associates, and administrative assistants.

At what cost?

Let's analyze exactly what university is and what it provides. Yes, it may train people for higher-paying careers. But many students study whatever they feel attracted to, and later learn that it brings them no higher pay than if they hadn't gone. Add to this the sometimes enormous expense that commonly leaves students with \$30,000-80,000 indebtedness to haunt them for over a decade. This is not very conducive to providing for a family and participating in one's church.

Consider the value system as well. In community colleges and secular universities, there is an overwhelmingly ungodly philosophy. Students are encouraged to throw off the shackles of childhood religion and decide not just "what" but "who" they want to become. This similitude of "fairness" and "diversity" is a thin disguise for relative truth which teaches that all viewpoints and actions are allowable if they do not harm one's neighbor. The professor's goal is to gently lure impressionable late teens into their "non-conformist" conformity.

Living on campus for the "full college experience" presents difficulties as well. Temptations abound to skip church, engage in binge drinking, drug usage, or non-married sexual activity. Campuses

overflow with strong anti-Christian rhetoric, skillfully presented as "the knowledgeable" informing the ignorant.

Consider this: if the goal is a well-rounded education, it can be gained by reading books from the library on any number of topics, and by learning through mentors. A writer learns best by writing, and writing some more, and getting advice and suggestions from others. While it is helpful for a businessman to study accounting and marketing, he might get by with QuickBooks software, some good books and direct learning from experienced people. One does not need to purchase classes in order to do these things.

Worth sacrificing?

And then there are the 5 examples we started with, of what people sacrificed to get into university. Brad's family ignored the needs of the child's first 18 years. Jenny gave up a *child* in order to sit in classrooms, take final exams, work and then maybe someday get married and oh, yes, raise a child. She sacrificed a *child* for a diploma.

Selma and George are denying themselves some of God's greatest blessings. Patti and Jed are being forced to believe that one must wait until age 22 to marry and raise children. It's not young age that kills marriages; it's selfishness and the lack of responsibility and commitment.

The curriculum committee is so concerned with proudly showing their how-many-went-to-university statistics that they ignore practical subjects such as budgeting, job and apartment searching, homemaking, house and car maintenance, business terms and ethics, church history and the deeper study of God's Word. Some say all of those should be taught at home. Good idea, but are they?

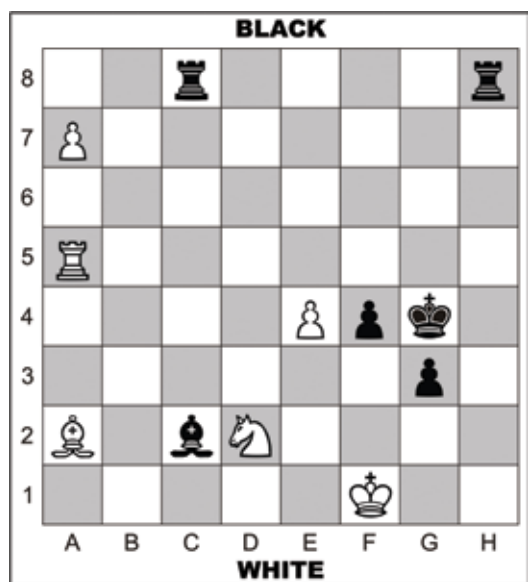
University is for some, but definitely not for everyone. Let's take care not to glorify it into something that it is not.



ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

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CHESS PUZZLE # 185



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

NEW PUZZLES

Riddle for Punsters #185 – “Plentiful Pre-nuptial Planning”

When Jasmine became engaged, she needed to find out which stores she should go to look for a suitable wedding gown, so she asked her sister to ad _____ the problem. She needed to know who to invite to the wedding, so she en _____ ed her mother’s help. She needed to decide which dainties to serve at the reception, so Jasmine asked her food-knowledgeable cousin to give a _____ choosing some finger foods.

Problem to Ponder #185 – “Aquarium Arithmetic”

On Tuesday Stephanie had ten more goldfish than Betty who had five fewer fish than Gregory. On Wednesday each of them bought two more fish. Betty now has half as many goldfish as Gregory while Stephanie has three times as many goldfish as Betty and there are now a total of thirty goldfish. How many goldfish did each person have on Tuesday?

SOLUTIONS TO THE JANUARY PUZZLE PAGE

Answers to Riddles for Punsters #184 – “HO, Ho! Oh, No!”

When Santa was told that Dancer was too sick to help pull his sleigh, Santa sent a get well card which said: I h e r d that you are sick. We will miss you d e r l y! Take some B u c k l e y’s cough syrup and get lots of sleep. The distance you have already pulled my sleigh through the years is s t a g g e r i n g.

Answers to Problem to Ponder #184 – “Winter Transportation”

snowmobile skis
snowplough toboggan
snowshoes ski lift
snowboard dogsled
sleigh ride



SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 184

WHITE to Mate in 2

Descriptive Notation
1. Bf7-e6 + Kd7-c7
2. N-K8 mate
OR
2. N-N5 mate

Algebraic Notation
1. Bf7-e6 + Kd7-c7
2. Nd6-e8 ++
OR
2. Nd6-b5 ++

BLACK to Mate in 2

Descriptive Notation
1. ----- R-R8 ch



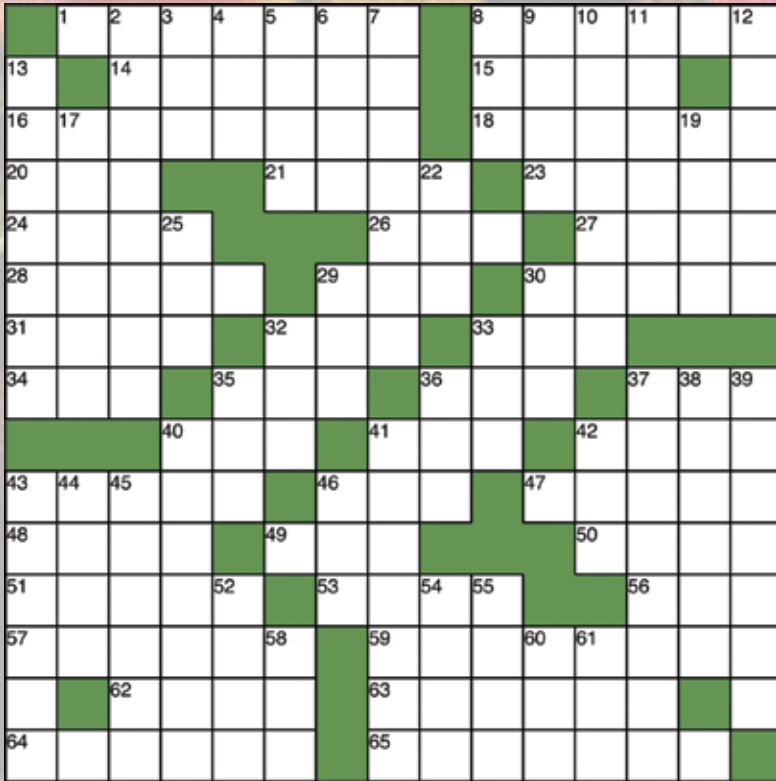
2. K-N2 R/R1-R7 mate

Algebraic Notation
1. ----- Rh5-h1 +
2. Kg1-g2 Rh8-h2 ++

Crossword Puzzle

Series 18 No 11

Last Month's solution
Series 18 No 10



ACROSS:

1. A weapon for shooting
8. Southern nuts
14. Male name, meaning "north town"
15. Repetition of sound
16. Ronald's last name, home of golden arches?
18. Makes a wee bird sound
20. Before, poetically speaking
21. Famous Canadian bird
23. Group of eight
24. Steals
26. Pale
27. Hearty's partner
28. Bury
29. Exclamation
30. A mean grasping person
31. Curvy letters of the alphabet
32. A shepherd's cudgel
33. Affirmative answer
34. Autistic-spectrum disorder
35. Cooking implement
36. Up to a particular time
37. First aid movement
40. Exist
41. Electrically charged atom
42. Seed of a vetch
43. Type of seafood
46. Big bird
47. Clan emblem
48. First-class, excellent
49. White, in prescriptions
50. Tabula ____
51. Unite by winding together
53. Benevolent
56. Center, for short
57. Fish with suckers
59. Pole with a hook at one end
62. Love, in Latin
63. Regard with respect
64. Quiet
65. Electronically produced echo effects

DOWN:

2. Obligated for favors received
3. Sault Ste. Marie, for short
4. State Registered Nurse (abbr.)
5. Italy for short
6. Member of the Yi people of China
7. Provided with a source of income
8. A pectoral muscle, for short
9. #15 across, #15 across
10. Pretentious people
11. Main trunks of the arterial system
12. Sibling
13. Continent, of a certain direction possibly
17. Withered old witch-like women
19. Famous soccer player
22. Negative answer, of old
25. Socioeconomic status, (abbr.)
29. Not lukewarm
30. Was introduced to
32. Fish eggs
33. Yearning
35. As needed, in prescriptions
36. Not me
37. Underground cemetery
38. Magical exclamation
39. Brief statements
40. Extraordinary, inspiring awe
41. One who consumes by drinking
42. Rocky pinnacle
43. A Greek seaport
44. English poet laureate, died 1718
45. Farm resident
46. Big hoofed animal
52. Comb. Form, extracted from electron
54. Face part
55. Digitally assisted television, for short
58. A form of entertainment
60. Golf accessory
61. Not him

Joyce