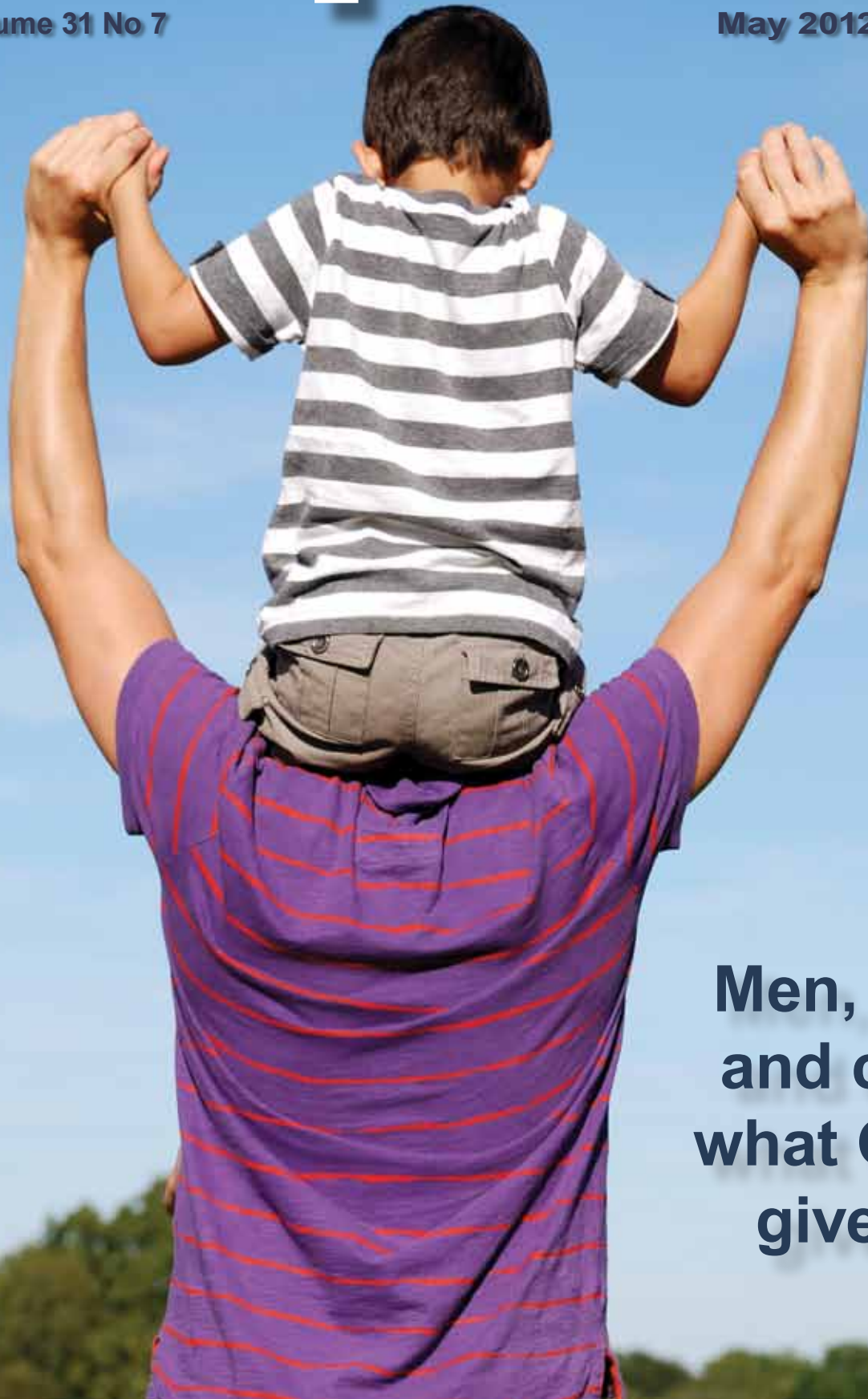


REFORMED
Perspective

**A MAGAZINE
FOR THE
CHRISTIAN
FAMILY**

Volume 31 No 7

May 2012



**Men, protect
and care for
what God has
given you**

Little white lies and why we tell them

Jon Dykstra

Your wife discovers some flowers in the kitchen and thanks you with a hug and a big kiss for “such a thoughtful surprise!” You bought the flowers for your secretary in honor of “Secretary’s Day” at the office. You can either take the credit for thoughtfully buying your wife flowers or you can tell your wife that they weren’t intended for her. Do you tell her the truth, yes or no?

This question was part of a very odd but interesting game – to win it you had to successfully predict what your friends would do in different moral dilemmas. Almost everyone in the room (both the men and women) thought in this case a little white lie would be the best idea.

But the question was directed at Glenn, and he thought differently. Lying to his wife wasn’t an option to him; this was his most important earthly relationship, so marring it with dishonesty seemed silly to him. Yes, when he told her the truth his wife wouldn’t be as happy with him at that moment. However, if she knew she could count on him to always be honest, even in the small things, then she would know she could count on him in the big things, too, and wouldn’t that benefit his marriage far more than a little extra undeserved credit he might get from saying the flowers were for her?

A more realistic test

When Christians debate the issue of lying, it’s most often in the context of whether we should always tell the truth – should we, for example, tell the truth if Nazis come to the door and ask us if we are hiding Jews?

But in her book *Anatomy of a Lie*, Diane Komp notes that very few Christians are confronted with this sort of extreme situation – few of us are ever faced with a circumstance in which telling the truth might put someone else’s life in jeopardy.

Instead, she notes, we lie for far more trivial reasons: it just seems easier. Telephone solicitors get the “we can’t talk right now” response, whether we can or not; the waitress asking “How are you?” is given a “good,” whether we are or not; children who want to play with

Mom or Dad are told “later,” whether there will be time then or not. We lie because it seems the quicker thing to do, because the “half-truths” we’re telling seem harmless enough, and because we doubt the sincerity of the people around us (“He can’t really want to know how I’m doing, can he?”). And eventually we’re lying simply because we’ve gotten into the habit. Then we do it so often we don’t even notice ourselves at it anymore.

The scariest part of Komp’s book was the chapter in which she suggested the reader, over the space of a few days or weeks, record “every time you lie, or are tempted to, and ask yourself the question ‘why?’” Try this, and I guarantee you’ll be startled by how often you “stretch” the truth for no reason at all – it’s something we do without thinking.

Of course, not all lies are motivated only by habit. We also lie to protect ourselves, to either cover up something we’ve done or failed to do. Would the husband at the beginning of this article feel any temptation to lie if he regularly remembered to get his wife flowers? Of course not; then it would be only a minor thing to tell his spouse that this time these flowers were for someone else. But because he’s neglected his wife for so long there is now a temptation in these circumstances to take credit for thoughtfulness the husband hasn’t had for his wife for quite some time.

Harmless?

So the more important issue is not whether it is right to lie to Nazis at the door – that’s an irrelevant issue for us – but rather whether it’s right to “stretch the truth” again and again.

The Bible is, of course, quite clear about the need for honesty and the value of truth in our day-to-day lives (Col 3:9, Lev. 19:11-12). We find that the very character of God prevents Him from ever lying (Num 23:19), and indeed Christ is so inseparable from honesty He is called “the truth” (John 14:6). So if we want to imitate Him then we, too, should be concerned about honesty.

Still there is a temptation to dismiss the “little lies” we tell as harmless.

So let’s consider some everyday examples: how

many parents make a habit out of lying to their kids, making promises they can't keep and making threats they don't carry out? When a parent's "no" doesn't really mean "no," how can they be surprised when their children don't accept that as the final word? Experience has taught these kids that Mom and Dad's "no's" are at best half-truths, because half the time a bit more badgering will result in a favorable "yes."

And how many wives can expect an honest answer from their husband when they want his opinion on a new dress. It's become almost a game for some, ferreting out the truth – in some cases experience has taught the wife that when she wants an honest answer from her husband it's best to look at his eyes rather than rely on the words that come from his mouth. She has to look to his body language for an honest reaction because she can't count on it verbally. So when he tells her she looks beautiful she's never quite sure if that's what he really thinks because that's what he says all the time. This husband will find it hard to offer his wife any encouragement because even his genuine efforts will be met with skepticism.

These are just the effects that are most evident. In some circumstance we may not be able to deduce the harm caused by a bit of deception – who gets hurt when we lie to a telephone solicitor? – but perhaps the harm comes simply from the fact that if we are not habitually honest we all too easily become habitually deceptive. And sin, even small sins, separate us from God (and would do so permanently but for the grace of God), so we should never dismiss any sin as inconsequential.

The first step to a more honest life is to start off by keeping track of your deceptive impulses. Give it a try and do as Komp suggests, even if only for a day: record every time you lie, or are tempted to lie, and ask yourself "why?" Then, when you become more aware of your sin, and the misery you may be causing, you can go to God in prayer and ask him for forgiveness, more aware than before about your desperate need for it.

And then, after that, maybe you can think of your wife and go buy her some flowers.



What's Inside

Let's begin with the cover article, which is a pointed, sobering and even scary look at how damage is done by **Careless men**. This isn't about violent or abusive men; it isn't about the good-for-nothing husband, or workaholic, always-absent father. No, it's about men we know, men we might be, who are quite ordinary and average... and careless with what God has entrusted to them.

It is important to note that the title of Jerry Johnson's contribution, **Why we are not conservative**, should not be read to say "Why we are not Conservative" – the author is not thinking here of Prime Minister Harper's party. Or, at least, he isn't thinking of it specifically.

John Piper weighs in with the provocatively titled **Christian Hedonism**. What a mismatched pairing of words! After all, hedonism is the pursuit of pleasure, while Christianity is the pursuit of God! Piper links the two words to combat the influence of Immanuel Kant who viewed an act as good only if pleasure wasn't an intended goal. Or to put it another way, according to Kant good could only be done out of dry, dusty *duty*. This is horribly wrong, and Piper wants us to remember that God repeatedly sets before us the prospect of pleasures to come, if we seek after Him. So we can seek pleasure in pursuing Him. In fact, we are called to seek our pleasure in Him! This is an important article that deserves a careful, charitable read - as Piper begins: "If you must, forgive me for the label. But don't miss the truth because you don't like my tag."

Finally, we review two more documentaries by our Reformed filmmaker, Colin Gunn (producer of *IndocriNation*, featured last month). **Captivated** is the meatier of the two, and should probably be digested in a couple of sittings, while the shorter **Act Like Men** is ideal for fathers to watch with their boys.



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AFTER EDEN

by Dan Lietha



When creationists have birthdays.

REFORMED Perspective

www.reformedperspective.ca

Published monthly by the Foundation for the publication of a Reformed Social-Political Magazine (Reformed Perspective Foundation).

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Canadian Funds – 1 year \$50.00, 2 years \$93.00, 3 years \$137.00*

Canada Airmail \$73.00,* U.S. Airmail (U.S. Funds) \$80.00

U.S. Funds – 1 year \$55.00, 2 years \$100.00, 3 years \$145.00,

International Surface Mail \$69.00 (2 years \$125.00, 3 years \$184.00)

International Airmail \$115.00 *including 5% G.S.T. – G.S.T. No. R118929272RT

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Canada Periodical Fund (CPF), for our publishing activities.



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Registration: ISSN 0714-8208

Charitable Organization under Canada Income Tax Act

Registration No. 18929272RR0001

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Nota Bene

News worth noting



New pro-life campaign launches

by Mike Schouten

In Canada, pre-born children have no recognition under the law but a new effort is underway to change that. On May 1st WeNeedALaw.ca was launched to build support for federal abortion legislation. Canadians who come to the site will be presented with various tools enabling them to get involved. With the website's Simple Mail technology, you will be able to tell your MP in a matter of seconds why you believe Canada needs a law.

Momentum is building, and many Canadians, including mainstream journalists, are openly asking why we don't have an abortion law.



Current developments, such as Member of Parliament Stephen Woodworth's Motion 312 (the definition of a human being), and the revelation that sex-selective abortions do happen in Canada, have made it clear that there is a shift in Canadian's attitude toward the status quo. Pro-choice rhetoric we've become accustomed to is simply breaking down in the face of the facts.

It's time to act! Canada needs a law, and Canadians want one! Check out the website WeNeedALaw.ca and add your name to the list, and utilize the tools to get the message out.

weneedaLAW.ca

Canada's hidden abortion stats

by Anna Nienhuis

If you look only at the numbers reported, it appears Canada's abortion rate is on the steep decline – there were 100,039 reported in 2004, but the figure released last month shows only 64,641, or almost 40% less. That would be great news except that the drop is due not to less abortions but to less reporting of them. Private clinics in Canada are not required to report the number of abortions they perform, and most of them don't, or vastly under report. Whole provinces are also exempt from reporting, including Quebec (which reported nearly 30,000 in 2004 and reported zero in 2010) and British Columbia.

Despite the shoddy reporting systems, Canadians continue to fund abortions. Shouldn't all Canadians care to have accurate information on where their money is going, including exactly how many abortions are being performed?

SOURCE: Natalie Hudson Sonnen's "Canada hides from its embarrassing abortion statistics"; fullcomment.nationpost.com; April 26, 2012

Whatcott wins right to freedom of expression

by Anna Nienhuis

In April, Bill Whatcott won the court battle surrounding his right to distribute a pamphlet that addressed the "harmful consequences" of homosexuality, and which prompted his arrest in 2008 by campus security at the University of Calgary. Whatcott also won a previous appeal in 2010 that allowed him to publicly criticize homosexuality.

While one may disagree with Whatcott's approach and generally aggressive attitude, this victory is a significant one for Christians and all Canadians who fear being unable to speak their mind or share their views without fear of reprisal. (For more on Bill Whatcott, see the Nov. 2011 issue.)

Source: Thaddeus Baklinski's "Alberta judge upholds 'truth about homosexuality' activist's free speech rights"; April 2, 2012.

Miss Universe contest no longer requires that contestants be Misses

by Anna Nienhuis and Jon Dykstra

After being disqualified from the Miss Universe Canada pageant for not being a “naturally born female,” Jenna Talackova’s case has led to a change for the entire Miss Universe pageant. Talackova has been re-allowed into the competition, and the rules are being officially rewritten to allow transgender “women” to enter as of 2013.

Controversy is nothing new for the Miss Universe pageant, though it usually concerns the event’s sexism. For example, in the 2010 the Miss Universe pageant decided to give contestants the option of posing topless – three chose to

do so. And in 2009 one of the finalists had a body mass index that, by World Health Organization standards, would classify her as malnourished – she was 5’11 but weighed only 105 pounds. And, of course, every year contestants are judged on the basis of how they look in a bikini.

Ironic, then, that an event so focused on the objectification of women’s bodies is now allowing men such as Jenna Talackova to compete. This may well take the lustful fun out of it for millions of male viewers.

Source: Jill Serjeant’s “Transgender beauty queen Jenna Talackova controversy spurs landmark Miss Universe rule change”; vancouver.sun.com, April 11, 2012



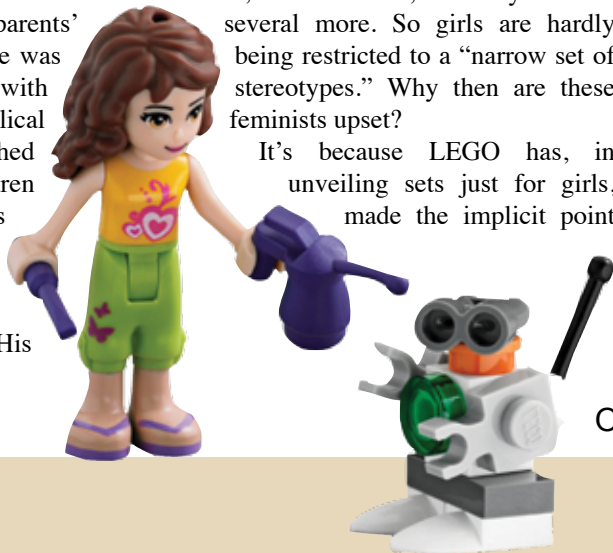
Have kids, live longer

by Neil Dykstra

A recent study in the *Journal of Age and Ageing* by a research team in Australia found a correlation between a woman’s longevity and the number of children she gives birth to. Specifically, the study found that as a woman has more children she will be less likely to suffer from respiratory illnesses and cancer later in life.

The study also concluded that men are likewise less prone to an early death if they have more children, but the statistical significance wasn’t as strong as it was for women.

In today’s post-Christian society, children are often seen as a duty and a liability. Myths abound, even among the scientific profession, about the ill effects of children on their parents’ health. Yet our human frame was designed by our Creator with children in mind. Back in biblical times it was an entrenched social norm that children were in and of themselves a blessing (Ps 127:3, Jn 16:21) and longevity is just one of the many collateral blessings that come with His gift of children.



LEGO controversy highlights feminists’ faulty basis for equality

by Jon Dykstra

Last December LEGO came out with a line of toys that were more anatomically correct (less blocky, and with slight curves) than the traditional LEGO people, and designed for girls. But these new “Ladyfigs” prompted one feminist group to accuse LEGO of feeding girls a “narrow set of stereotypes.” SPARKS Movement spokeswoman Dana Edell said that according to LEGO “girls aren’t building space shuttles, they’re getting their nails done.”

But was this a fair accusation? The LEGO girl sets did include a beauty parlor, but also a bakery, a robot-building lab, a clothing design studio, an American Idol-type stage, a farm tractor, a coffee house, a kitchen set, a family set and several more. So girls are hardly being restricted to a “narrow set of stereotypes.” Why then are these feminists upset?

It’s because LEGO has, in unveiling sets just for girls, made the implicit point

that girls and boys are different, and that, to the SPARKS Movement and to many other feminists, is unforgivable. The girls’ sets involve lots of options, but none of those options include aliens, or knights, or pirates, because those are things that few girls are interested in – those are “boy toys.” That there are such things as boy toys and girl toys is not a reality that feminists want to acknowledge (SPARKS started a “Toy Aisle Action Project” to get stores to stop having separate boys’ and girls’ toy aisles). They are touchy about acknowledging gender differences because they don’t acknowledge God. They therefore can’t use the Christian basis for male and female equality (that we are all made in God’s image) and instead have to find their basis for equality elsewhere. What they have turned to is pretending we are equal because we are indistinguishable; we are equal because we are the same. Therefore anytime that this is shown to be untrue (as in this LEGO episode) feminists can get quite annoyed because, in their worldview, acknowledging gender differences attacks their only basis for women’s equality.

One of LEGO’s new “Ladyfigs”

Why we are not conservatives

Our lines aren't drawn in the sand

by Jerry Johnson

A few months ago I was sitting on my front porch overlooking the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains of Southwest Virginia. I was reading selections from God's Word and considering some of the political issues of our day when a thought hit me: "Why does it appear as if conservatives never seem to conserve anything?"

A few days later I got a call from an old friend, and I was sharing my thoughts with him. He told me that I sounded like Robert Lewis Dabney, the great Southern Presbyterian scholar, and he encouraged me to look up an article Dabney had written over 130 years ago. I eventually found the article and was shocked by what I read. I am going to include part of that article for you here, but please be advised that I have changed a few of the words so that his message will be applicable today in the light of issues that currently confront twenty-first century Christians. Dabney wrote,

It may be inferred again that the present movement for [Homosexual Marriage] will certainly prevail from the history of its only opponent...conservatism. This is a party which never conserves anything. Its history has been that it demurs to each aggression of the progressive party, and aims to save its credit by a respectable amount of growling, but always acquiesces at last in the innovation. What was the resisted novelty of yesterday is today one of the accepted principles of conservatism; it

is now conservative only in affecting to resist the next innovation, which will tomorrow be forced upon its timidity and will be succeeded by some third revolution, to be denounced and then adopted in its turn.

Conservatism is merely the shadow that follows [Liberalism] as it moves forward towards perdition. It remains behind it, but never retards it, and always advances near its leader. This pretended salt utterly lost its savor... It is worthless because it is the conservatism of expediency only, and not of sturdy principle. It intends to risk nothing serious for the sake of the truth, and has no idea of being guilty of the folly of martyrdom. It always, when about to enter a protest, very blandly informs the wild beast, whose path it essays to stop, that its "bark is worse than its bite," and that it only means to save its manners by enacting its decent role of resistance.

The only practical purpose which it now subserves in politics is to give enough exercise to [Liberalism] to keep it "in wind," and to prevent its becoming puffy and lazy from having nothing to whip. No doubt, after a few years, when [Homosexual Marriage] shall have become an accomplished fact, conservatism will tacitly admit it into its creed, and thenceforward plume itself upon its wise firmness in opposing with similar weapons the extreme of [pedophilia]; and when

that too shall have been won, it will be heard declaring that the integrity of the Constitution requires at least the refusal of [bestiality]. There it will assume, with great dignity, its final position.

Well, was Dabney ever correct! Does history bear out his observations about so-called conservatism? Do Conservatives ever really conserve anything? In the end, the position they stand against now will ultimately become their cherished scrimmage line from which they will vilify all who dare to cross it.

Without a reliable epistemology – a reliable means of determining what is true and right – one is left with no standard. And whenever a movement's core beliefs become mere tradition, the core beliefs are soon forgot.

So we must remember, brothers, that we are not traditionalists, and certainly not conservatives. We are Christians, and we stand where we do, unmovable, because God said it, and, my friends, that settles it!

Jerry Johnson is the president of NiceneCouncil.com and this is adapted from an episode of Against the World, titled "Why We Were Wrong about Homosexuality!" which has been printed here with permission. You can find this episode, and many others at AgainsttheWorld.tv.



Coming for the kids

Sowing gender confusion in malleable minds

by Bert Witvoet

Public schools in the Toronto area have to follow the curriculum set by the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) for its 600 schools. That in itself is not unusual or bad. What should give us cause for concern, however, is the kind of human rights education to which young and impressionable children are exposed. All schools must follow the course prescriptions for Kindergarten through Grade Three that include the indoctrination called LGBTQ – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual/two-spirited, queer issues.

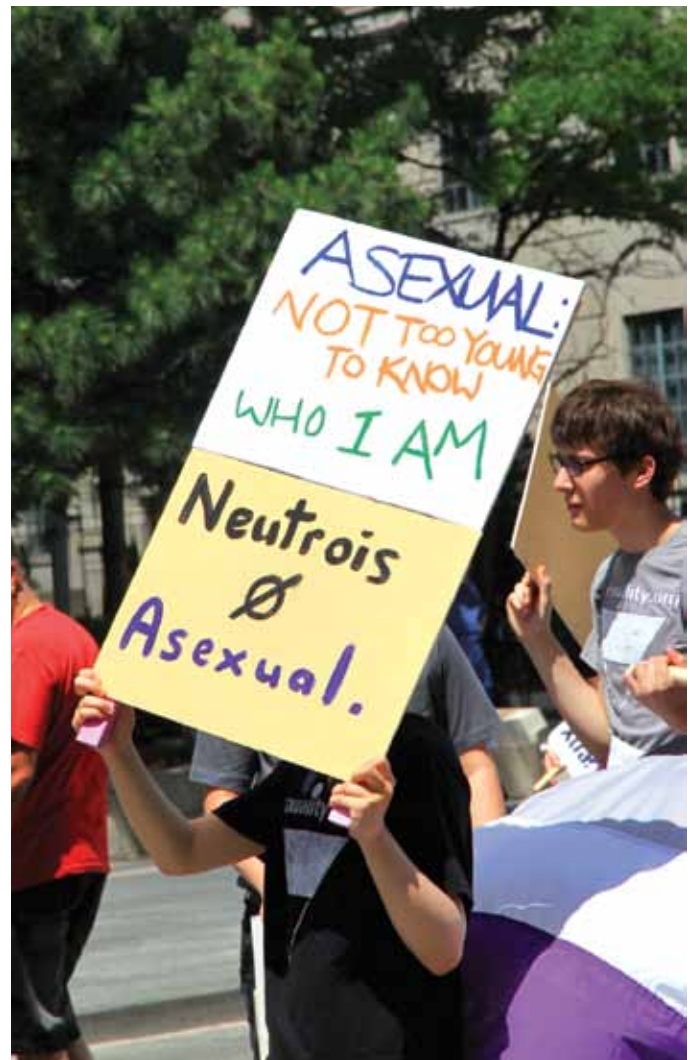
Forced compliance

During their human rights classes, young children are encouraged to question their own gender and sexuality. They are asked to role-play opposite roles – boys play girls and girls play boys. Teachers are asked to read some traditional folk tales and fairy tales with the class and have students write or illustrate their own “gender bending” versions of these tales (Snow White falling in love with Cinderella?). Teachers are instructed to read from *Gloria goes to Gay Pride*. If this storybook is not available, they are to cut out a photo from a newspaper or magazine of the Pride Parade, where all the LGBTQ sexual expressions are celebrated. In addition, these 4- to 9-year-old students are asked to discuss the significance of Toronto’s annual Pride Week celebrations. One can guess what kind of opinions are considered acceptable and what

kind are deemed unacceptable.

Students are then asked to make posters for the Toronto District School Board float and/or school bus that are in the Pride Parade. In addition, students can organize their own Pride Parade in their school. One wonders how much nudity will be allowed to do justice to the theme.

Can a parent seek to have their child excused from these kinds of lessons? The answer is a firm NO. Can teachers be excused from teaching it if their conscience won’t allow them? NO. “Teachers are obligated to address all equity issues. Any omissions that maintain a non-inclusive curriculum and pedagogy are considered to foster a poisoned environment” (quoted from the TDSB curriculum guidelines).



SO CONFUSED: This poor teen (as spotted at the 2011 Toronto Gay Pride Parade) has been told that his lack of interest in the other sex (or the same sex) means he must be asexual. ValeStock / Shutterstock.com

Sinister aim

Some understanding soul may argue that the purpose of this curriculum is to break down the walls of suspicion and hostility between those who are straight and those who are not. Surely that must be seen as a noble and generous goal. That may indeed be the case at one level of the issue. Nobody, least of all a Christian, wants to build walls of suspicion and hostility between people.

But where the issue becomes

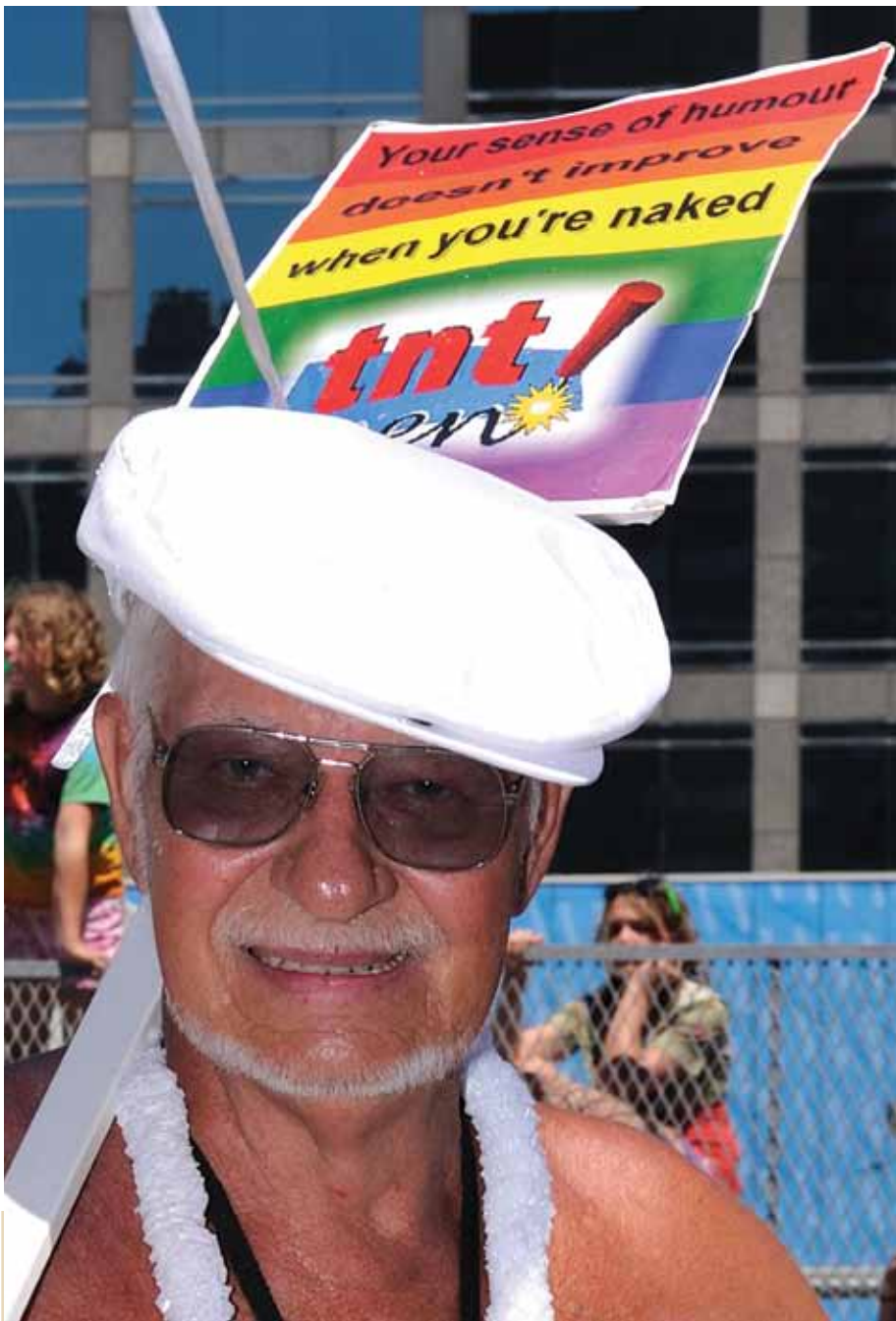
oppressive is at a deeper level of spiritual and moral development. Nobody has the right to impose normative expectations on a child without the approval of its parents.

This, of course, is the conundrum for public education in a pluralistic society. The public school cannot represent the public in spite of its lofty goals as expressed on the Toronto District School Board website: “*Our Trustees ... are advocates for education and are the voice of the public, ensuring all concerns are addressed.*” If you seriously weigh the

validity of such a claim, you realize that it lacks integrity: “The voice of the public”? Who is the public? “Ensuring all concerns are addressed”? What is *that* supposed to mean?

But the most serious objection many will have is that to break down the walls of hostility you have to buy into the worldview of those who consider every possible sexual preference to be a positive expression of self or of love. In Toronto it’s educational peace on terms set by Gay Pride ... or graduation based on a contract signed LGBTQ.

SO PERVERSE: This man was among several completely naked participants in the 2010 Toronto Gap Pride Parade. The TDSB wants students to help create a float for this parade. Zoran Karapancev / Shutterstock.com



Ominous indicators

The harsh irony of this exclusive inclusivity seems to escape the leading lights at the Toronto public school system. The question for other school jurisdictions is, how far are we from seeing this kind of curriculum being imposed on all public schools in the country? And how far are we from seeing alternative schools being forbidden to teach their own curricular version of human rights and gender education?

In Quebec, for example, all schooling – public, private, home schooling – must teach the ethics and religion course as spelled out by the ministry of education. (Quebec’s Ethics and Religious Culture program became mandatory for schools in May 2008.) And throughout Canada, Christian higher institutions are already feeling the pinch of non-recognition by their secular peers because of the former’s view of what constitutes inappropriate sexual behavior.

So how far are Canadian schools from being squeezed into teaching concepts their teachers and parents reject from out of their faith and worldview? The answer, my friends, is blowing in the blustery winds that emanate from 5050 Yonge Street in Toronto, where Canada’s largest school board, and the fourth largest board in North America, legislates what attitudes toward gender issues 250,000 students need to adopt in their formative years.

This is from the April 23, 2012 issue of Christian Courier and is reprinted here with the permission of the author.



When in Rome

A dialogue on adaptation

by Jay Adams

When St. Augustine's mother, Monica, asked Ambrose, "At Rome they fast on Saturday, but not at Milan; which practice ought to be observed?" Ambrose replied, "When in Milan, I do as they do at Milan; but when I go to Rome, I do as Rome does" (Epistle 36). It's all too easy to follow Ambrose's advice, isn't it?

But Paul did that, didn't he? He said he'd become "all things to all people," that he might win some.

Ah! You know about his words in 1 Corinthians 9:19! But they are often misunderstood and therefore misapplied.

How so? They seem plain enough.

Yes, at first sight you might conclude so. But he also said some other things . . .

Like what?

Like, "Come out from their midst and be separate, says the Lord, and don't touch the unclean thing" (2 Corinthians 6:17).

Oh! I guess he did say that, too. Did he contradict himself?

Certainly not.

Then, how do you explain the relationship of the two verses to one another?

The difference is this: when Paul said he would adapt to Jews or Gentiles, he was saying he was willing to adapt, regardless of what inconveniences it might mean to him, personally. He would even become a "slave" to them to do so! But he would not adapt his message, or any of his personal practices, in a way that would contradict what he was preaching. He would endure any disadvantages that proper adaptation would mean to him, but he would engage in nothing that could alter the message. He could take it on the chin, but the message must never do so! In 2 Corinthians 6 he is urging Christians to completely

abandon heathen temple worship, and such partnership with unbelievers that would involve Christians in paganism of any sort.

So, I can adapt to all kinds of disadvantages personally to witness to unbelievers, so long as that doesn't mean participating in things that are abhorrent to God?

You've got it! For instance, you may want to win a Roman Catholic to Christ, and you may have to spend time and money in doing so, but you can't participate in a mass with him, because Jesus was sacrificed once for all on the cross, and doesn't need to be sacrificed (in what Romanists call an "unbloody sacrifice") again in the mass. It is a travesty to have anything to do with it. Christ's work on the cross was all-sufficient!

So, I can take time out of a busy schedule, travel at my own expense, do whatever might inconvenience me, to win my Roman Catholic relative to Christ, but I can't participate with him in anything that would contradict the Scripture's teaching about the Gospel.

Good! I couldn't have said it any better myself!

Jay Adams is the father of modern biblical counseling, the Martin Luther of this reformation. His article is reprinted with permission from his blog nouthetic.org/blog.



Common Grace and Grace

by Christine Farenhorst

There has been, during the last number of years, a great deterioration of relationships between Israel and Turkey: their economic relations have decreased, any military collaboration has been suspended, tourism between the two countries has dropped drastically, and cultural ties are no longer promoted.

Although it is not my intention to discuss at length why the two countries are in such a state of disharmony, I will interject the scene of the 2008-2009 Israel-Gaza conflict and the fact that Turkey heavily supports Gaza.

The Gaza War was a three-week armed conflict that took place in the Gaza Strip during the winter of 2008-2009. The result of this short war was an Israeli tactical military victory after which Israel continued its economic blockade of Gaza. A humanitarian crisis was said to exist in Gaza after the war. In May 2010 a "Gaza Freedom Flotilla" was arranged, which involved, among other organizations, the Turkish Foundation for Human Rights. It carried humanitarian aid as well as construction material. After repeated warnings to stop, a raid was conducted on this Flotilla by Israelis. There was fighting, provoked by the activists, in which nine Turkish activists were killed by Israeli troops, and seven Israeli soldiers were injured by Turks.

In September of 2011, Turkey expelled Israel's ambassador after a UN report found that the blockade of Gaza was legal according to international law. Israeli's officials have said they want to restore ties with Turkey, but have refused to apologize

for what happened.

All in all, as said above, a great deterioration of relationships.

Rhodes during WWII

Yet, in the past, the relationships were much better. During World War II, for example, the Jewish Sephardic communities in Turkey and Bulgaria did not suffer during the Nazi Holocaust.

There is an old Turkish proverb. It says: "A cup of coffee commits one to forty years of friendship." There is also an old Heidelberg Catechism answer which says: "Good works are only those which are done from true faith, according to the law of God and to His glory, and not such as are based on our own opinions or the precepts of men."

During World War II, Selahattin Ulkumen was the Turkish Consul-General on the island of Rhodes. Rhodes belongs to Greece, but early on in the war, Rhodes, as well as the island of Kos, fell to Hitler and Mussolini. Under the joint control of these two countries, there were no persecutions of the Jews.

But in September 1943, the Italians withdrew, and control was left to the Germans. Arrests soon started, and the 2,200 Jews on the island were centered out for deportation. Because all radios had been confiscated on Rhodes since the onset of the occupation, these Jews knew little of what would happen to them. Hence they were arrested easily. Turkish Consul-General Ulkumen, however, was overcome by the scenes of weeping and

distress he encountered. He organized a census of all the Jews who were in any way of Turkish origin and distributed Turkish identity cards to their wives. He then went to see the German Commandant, a Gestapo general.

"You cannot," he told the official, "take people who are Turkish citizens of the Jewish religion. They are subject to Turkish laws, and the Turkish Constitution establishes no distinction between Turks of different religious persuasions. It is my duty, therefore, to protect these people."

The Gestapo general was not convinced. But Ulkumen returned to him the next day. "These Jews are citizens of Turkey, a neutral country with which Germany does not have hostile relations. The Turks have goodwill towards Germany. Why risk spoiling such good relations by arresting and deporting Turkish citizens just because they are Jews?"

The Gestapo general was still not convinced. But Ulkumen returned to him the next day again and the next and the next. On the fifth day, the general sent his aide de camp to Ulkumen, finally giving permission to free the forty-two Jews who had Turkish identity cards. (In addition to saving these Turkish Jews, Ulkumen as well succeeded in saving twenty-five Italian Jews, whom he passed off as Turks.)

Marseilles, 1941

In 1941, Necdet Kent was appointed Vice-Consul in the Turkish Consulate General in Marseilles. Turkish Jews,

fleeing from occupied northern France, for?" he asked Necdet.

were arriving in the city. If a Jew asked "For Turkish citizens." The Vice-assistance from the Turkish Consulate, Consul's answer came quickly and without

he was immediately given a certificate attesting to his or her Turkish citizenship, placing that person under Turkish protection. The Jews were heavily persecuted. Jewish men were often stopped on the street and made to drop their trousers to make sure they were or were not circumcised. When the Nazis invaded the southern zone, with the aid of 12,000 French police, they organized an immense roundup. It was during this time that Sidi Iscan, a Turkish Jew and the interpreter at the Turkish Consulate, came to see Necdet Kent.

"The Germans," he said, greatly agitated, "have arrested about eighty Turkish Jews and have taken them to the train station."

The man was weeping, and Necdet Kent immediately obtained a car and went with him to the train station. What he found was sickening. Cattle trucks full of people – hundreds of men, women and children crying and sobbing. The inscription written on one train car made a tremendous impact on Mr. Kent. It read: "This wagon can carry 20 large beasts and 500 kilos of hay." And then he observed that the particular wagon on which this was inscribed had eighty people crammed into it, one on top of the other.

The Gestapo officer in charge of the transport was told that the Turkish Vice-Consul was present. He approached and, with an arrogant tone, questioned the Vice-Consul.

"What are you looking



Necdet Kent was a Turkish diplomat during World War II, who used his office and his bravado to save many Jews.

hesitation. The man shrugged and Necdet continued. "Their arrest is a mistake, and you must let them go."

"I am only carrying out my orders and besides that – they are not Turks but Jews."

Necdet at this point called Sidi over and told him they were going to get on the train together. He pushed the Gestapo officer, who was trying to stop them, aside and both men successfully climbed aboard. The officer shouted alarm but at this point the train had begun to move.

"Get off," the officer yelled, but it was too late. "All right then, go with them!" he added contemptuously. The train chugged out, destination Nazi concentration camp.

Three hours later, having been exposed to extreme filth, cold and discomfort, Necdet Kent and Sidi Iscan, along with many unfortunates, pulled into the next station. At that station they were met by a number of German officers. Possibly realizing that this incident could be blown up internationally, they were there to diffuse a potentially difficult situation. They saluted Necdet, who refused to recognize the salute.

"We apologize," one said smoothly, "for the quick departure of the train from Marseilles when you were aboard. It was a mistake and those responsible will be punished."

"It was not a mistake," Necdet replied, standing in the open door of the wagon, "and it is scandalous that these Turkish citizens of Jewish faith should be shut up in cattle wagons."

"There is a car over there at your disposal," they responded, ignoring his words, "to escort you back

to Marseilles.”

“You refuse to understand,” Necdet retorted angrily, “it is out of the question for me to leave my people on their own. They are Turkish. They are citizens of my country, and I represent their government whose policy with regard to religious beliefs will not allow such treatment and indignity.”

He paused for breath, and the German officials standing in front of him made no response. “I refused to leave Marseilles without them, and I now refuse to leave this station without them.”

The Germans, who had received orders to treat the matter cautiously, looked at one another. During this conversation, the men, women and children packed in behind Necdet on the train, stared at his back. They silently watched, hoped and prayed. All were petrified.

After a long while, the officers, who had received orders to be conciliatory, asked Necdet if all the people in the car with him were Turks. Necdet could feel the eyes of everyone on the cattle train behind him, piercing into his back.

“Yes,” he affirmed without any hesitation, “they are all Turks.”

Never looking at their papers, never double checking to see if Necdet was telling the truth, the SS then made everyone get down from the train and left the entire wagonload standing on the platform. Once down, the people threw themselves around Sidi’s and Necdet’s necks. Overcome with gratitude, they took the two men into their arms, could not stop shaking their hands and wept.

Necdet called his office in Marseilles and ordered that vans be sent to pick up all the people to return them to that city. Necdet deliberately refused a Mercedes Benz that the Germans had put at his disposal.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that what Selahattin Ulkumen, Necdet Kent, and many others, did was good. Later, when interviewed, Mr. Ulkumen reflected about the decision he took to help the Jews on Rhodes. He said:

As the Chinese proverb says it: “Instead of complaining of the dark, you can light a candle.” That’s what made me act. I said to myself: if I could be like a sort of candle, that would give me the greatest pleasure. Then I lit that candle...

Necdet Kent, reflecting back as well, said:

In my whole life, I never experienced again that interior sense of peace and tranquility which filled me early that morning, that day when, at last, I slipped between the sheets of my bed... All through the years, I have received letters from many of my companions on that strange journey. Today, who knows how many of them are still in good health, and how many have died? I always think of them with affection, with some emotion, even those who, perhaps, don’t remember me any more.

A third Turkish man, a Namik Yolga, Third Administrator in the Turkish Consulate in Paris during the Second World War, helped save some four hundred Jews during this time. Asked why he helped, he remarked:

...Yes, thanks be to Allah, ... I am a Muslim. But that does not at all signify that I feel differently from the French, or Jews, or whoever. That didn’t hinder me from saving Jews. On the contrary! It is the humane qualities in a person that are important. If a man is good, kind, God – be it the God of Allah, of Jews, of Christians or other religions – God, then, will take you into His paradise. Then, on this earth, you understand... it goes better for you if you begin at once to show love, to help one’s fellow man.

Perhaps at some date in the future the Turks and the Jews will again improve their relationships here on earth. That will be common grace.

Perhaps at some date in the future the Turks and the Jews will come to know and confess the Lord Jesus Christ. That will not be common but will be pure grace.

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



TOP FILMS: 2 by Reformed filmmakers *reviewed by Jon Dykstra*

Act Like Men

Documentary
45 minutes; 2012

Act Like Men uses the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic to remind us of the bravery, chivalry and manliness the male crewmembers and passengers displayed.

On the night of April 15, 1912, this “virtually unsinkable” luxury ocean liner struck an iceberg and quickly started taking on water. There were lifeboats for only half the people aboard, so the captain gave the order that, with the exception of able-bodied men to row, the boats would first be filled with women and children. The end result was that 75 per cent of the women and children were saved, but just 20 per cent of the men.

Several Christian pastors – most of whom seem to be Reformed – are interviewed, and they establish a firm connection between the example of the men on the Titanic and God’s call for all men to be sacrificial leaders (Ephesians 5). As the filmmakers tell us more about these men who willingly gave up their lives, they also start contrasting them with men of today, many of whom aren’t even willing to give up their X-box for their loved ones. As one pastor, Scott Brown, explains:

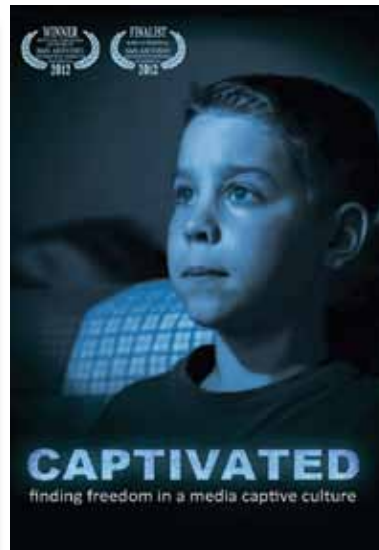
Fathers today have too many diversionary activities. They have too many sports, too many interests, too many hobbies. They have things that just get in the way of the discipleship of their children. If a man is going to obey the biblical commands he has to lay aside lots of lawful, interesting, fantastic, fun, engaging kinds of things or he will never be able to be a shepherd of his children.

This is a well-made, thought-provoking production. My only critique would be that it goes a tad overboard, tracing most every evil in the world to the lack of godly manliness. That said, lack of male leadership is a pressing problem, and this is a challenging presentation that the men in our circles would benefit from seeing and discussing. You can purchase it at Christianbooks.com.



Captivated

Documentary
107 minutes; 2011



A highlight in *Captivated* is an epic rant by Professor Mark Bauerlein, author of *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans*. When asked what he would say to his students caught up in the digital age, his answer is worth the price of the DVD:

Do something different with yourselves. That means reading books. Know a little bit about

history.... You’ll encounter people [there] who actually faced real stakes in their lives. [They] didn’t sit around and say, “Oh, my girlfriend dumped me. I feel so terrible; let me go talk to my friends. I’ll go change my facebook page.” *The trivia of youth are amplified by these digital tools!* What is the motto of YouTube? Broadcast *yourself*. Well, guess what? Yourself may not be that important. That may not be such a great subject to focus so much time on. One of the most dismaying things about you guys is you get together and all you talk about is *yourselves* and what *you* do. You don’t talk about anything else. Do you know how boring you are?

The self-absorption of youth is not the film’s only target. Parents are liable to feel pretty uncomfortable when their own enslavement to digital media is highlighted. *Captivated* asks, how can we use media, and use these tools without becoming enslaved to them? It promotes moderation, but in what is surely the most controversial segment, suggests a one-month media fast can help families connect, and better regain balance in their lives. One father, Erik Engstrom, notes that it can’t be “just about taking away – if all you do is take away something from your kids, and leave them with nothing, they’re in no better spot.” So the fast also has to involve feasting – feasting on family board games, on biking together, shooting hoops, conversations with mom and dad about the books that kids are reading, and much more.

There’s much more to this DVD, and all of it challenging and thought-provoking. Highly recommended!

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

BEST BOOKS: 3 “Dutch” picture books *reviewed by Jon Dykstra*

Noah’s Ark

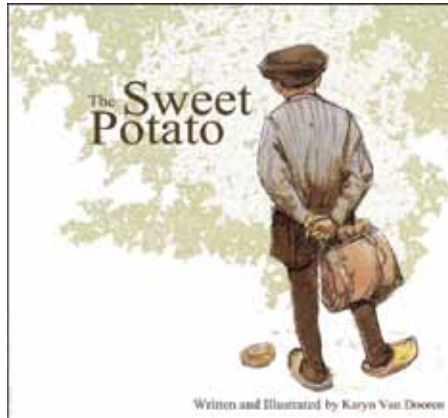
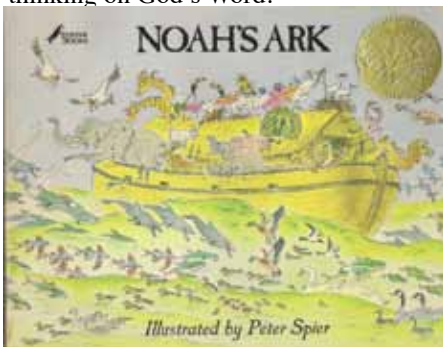
by Peter Spier

48 pages, Hardcover, 1977

Peter Spier studied illustration in the Netherlands before emigrating to the US at the age of 23. What he gives us here is a beautifully illustrated, nearly wordless account of the Flood, with only three of the 48 pages containing text. There are two biblical quotations, one to start the book from Genesis 6:8: “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” The second ends the book, and is taken from Genesis 9:20: “... and he planted a vineyard.” In addition, one page is given to an English translation of a 400-year-old poem about the Flood by Dutchman Jacobus Revisus.

The rest of the book is filled with seemingly simple, but incredibly detailed pictures of Noah and his family as they build the Ark, bring in the animal pairs, and feed and care for them inside. Some of the detail is amusing – two dodos are shown waddling their way to safety (at least for a few thousand years). But we also see, in a series of panels, the floodwaters overtaking the many animals that were left behind. This is no cutesy, sanitized account!

I find most Bible storybooks quite problematic, as they so often mangle the biblical texts. What I appreciate about Spier’s account is that, because it is wordless, it actually requires that you go to the Bible to read the original account. So it is not a Bible storybook meant to replace Bible reading, but is instead a Bible *study* book, meant to spur further thinking on God’s Word.



The Sweet Potato

by Karyn Van Dooren

24 pages, Softcover, 2008

In *The Sweet Potato* Canadian Reformed author Karyn Van Dooren tells the story of her husband’s grandfather growing up in the Netherlands during World War II. Because he was a child during the war, he wasn’t fully aware of all that was going on, and this is how he recalls the story of his youth. This childish, uninformed recollection adds to the book’s charm, but it also means that there are some gaps that require readers to be generally knowledgeable about the war. For example, he remembers how they had a lot of house guests during the German occupation, “but for some reason my brothers and sisters and I were never asked to give up our beds.” This little boy couldn’t understand why his parents weren’t being more hospitable. Adult readers will readily understand that these houseguests were Jews, or others in hiding, but that isn’t ever stated: little ones will therefore be left mystified if there is no parent reading along with them. So this is a picture book best read with Mom or Dad, or maybe Oma or Opa. In their hands it will certainly be a great teaching tool, and a wonderful way to share with the next generation their Dutch heritage and the quiet heroism of their elders.

It can be purchased directly from the author (Karyn.VanDooren@gmail.com) at \$15 per book, including shipping.

Where is the cake?

T.T. Khing

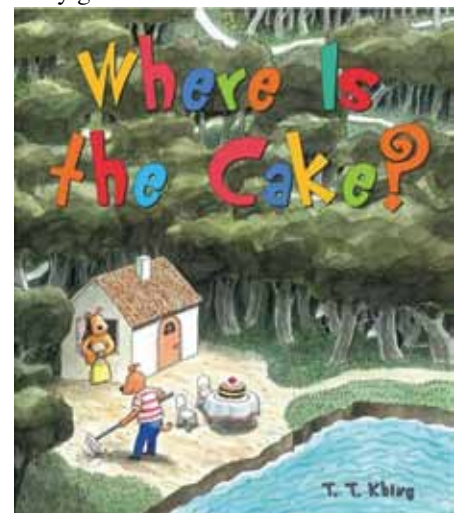
32 pages, Hardcover, 2007

Thé-Tjong Khing was born in Indonesia, studied in the Netherlands, and is now one of the Netherlands’ best-known illustrators and authors. His books have been translated into several languages, and *Where is the Cake?* must have been the easiest as, except for the title, it is a wordless book.

The main story involves a chase after two possums who have taken Mr. and Mrs. Dog’s cake. The action takes place on large pages (even a bit larger than the pages in *Reformed Perspective*) so there is plenty of room for detail and for a host of different animals. There are more than 30 characters on each page, and almost as many storylines!

I “read” this to my two-year-old daughter, and we had great fun trying to keep track of what everyone was up to. While it is wordless, it still lends itself to a lot of interaction. I was constantly talking to her about what must have happened “in between” the pages and congratulating her as she found Mr. and Mrs. Dog once again. She loved it, and her dad did, too, because it was book I could read again and again (as parents are often required to do) and keep finding new things.

For a book with no words, this is a really great read.



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

PEOPLE WE SHOULD KNOW

Ayn Rand

Prophetess of godless liberty

by Michael Wagner

Among President Barack Obama's many achievements (sic) has been the reinvigoration of the American conservative movement. There are now a large number of Americans involved in groups loosely associated with the Tea Party movement, which seeks to shrink the size of government and reduce taxes. One of the thinkers whose popularity has risen in tandem with this phenomenon is Ayn Rand (1905-1982).

Many Christians may be unfamiliar with Ayn Rand and wonder why anyone would want to know about her. But even though Rand died almost 30 years ago, her influence today is growing. Freedom-loving Americans are turning to her books as a reaction against the recent socialistic direction of the American government.

History professor Jennifer Burns explains Rand's life and influence in a new book, *Goddess of the Market: Ayn Rand and the American Right*. Burns points out that Rand's writing is currently so popular that in

... 2008 alone combined sales of her novels *Atlas Shrugged*, *The Fountainhead*, *We the Living*, and *Anthem* topped 800,000, an astonishing figure for books published more than fifty years ago.

Christians need to know about this woman

because her influence is increasing in politically and economically conservative circles. And while she was a staunch opponent of socialism, this is not a case in which "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" – Ayn Rand was just as staunchly opposed to God.

From Rosenbaum to Rand

Alisa Rosenbaum was born in Russia to Jewish parents in 1905. Her father was a successful businessman who provided a good standard of living to his family through hard work. When the Communists came to power in 1917, they confiscated her father's business (along with the businesses and properties of countless others), as part of their socialist program. Alisa saw the brutal and unfair consequences of socialism in action, and this would inform her perspective for the rest of her life.

She changed her name to Ayn Rand and moved to the United States in 1926. She worked occasionally as a Hollywood screenwriter for a number of years but her true passion was writing novels promoting individualism. Individualism is basically a libertarian philosophy that emphasizes personal responsibility, free enterprise, and living for oneself.

That might sound rather mundane, but ideological commitment to individualism and free enterprise was very radical for the time. During the 1930s and 1940s,



In 1999 the US Postal Service issued a stamp celebrating Ayn Rand.

From the Collection of the United States Postal Service.
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leftwing thinking dominated intellectual thought in the West, including the United States. Burns notes that in

... educated, reform-minded circles it became conventional wisdom that the United States would simply have to move toward Communism or, at the very least, socialism.

For many intellectuals, the Great Depression proved that capitalism was a failure, and that only socialism or communism could provide for the future well-being of mankind. It's vital to understand this intellectual climate to appreciate the significance of Ayn Rand's writing and philosophy.

Promoting liberty through novels

Rand wrote a couple of novels in the 1930s but they did not receive much attention at that time. However, her novel *The Fountainhead*, released in 1943, was

a smashing success and was subsequently made into a movie. As Burns recounts,

In 1945 alone, *The Fountainhead* sold 100,000 copies and finally cracked the New York bestseller lists, a milestone Rand had long anticipated. Both were notable feats for a book released two years earlier.

The novel contained a very strong pro-individualism and pro-business message, and this helped Rand get the attention of important conservatives and business leaders across the United States.

Her subsequent novel and magnum opus, *Atlas Shrugged*, was an instant bestseller and has been wildly popular since it was first published in 1957, despite the fact that it is over one thousand pages long. According to Burns, "Taken at the level of a story, *Atlas Shrugged* is a moral fable about the evils of government interference in the free market."

This novel portrays capitalists as creative and glamorous people, an unwelcome message to the American intelligentsia. Intellectuals and professional book reviewers dismissed the book, but it sold well anyway.

Outside of the academic and literary worlds, *Atlas Shrugged* was greeted with an enthusiastic reception. The book made Rand a hero to many business owners, executives, and self-identified capitalists, who were thrilled to discover a novel that acknowledged, understood, and appreciated their work.

Most people are not willing to read philosophical treatises. But they will read novels, and especially novels promoting ideas they like. Burns explains:

For those who could plausibly self-identify as the "producers" that Rand celebrated, the novel was a powerful justification of their livelihood. Rand's defense of wealth and merit freed capitalists from both personal

and social guilt simultaneously.

This is a message that continues to resonate among certain sectors of the population. As mentioned previously, recent political events in the USA have sparked a renewed interest in Rand and her writings.

Sales of *Atlas Shrugged* spiked in 2008 after the U.S. Treasury bought stakes in nine large banks, and again in 2009 when the Democratic administration announced its stimulus plan.

The anti-socialist message of Rand's magnum opus may be just as relevant today as when it was first written.

Objectivism

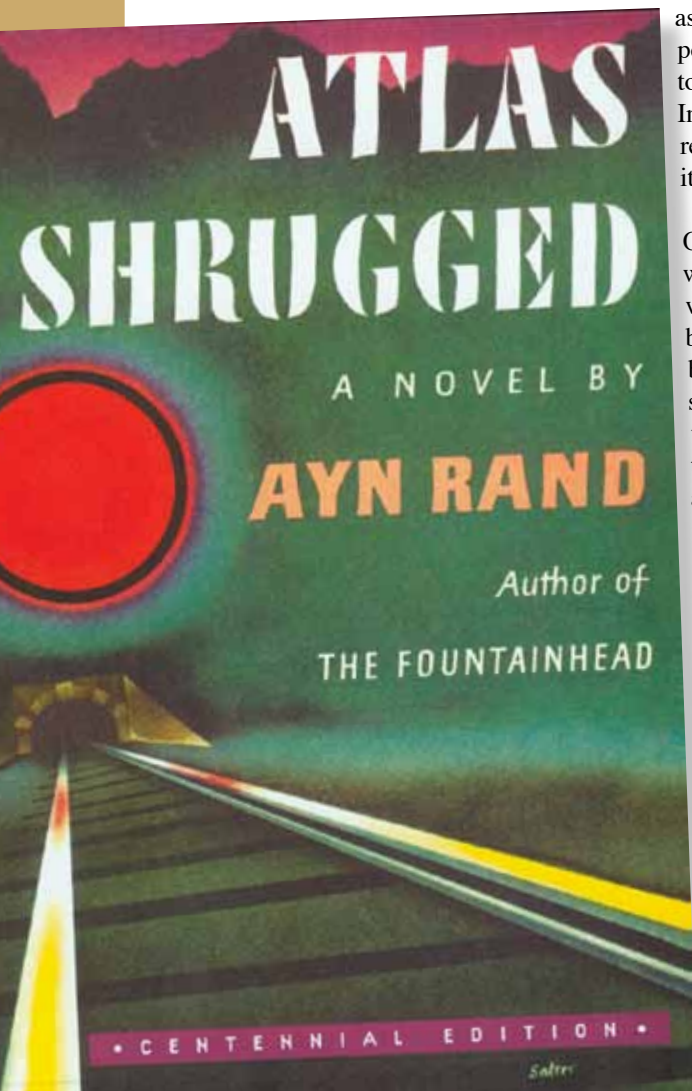
In her books Rand developed her own philosophy, which she called "Objectivism." Among the tenets of this philosophy is the view that the purpose of life is to pursue one's own happiness or rational self-interest. Selfishness is thus regarded as a *good* thing, and free market capitalism is defended as the only economic system in which people can properly pursue their happiness and self-interest. Objectivism also emphasizes reason as the source of knowledge and it rejects God; in other words, it is an atheistic philosophy.

Rand opposed Christianity, in part because Christianity emphasizes concern for others over oneself. She even wrote

... that Christianity "is the best kindergarten of communism possible." Christianity taught believers to put others before self, an ethical mandate that matched the collectivist emphasis on the group over the individual.

While in her earlier years Rand was considered to be a type of conservative, with her more developed philosophy it became clear that she was actually a libertarian since her anti-Christian stance put her at odds with American conservatism. As Burns notes:

... conservatives wanted the free market set within an explicitly Christian



society. Only religion could balance the “materialism” of free enterprise, with the Christian emphasis on charity, humility, and equality blunting the harsher edges of laissez-faire.

Rand’s emphasis on self-interest and selfishness was fundamentally opposed to major components of conservative philosophy.

Whereas traditional conservatism emphasized duties, responsibilities, and social interconnectedness, at the core of the rightwing ideology that Rand spearheaded was a rejection of moral obligation to others.

Objectivism provides no basis for supporting traditional sexual morality. It’s not surprising, then, that Rand was favorable to the first big venture in American pornography, *Playboy* magazine, and its founder Hugh Hefner.

Hugh Hefner had long been a fan of Rand, and his magazine ran a long and probing piece by the future futurist Alvin Toffler, who treated Rand with care and respect. She even visited a Playboy Club, which she pronounced “a wonderful place and a brilliant undertaking.”

Similarly, Rand took a strong public stand in favor of abortion. Burns states that Rand was “fiercely against any legal restrictions on abortion.” Rand’s view was that

... restrictions on abortion were immoral because they elevated a potential life over an actual life. It was essential that women be able to choose when, and whether, to become mothers.

Rand’s personal life

Ayn Rand married Frank O’Connor in 1929 and remained with him until he died in 1979. However, beginning in the late 1950s she had a serious extra-marital affair with her favorite student, Nathaniel Branden. Branden was also married and

his wife was a Rand devotee. Strangely, Rand and Branden were able to convince their respective spouses that this adulterous affair was “rational” and that they should therefore accept it. Rand’s marriage survived but Branden’s didn’t. When their affair became public in the late 1960s, it had a serious negative effect on Rand’s public reputation.

In 1968 Rand found out that Branden had started having an affair with yet another woman in the 1960s. At that point she berated him and then never spoke to him again. Branden had been a significant partner with Rand in promoting Objectivism, so the break between them was a major setback to the Objectivist movement.

Nevertheless, Rand continued to promote her views through writing, public speaking, and occasional television appearances until she died in March, 1982.

Conclusion

What, then, can be concluded about Ayn Rand?

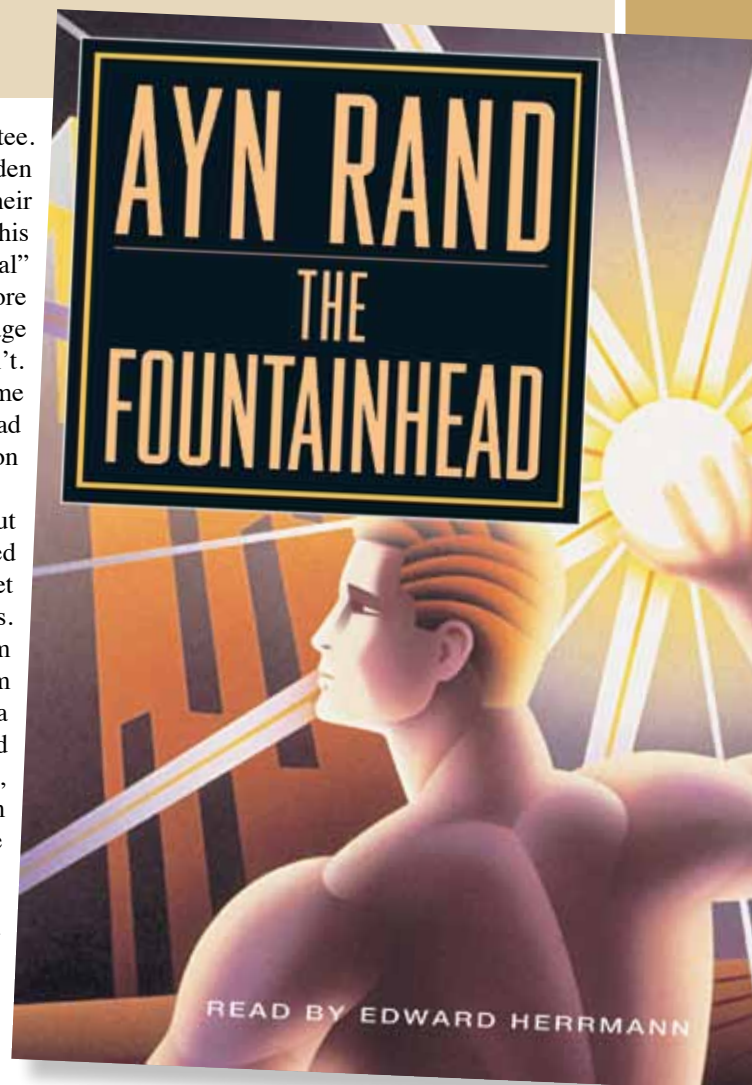
It is important to point out that in a period during which anti-freedom ideas (especially socialism and sometimes even communism) flourished in the intellectual community, Ayn Rand stood strongly for individual freedom. She provided a rallying point for businessmen and entrepreneurs who were under cultural attack for allegedly being greedy and selfish, when in reality it was their work that provided the economic sustenance for their societies. Rand deserves credit for supporting individual liberty and the business community in an intellectual climate of pro-socialist, anti-freedom sentiment. She was courageous.

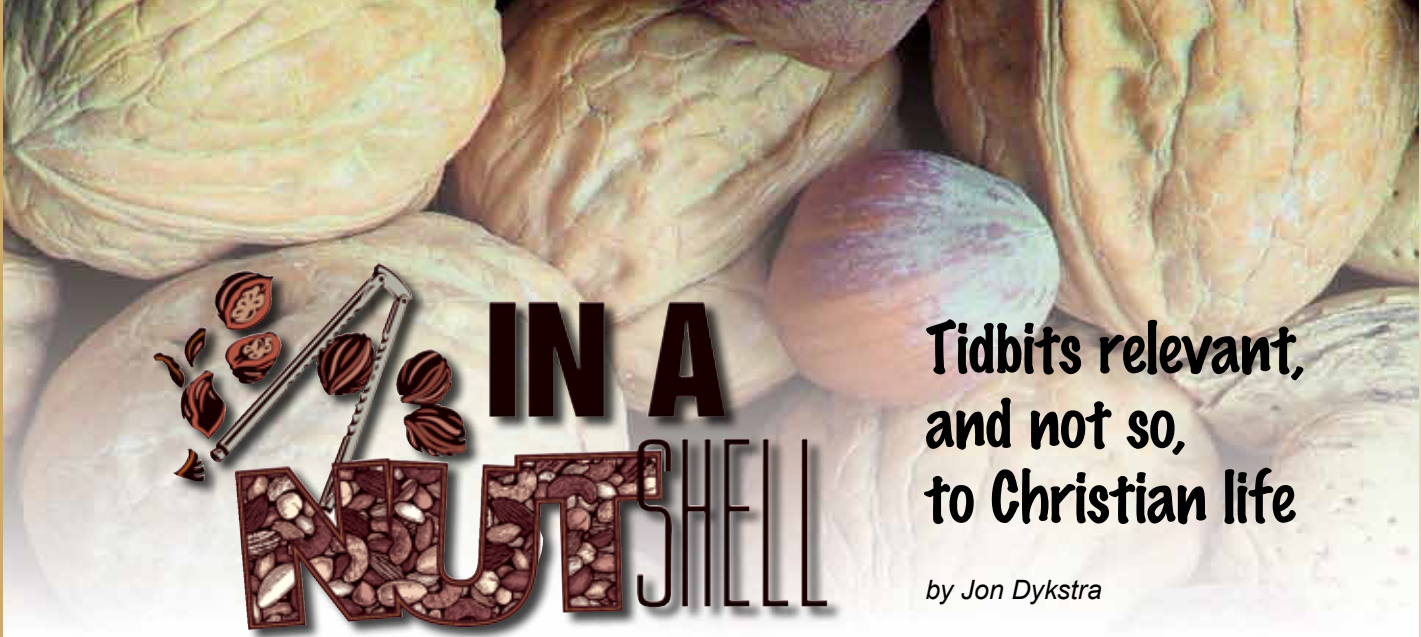
But she was also fundamentally wrong. Instead of defending hard-working, industrious and entrepreneurial

businessmen

as making good use of the talents given to them by God, Rand agreed with her opponents that these capitalists were selfish. And then she argued that *selfishness was a good thing*. Turning selfishness from vice into virtue was a logical result of her particular, outspoken atheism. Rand not only denied there was a God, she put the individual in His place. She thought every individual should, essentially, worship themselves. And in that sort of religion, being selfish is simply paying attention to what your god wants you to do. And, of course, in that sort of religion it only makes sense to favor abortion (what do we care about *someone else’s* life?), as Rand did.

While we will agree with “Randians” on some political and economic issues, clearly Christians cannot support Ayn Rand and her philosophy. In fact, given her opposition to Christianity, it’s likely she wouldn’t want to be supported by Christians.





IN A NUTSHELL

Tidbits relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

Great quotes

“Everybody is a genius. But if you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing that it is stupid.”

– attributed to Albert Einstein on various websites, but without sourcing.

“The trouble with quotes on the Internet is that it’s difficult to determine whether or not they are genuine.”

- Abraham Lincoln

her hair out of her face when she had bad dreams and couldn’t sleep.” Termite’s face turned sour. “You’re starting to ruin this for me.” “Termite,” I continued, “that is somebody’s daughter. She’s somebody’s little sister, and someday, she might even be somebody’s mother.... This,” I said, pointing again, “is something you ought to wait and let your wife show you instead of trying to buy it from a little girl who once took piano lessons before her feet could touch the pedals.”

Somebody’s daughter

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

He handed me the picture - it was a centerfold of some nineteen-year-old silicone beauty... I took the two-page spread and folded back every portion of the picture except the part that showed the girl’s neck and face. When I held it up and gave it back to Termite, I said, “Let me see if I got this right.” He looked confused. I sat down next to him and dangled my feet over the boardwalk. “You see that girl?” I pointed to the face. “She’s probably named something sweet like Amanda or Mary. She’s from some small town in Wyoming or Texas, and her daddy used to pay for dance lessons and coach her softball team when she was in grammar school. He put Band-Aids on her skinned knees and brushed

On empathy and homosexuality

“...we should never forget that just as Jesus was the incarnation of God’s love, mercy, and compassion for us, we are called to model these for our neighbor.... So, when we address a hot-button issue like same-sex attraction or same-sex marriage, we should always keep in mind our own struggles and brokenness when it comes to sexuality. If you are blessed not to have struggled in this area, then recall your struggles in other areas. If you can’t think of any, well, you might want to think about the sin of pride. I’m just saying.”

- Eric Metaxas (April 18, 2012, *Breakpoint Daily*)

Hollywood history vs. the real thing

This year is the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic, and to mark this anniversary the all-time highest grossing film, James Cameron’s *Titanic*, has

reappeared in theatres. Events marking the 100th anniversary of the sinking are being held on both sides of the Atlantic. And in many of them the chivalry of the male crew and male passengers is being celebrated. This wasn’t the first instance in which priority was given to “women and children first,” but it is one of the most dramatic, as the statistics show. The overall death toll was 9 men for every 1 woman – 75 per cent of the women were saved while 81 per cent of the men died.

And contrary to the portrayal shown in Cameron’s film, this was not an instance of class warfare. The richer passengers did have a higher survival rate, in part because they had closer access to the boats, but when we look at the numbers we see that men of all classes were stepping aside for women of all classes. Just 32 per cent of the first-class male passengers survived, in contrast to the 49 per cent of third-class women. Just another reminder that we should never learn our history from Hollywood.

SOURCE: “Communist Dictator Praises Cameron’s ‘Titanic’” by Douglas Phillips, March 30, 2012 visionforum.com/news/blogs/doug/2012/03

Why government becomes big

“If men will not be governed by the Ten Commandments they shall be governed by the ten thousand commandments.”

- GK Chesterton

Christian hedonism

Forgive the label, but don't miss the truth

by John Piper

If you must, forgive me for the label. But don't miss the truth because you don't like my tag. My shortest summary of it is: God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him. Or: The chief end of man is to glorify God *by* enjoying him forever. Does Christian hedonism¹ make a god out of pleasure? No. It says that we all make a god out of what we take most pleasure in. My life is devoted to helping people make God their God, by wakening in them the greatest pleasures in Him.

- When Jesus warned his disciples that they might get their heads chopped off (Luke 21:16), he comforted them with the promise that, nevertheless, not a hair on their heads would perish (v. 18).
- When he warned them that discipleship means self-denial and crucifixion (Mark 8:34), he consoled them with the promise that “whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it” (v. 35).
- When he commanded them to leave all and follow him, he assured them that they would receive “a hundred-fold now. . . with persecutions, and in the age to come eternal life” (Mark 10:28-31).

If we must sell all, we should do it, Jesus said, “with joy” because the field we aim to buy contains a hidden treasure (Matthew 13:44).

By Christian hedonism, I do not mean that our happiness is the highest good. I mean that pursuing the highest good will always result in our greatest happiness in

the end. But almost all Christians believe this. Christian hedonism says more, namely, that we should *pursue* happiness, and pursue it with all our might. The desire to be happy is a proper motive for every good deed, and if you abandon the pursuit of your own joy you cannot love man or please God - that's what makes Christian hedonism controversial.

Christian hedonism aims to replace a Kantian morality with a biblical one. Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher who died in 1804, was the most powerful exponent of the notion that the moral value of an act decreases as we aim to derive any benefit from it. Acts are good if the doer is “disinterested.” We should do the good because it is good. Any motivation to seek joy or reward corrupts the act. Cynically, perhaps, but not without warrant, the novelist Ayn Rand captured the spirit of Kant's ethic:

An action is moral, said Kant, only if one has no desire to perform it, but performs it out of a sense of duty and derives no benefit from it of any sort, neither material nor spiritual. A benefit destroys the moral value of an action. (Thus if one has no desire to be evil, one cannot be good; if one has, one can.)²

Against this Kantian morality (which has passed as Christian for too long!), we must herald the unabashedly hedonistic biblical morality. Jonathan Edwards, who died when Kant was 34, expressed it like this in one of his early resolutions: “Resolved, To endeavor to obtain for

myself as much happiness in the other world as I possibly can, with all the power, might, vigor, and vehemence, yea violence, I am capable of, or can bring myself to exert, in any way that can be thought of.”³

C. S. Lewis put it like this in a letter to Sheldon Vanauken: “It is a Christian duty, as you know, for everyone to be as happy as he can.”⁴

And southern novelist Flannery O'Connor gives her view of self-denial like this: “Always you renounce a lesser good for a greater; the opposite is sin. Picture me with my ground teeth stalking joy - fully armed too, as it's a highly dangerous quest.”⁵

Combating Kant

The Kantian notion says that it's O.K. to get joy as an *unintended result* of your action. But all these people (myself included) are *aiming* at joy. We repudiate both the possibility and desirability of disinterested moral behavior. It is impossible, because the will is not autonomous; it always inclines to what it perceives will bring the most happiness (John 8:34; Romans 6:16; 2 Peter 2:19).

Pascal was right when he said: “All men seek happiness without exception. They all aim at this goal however different the means they use to attain it. . . . They will never make the smallest move but with this as its goal. This is the motive of all the actions of all men, even those who contemplate suicide.”⁶

But not only is disinterested morality (doing good “for its own sake”)



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PURSUING PLEASURE: As Piper notes: “[Everyone’s] problem is not that they want to be satisfied, but that they are far too easily satisfied.”

impossible, it is undesirable. That is, it is unbiblical, because it would mean that the better a man became the harder it would be for him to act morally. The closer he came to true goodness the more naturally and happily he would do what is good. A good man in Scripture is not the man who dislikes doing good but toughs it out for the sake of duty. A good man *loves* kindness (Micah 6:8) and *delights* in the

law of the Lord (Psalm 1:2), and the will of the Lord (Psalm 40:8). But how shall such a man do an act of kindness disinterestedly? The better the man, the more joy in obedience.

Kant loves a disinterested giver. God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7). Disinterested performance of duty displeases God. He wills that we *delight* in doing good and that we do it with the confidence that our obedience secures and increases our joy in God.

Oh, that I could drive the notion out of our churches that virtue requires a stoical performance of duty – the notion that good things are promised merely as the *result* of obedience but not as an *incentive* for it. The Bible is replete with promises which are not appended carefully as non-motivational *results*, but which clearly and boldly and hedonistically aim to motivate our behavior.

Greater and purer

What sets off biblical morality from worldly hedonism is not that biblical morality is disinterested, but that it is interested in vastly greater and purer things. Some examples:

Luke 6:35 says, “Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great.” Note: we should never be motivated by worldly aggrandizement (“expect nothing in return”), but we are given strength to suffer loss in service of love by the promise of a future reward.

Again, in Luke 14:12-14:

When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your kinsmen or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return, and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor . . . and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the just.

Note: don’t do good deeds for worldly advantage, but do them for spiritual, heavenly benefits.

But the Kantian philosopher will say, “No, no. These texts only describe what reward will *result* if you act disinterestedly. They do not teach us to seek the reward.”

Two answers:

1. It is very bad pedagogy to say, “Take this pill and I will give you a nickel,” if you think the desire for the nickel will ruin the taking of the pill. But Jesus was a wise teacher, not a foolish one.
2. Even more importantly, there are

texts which not only commend but command that we do good in the hope of future blessing.

Luke 12:33 says, “Sell your possessions, and give alms; provide yourselves with pursuits that do not grow old, with a treasure in the heavens that does not fail.” The connection here between alms and having eternal treasure in heaven is not mere *result* but *aim*: “Make it your aim to have treasure in heaven, and the way to do this is to sell your possessions and give alms.”

And again, Luke 16:9 says, “Make friends for yourselves by means of unrighteous mammon, so that when it fails they may receive you into eternal habitations.” Luke does not say that the *result* of a proper use of possessions is to receive eternal habitations. He says, “Make it your *aim* to secure an eternal habitation by the way you use your possessions.”

Therefore, a resounding NO to Kantian morality. No in the pew and no in the pulpit. In the pew the very heart is ripped out of worship by the notion that it can be performed as a mere duty. There are two possible attitudes in genuine worship: delight in God or repentance for the lack of it.

Sunday at 11 AM, Hebrew 11:6 enters combat with Immanuel Kant. “Without faith it is impossible to please Him. For whoever would draw near to God must believe that He exists and that *He rewards those who seek Him*.” You cannot please God if you do not come to him as *rewarder*. Therefore, worship which pleases God is the hedonistic pursuit of God in whose presence is fullness of *joy* and in whose hand are *pleasures* for evermore (Psalm 16:11).

What a difference it will make if we are Christian hedonists and not Kantian commanders of duty! Jonathan Edwards, the greatest preacher-theologian that America has ever produced, daringly said:

I should think myself in the way of my duty to raise the affections of my hearers as high as possibly I can, provided that they are affected with nothing but truth, and with affections

that are not disagreeable to the nature of what they are affected with.”⁷

The ultimate reason Edwards believed this was his duty is his profound and biblical conviction that

God glorifies Himself toward the creatures... in two ways:

1. By appearing to...their understanding.
2. In communicating Himself to their hearts, and in their rejoicing and delighting in, and enjoying, the manifestations which He makes of Himself.... God is glorified not only by His glory’s being seen, but by its being rejoiced in. When those that see it delight in it, God is more glorified than if they only see it.... He that testifies his idea of God’s glory [doesn’t] glorify God so much as he that testifies also his approbation of it and his delight in it.⁸

This is the ultimate foundation for Christian hedonism.

Don’t be too easily satisfied

As Christian hedonists we know that everyone longs for happiness. And we will never tell them to deny or repress that desire. Their problem is not that they want to be satisfied, but that they are far too easily satisfied. We will instruct them how to glut their soul-hunger on the grace of God. We will paint God’s glory in lavish reds and yellows and blues; and hell we will paint with smoky shadows of gray and charcoal. We will labor to wean them off the milk of the world onto the rich fare of God’s grace and glory.

We will bend all our effort, by the Holy Spirit, to persuade people:

- that “abuse suffered for the Christ [is] greater *wealth* than the treasures of Egypt” (Hebrews 11:26);
- that they can be *happier* in giving than receiving (Acts 20:35);
- that they should count everything as loss for the *surpassing worth* of knowing Christ Jesus their Lord (Philippians 3:8);
- that the aim of all of Jesus’ commandments is that their joy might

be full (John 15:11);

- that if they delight themselves in the Lord he will give them the desire of their heart (Psalm 37:4);
- that there is great gain in godliness with contentment (1 Timothy 6:6);
- and that the joy of the Lord is their strength (Nehemiah 8:11).

We will not try to motivate their ministry by Kantian appeals to mere duty. We will tell them that delight in God is their highest duty. But we will remind them that Jesus endured the cross for the *joy* that was set before him (Hebrews 12:2), and that Hudson Taylor, at the end of a life full of suffering and trial, said, “I never made a sacrifice.”⁹

Notes

¹ For the full story of what I call “Christian Hedonism,” see John Piper, *Desiring God: Meditations of a Christian Hedonist* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 1996); or the small version, *The Dangerous Duty of Delighting in God* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers, 2001).

² Ayn Rand, *For the Intellectual* (New York: Signet, 1961), p. 32.

³ Resolution #22 in Edwards’ *Memoirs in The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1974), p. xxi.

⁴ From a letter to Sheldon Vanauken in Vanauken’s book, *A Severe Mercy* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 189.

⁵ *The Habit of Being*, ed. by Sally Fitzgerald (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1979), p.126.

⁶ Blaise Pascal, *Pascal’s Pensées*, trans. by W. F. Trotter (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1958), p. 113 (thought #425).

⁷ Jonathan Edwards, *Some Thoughts Concerning the Revival*, in *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 4, ed. by C. Goen (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1972), p. 387.

⁸ Jonathan Edwards, *The “Miscellanies,”* a-500, ed. by Thomas Schafer, *The Works of Jonathan Edwards*, Vol. 13 (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1994), p. 495. *Miscellany #448*; see also #87, pp. 251-252; #332, p. 410; #679 (not in the New Haven Volume). Emphasis added. These *Miscellanies* were the private notebooks of Edwards from which he built his books, like *The End for Which God Created the World*.

⁹ Howard and Geraldine Taylor, *Hudson Taylor’s Spiritual Secret* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, n. d.), p. 30.

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Careless men

“Why do you kick at My sacrifice and at My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling, and honor your sons above Me?”

1 Samuel 2:29

by Allen M. Baker

Hophni and Phinehas were worthless men who did not know the Lord and who regularly abused the sacrificial system in Israel. They commissioned their workers to go to families as they prepared the post-sacrifice meal, having them plunge their three-pronged fork into the boiling pot and take up whatever meat they could. The priests were already guaranteed the breast and right thigh of each sacrifice (Lev. 7:28-36) but Hophni and Phinehas were greedy. They wanted more.

Moreover, they had their workers demand uncooked meat, a direct violation of God’s law. The fat was first to be burned as an offering to the Lord (Lev. 7:3-4) but these two wicked men would not wait for God’s protocol. And their workers promised harm on any who resisted. Finally we are also told that Hophni and Phinehas, priests serving before the Lord in the tabernacle, had sexual intercourse with the women who served at the entrance to the tabernacle.

In other words, these wicked men were careless in handling the holy things of God. Consequently the Lord removed them by death in a later battle with the Philistines. Israel also lost thirty thousand men, including the prized Ark of the Covenant, symbolic of the Lord’s presence with his people.

Men, do not be careless with the holy things of God. What are those holy things? Well, first is your walk with Christ. Don’t take it lightly. Second is the spiritual welfare of your wife and children. And third is your place in the world, your church, and your job.

Three types of careless

In looking at the lives of Hophni and Phinehas it becomes obvious that this carelessness has at least three characteristics.

First is *presumption*. David asks that God would keep him from presumptuous sins (Ps. 19:13). Hophni and Phinehas were priests. They believed they had the Lord on their side, that they could do as they wished. Men, don’t do it. Just because you have walked with Jesus for many years, just because God has smiled on you by giving you a beautiful wife and children, and a good job, don’t presume on his goodness by living carelessly.

Second is *denigration*. When Eli rebuked his sons for their ungodly behavior it made no difference at all. We are told that they did not repent because God had decided to put them to

death. When your wife challenges some aspect of your behavior, when a close friend asks, “What are you doing in getting close to that woman at work?” and you blow it off, bad idea!

And third, carelessness is evident in *accommodation with the world*. Lot separated from Abram and moved his tents as far as Sodom (Gen. 13:12). When Chedorlaomer raided Sodom and took Lot away into captivity, we are told that Lot was living in Sodom (Gen. 14:12). And when the two angels came to warn Lot to flee from Sodom we find that he is sitting in the gate (Gen. 19:1), that he is a major player in town. He had accommodated to the culture. A prophet of God came to Eli and rebuked him for honoring his sons before God. How did he do it? Yes, it is true that Eli rebuked his sons but he should have removed them from their priestly office. He had accommodated his sons over the holiness and glory of the Lord.

Men, are you accommodating the culture? Are you watching things on television you would never have watched twenty years ago? Do you find filthy language coming out of your mouth, words you have not said for many years, since before you were converted? Are you looking at so-called soft porn, convincing yourself that you can handle it?

Three reasons we are careless

Why have you become careless? Three reasons.

First, you may take the grace of God for granted, sort of like what Samson did with the woman from Timnah, the prostitute, and Delilah (Judg. 14:1ff, 16:1, 4ff). Samson knew God had raised him for a special purpose but he was careless in carrying out his mission. Yes, God’s grace is greater than our sin, but we are called not to participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness (Eph. 5:11).

Second, you may forget the fear of God. To fear God is to know that you can be displeasing to Him, that you are to dread more than anything his frown, and to desire more than anything his smile. Those who say that God is never displeased or angry with his children are not presenting a balanced explanation of living for Christ Jesus. Teaching and living in this way is the height of carelessness and folly.

And third, you may mitigate the glory of God. You are to do all things for the glory of God, to make God look good in all you

think, do, and say. You are exceedingly careless when you think you are to do all you can to make yourself look good.

Where carelessness leads

It goes like this, men – you and your wife have been steadily growing apart over the last several years, not necessarily heated arguments, but surely poor communication and a decline in simply having fun together. Added to this is the frenetic pace of life where she does her own thing and you do yours.

Then you are on a business trip, sitting next to a beautiful woman, and you strike up a conversation. As your plane lands and you take the shuttle bus to the hotel you realize she is on the same bus. You continue your conversation. You are in a city far from home. You are feeling lonely. One thing leads to another and you find yourself in unspeakable sin that will ruin your life. You will lose your wife, your children, your Christian witness, and most importantly Christ's great name will be besmirched. Men, are you handling the holy things of God carelessly?

What happens to the careless man? He can surely expect the chastisement of a loving, holy Father (Rev. 3:19, Heb. 12:9-11). Indeed the way of the transgressor is hard (Prov. 13:15). And you will experience death. God has taken people out very quickly after grievous sin (Num. 16:31-33, Acts 5:1ff, 1 Cor. 11:30), but I mean more than that. You will experience the death of your family and witness.

Can you be forgiven? Of course you can, but the consequences are likely to remain for generations. Check out King David's family after his adultery and the murder of Uriah. The admiration of your children will die. Young believers who considered you a role model will be crushed, some perhaps leaving the faith due to your carelessness. And then you may indeed experience the judgment of God in hell. I am not saying that the true believer can lose his salvation. Scripture is clear on that one (John 10:28-29). But I am saying that adulterers will

not enter heaven (1 Cor. 6:9-11), that not everyone who says, "Lord, Lord" will enter heaven (Matt. 7:21-23), that those who go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth no longer have a sacrifice for sins (Heb. 10:26-31).

Conclusion

Men, are you being careless with the holy things of God? What must you do?

First, realize your grave danger. You face the chastisement of a holy God who loves you and who is jealous for his own glory. You face death. You face judgment. May you tremble before God at your carelessness, at what it may cost you! Let's face it, you battle the flesh daily. You may secretly delight in the attention of another woman. You may allow your mind to run rampant with sensual thoughts that can destroy you. You must tremble before God!

And second, consider how you have been careless, and repent, not with a mere moral repentance, of promising better things. Instead it must be a true, evangelical repentance where you hate your sin, see the untold danger of it, and cry out to Jesus for mercy and grace.

And third, do what I always tell people to do. You must run to Jesus for his holiness. He is your sanctification (1 Cor. 1:30). As you repent you are promised the forgiveness of your sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38). Go to Jesus daily. Go to Him on Sunday as you hear the Word preached, as you go to the Lord's Supper, as you lead your family in worship, as you walk throughout the day. Be vigilant. Your adversary, the devil, is a roaring lion, roaming about, seeking someone to devour (1 Pet. 5:8). You are no match for him but Jesus by the Spirit is (1 John 4:5).

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“All mankind, descending from him...”?

Scripture is clear, so if science tells us there was no Adam, then science must be wrong

by Richard B. Gaffin, Jr.

The title above, as some readers may recognize, is from answer 16 of the Westminster Shorter Catechism (and Larger Catechism 22). It expresses a central truth of Scripture and reflects the universal confession of the church about Adam.

Why then the added question mark? Not because non-Christians widely reject this truth, as they have for a long time, but because more recently it has been increasingly called into question by scientists, biblical scholars, and others who consider themselves evangelical or even Reformed Christians. Moreover, they are persuaded that their doubts about this truth should be accepted as compatible with their Christian commitment.

Every Christian who is truly submitted to the Bible’s authority needs to be alert to this recent development and clear about the consequences of these doubts and denials. No matter how well intended, they undermine the gospel and will lead to its eventual loss. If it is not true that all human beings descend from Adam, then the entire history of redemption, as taught in Scripture, unravels. The result is no redemptive history in any credible or coherent sense, and so the loss of redemptive history in any meaningful sense.

The reasons given for this recent questioning of the church’s historic confession concerning the origin and descent of humanity are of two sorts: scientific and exegetical. Accumulating

results in several fields – primarily paleontology, archaeology, anthropology, and, especially in the past couple of decades, genetics – allegedly make it virtually certain that all human beings have not descended from an original pair. The claim that everyone living today has the same “first parents” is deemed no longer credible.

These scientific findings, in turn, have prompted reconsideration of Scripture, principally Genesis 2-4. Science is perceived as forcing us to acknowledge that, on a literal reading of this passage, some details simply do not cohere with the view that all human beings descend from Adam and Eve. For example, often cited is the long-recognized problem of where wives for Adam’s sons came from.

The rest of this article will not deal directly with these scientific claims, but rather with the biblical and theological views usually associated with them, including implications and conclusions drawn for interpreting Scripture. This focus doesn’t mean to suggest that these claims can be easily dismissed or simply ignored. But evaluating them in a scientifically responsible fashion is beyond my competence, as it is for most Christians. I highly regard those who are knowledgeable and have expertise in scientific areas like those mentioned above. And there is an urgent need, as never before, for Christians qualified in these and other fields.

The relationship between Scripture and science

Where I am confident is that the biblical and theological considerations sketched here briefly are mandatory for any constructive Christian interest or direct involvement in scientific inquiry into matters like the origin of humanity. Those with the doubts we are considering often plead for a cooperative effort between scientists and theologians in honestly considering the available scientific evidence in a way that also maintains requisite biblical doctrine. That is surely a laudable goal. But when I ask myself what such collaboration looks like for theologians, I’m left with the answer that I make not only my best, but also my necessary, contribution by being resolutely insistent on the comments that follow, subject, of course, to being corrected where I may be in error. I’m also bound to ask these scientists whether they shouldn’t reconsider at least aspects of the divinely guided (“theistic”) macroevolutionary model of human origins to which most, if not all, of them appear to be committed.

Not a “Galileo moment”

The view that questions whether Adam is the first human being from whom all others descend is itself questionable in its general approach to Scripture in at least two respects. Both reflect adversely on the clarity of Scripture. First, scientific

findings are being given priority in the sense that they are seen as necessitating a rejection and consequent reinterpretation of what has heretofore been considered certain, as well as basic, biblical teaching. In that regard, let's not suppose that we are faced here with yet one more "Galileo moment," where Christians need to adjust their thinking and get on board with science. Plainly at issue here is not an aspect of our ever-changing understanding of the physical workings of our environment and the universe at large, but perennial and unchanging matters that are basic to who we are as human beings – what it means to be created in God's image and the kind of relationship with him that that entails.

Certainly, God's saving revelation culminating in Christ, sufficiently and authoritatively inscripturated for us, cannot be understood by itself, apart from his self-revelation in nature. Both creation, "a most beautiful book" (Belgic Confession, article 2), and Scripture are necessary for knowing and living before God and with others. But the reciprocal relationship that marks these two "books" and their study is asymmetrical. Scripture, not nature, always has priority in the sense that in it God reveals himself, as the Belgic Confession also says, "more clearly and openly," particularly on matters basic to our identity as human beings and our relationship to him.

As Calvin has memorably put it, Scripture provides the "spectacles"

that enable human beings to read aright the whole of created reality, including themselves as his image-bearers, as a self-revelation of God. As a general rule, then, human scientific disciplines, in their study of general revelation, must always defer to inscripturated special revelation. The view that holds that we can no longer confess that Scripture teaches the descent of all human beings from Adam has effectively reversed this rule. Scripture is being made to yield to science.

Paul is very clear

This leads, secondly, to the observation that this view is also defective because it maintains that Scripture is unclear and less than certain about the origin and descent of humanity. To focus primarily on problems in Genesis 2-4 is myopic. Since Scripture is self-interpreting, this passage, like any other, is to be understood in light of the Bible as a whole, and any passage with difficulties, like this one, is to be interpreted in light of other passages that speak more clearly (WCF 1.9).

As a general rule, within the unfolding history of God's special revelation consummated in Christ and recorded for the church in the completed canon of Scripture, the Old Testament is to be read in light of the New. Every passage is to be read from the vantage point of God's speaking "by his Son" in "these last days" (Heb. 1:2). Specifically, in the overall profile of biblical revelation,

it has been given to Paul, as an apostle of Christ, to speak about the origin of humanity in a way that has a clear and decisive bearing on the matters we are considering. That happens principally in two places: Romans 5:12–19 and 1 Corinthians 15:21–22, 45–49.

Adam as the "first" man, and Christ as the "second"

The central interest of both passages is plainly the person and work of Christ. Equally plain in both passages are

1. the sweeping historical outlook on Christ and the salvation he has accomplished
2. and within this historical outlook and fundamental to it, a contrast with Adam.

In 1 Corinthians 15:44b–49, this perspective is the most comprehensive possible, covering nothing less than the whole of human history from its beginning to its end, from the original creation to its consummation. Accordingly, in verse 45, Adam as he was by virtue of his creation and before the Fall (Adam in Genesis 2) is contrasted with Christ, "the last Adam," as he is by virtue of his resurrection.

In Romans 5 and the earlier verses in 1 Corinthians 15, the scope of the historical outlook is only slightly less comprehensive; on the one side, Adam is in view as he was after the Fall, as a

ROMANS 5:12–19 (ESV)

Death in Adam, Life in Christ

12 Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned— **13** for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. **14** Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. **15** But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. **16** And the free gift is not like the result of that one

man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. **17** For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. **18** Therefore, as one trespassed to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. **19** For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.

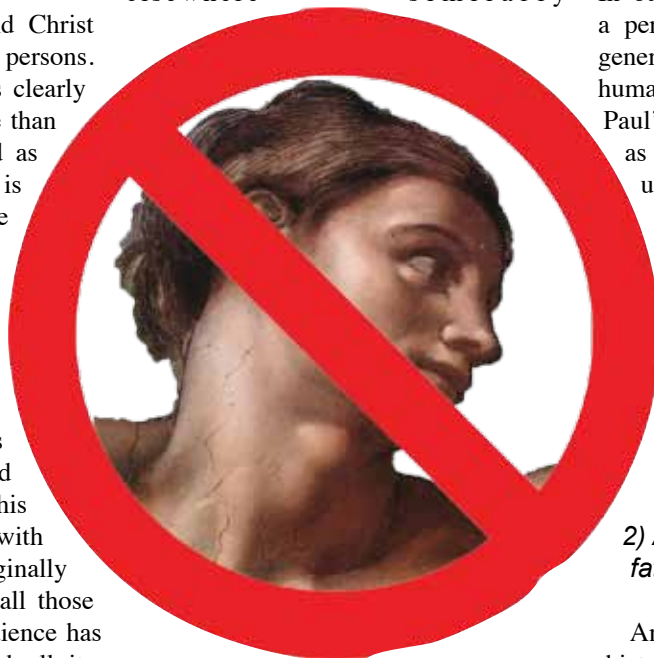
sinner (Adam in Genesis 3). For Paul, redemptive history has its clear and consummate ending with Christ only as it has a definite and identifiable beginning with Adam.

In both passages, Adam and Christ are clearly in view as individual persons. But as individuals they no less clearly have a significance that is more than individual. They are contrasted as each represents others, as each is a head in a way that is decisive for those “in him.” This union-based contrast exhibits the representative or federal principle that is at the root of the Bible’s covenant theology taught, for instance, in the Westminster standards. This teaching may be summarized like this: as Adam by his disobedience has brought sin with all its consequences into the originally good creation for himself and all those “in him,” so Christ by his obedience has brought salvation from sin and all its consequences for those “in him.”

The significance of the identifying terms in the contrast must not be missed. Christ in his saving work is “second” and “last”; Adam is “first” (1 Cor. 15:45, 47). The uniquely pivotal place of each in the unfolding of redemptive history, at its beginning and end, is such that no one else “counts.” Only Adam, in his representative role in union or solidarity with “all,” is the “type of the one who was to come” (Rom. 5:14). As Christ is the omega-point of redemptive history, so Adam is its alpha-point.

It cannot be stressed too emphatically that these passages teach that essential to Christ’s work of saving sinful human beings is his full solidarity with them, personal sin excepted, as he is “second” and “last,” and that he has, and can only have, this identity as Adam is “first.” If Adam was not the first man, who fell into sin, then the work of Christ loses its meaning. Without the “first” man, Adam, there is no place for Christ as either “second” or “last.” The integrity and coherence of redemptive history in its entirety depends on this contrast. It is simply not true, as some claim, that

whether or not Adam was the first human being is a question that leaves the gospel unaffected, at least if we accept the clear teaching of these passages. Paul is elsewhere similarly



If there was no first Adam, how can there be a second?

clear: Christ’s resurrection, the final judgment, and the attendant call for all people everywhere to repent, all stand or fall with the fact that God has made from one man every nation of mankind (Acts 17:26–30).

Other interpretations of Adam

How do those who deny that all human beings descend from Adam, and yet wish to remain committed to the authority of Scripture as in some sense God’s Word, understand the references to Adam in these passages - and others, like Luke 3:38, 1 Timothy 2:13–14, and Jude 14? It appears that two approaches are being taken: the first denies the historicity of Adam; the second affirms his historicity, but denies that he was the first human being and father of the entire human race.

1) Adam didn’t exist

On the former view, Paul, like the other New Testament writers, may well have

believed that Adam was a real, historical person, but that belief is immaterial for his teaching and can be jettisoned without detriment to the gospel or faith in Christ. In our passages, “Adam” is supposedly a personification either of humanity in general or of Israel as a nation for all humanity; Adam is everyone. He serves Paul’s purposes as a “teaching model,” as it has been put, to highlight the universality of human sinfulness.

Suffice it here to note that this view flatly contradicts the sustained emphasis in Romans 5 on Adam’s sin as the one sin of the one man, distinct from the sinning of “many” or “all.” To conclude that the historicity of Adam is irrelevant for Paul is, in fact, to make responsible exegesis irrelevant.

2) Adam did exist but he wasn’t our father

Another view affirms Adam’s historicity, but denies that he is the first human being. At least some who take this view assert that Adam is “first” in the sense that at some point in human history God set him apart as a representative from among a considerable number of already existing human beings for the dealings with humanity that he initiated at that point.

But this view is faced with an insuperable difficulty: Adam is not simply the “first”; he is the “first” in relation to those who “have borne [his] image” (1 Cor. 15:49). People can hardly be described as image-bearers of Adam if they either existed before him or subsequently have not descended from him. Adam is the representative of all who, by descending from him, are in natural union or solidarity with him, and he represents only them. It is not enough today for Christians simply to affirm the historicity of Adam.

This is not a minor point. Paul is clear in verse 49. Believers will bear Christ’s heavenly image, the redeemed and glorified image of God, as they have borne Adam’s earthly image, the original image of God subsequently defaced by sin. It is quite foreign to this passage, especially

given its comprehensive outlook noted above, to suppose that some who do not bear the image of Adam will bear the glory-image of Christ. There is no hope of salvation for sinners who do not bear the image of Adam by ordinary generation. Christ cannot and does not redeem what he has not assumed, and what he has assumed is the nature of those who bear the image of Adam, and as they do so by natural descent.

The implications of denying Adam's priority

By now it should be clear that questioning or denying the descent of all humanity from Adam as the first human being has far-reaching implications for the Christian faith. It radically alters the understanding of sin, particularly concerning the origin and nature of human depravity, with the corresponding abandonment of any meaningful notion of the guilt of sin. It radically alters the understanding of salvation, especially

in eclipsing or even denying Christ's death as a substitutionary atonement that propitiates God's just and holy wrath against sin. And it radically alters the understanding of the Savior, by stressing his humanity, especially the exemplary aspects of his person and work, to the extent of minimizing or even denying his deity.

I don't have room here to detail these implications, so instead I commend the following more extensive treatments, among others, as particularly helpful: *Is Adam a "Teaching Model" in the New Testament?* by J. P. Versteeg; Robert B. Strimple's chapter, "Was Adam Historical?" in *Confident of Better Things*; and Michael Reeves's chapter, "Adam and Eve," in *Should Christians Embrace Evolution?* I conclude with the closing words of Versteeg's study:

As the first historical man and head of humanity, Adam is not mentioned merely in passing in the New Testament. The redemptive-historical

correlation between Adam and Christ determines the framework in which – particularly for Paul – the redemptive work of Christ has its place. That work of redemption can no longer be confessed according to the meaning of Scripture, if it is divorced from the framework in which it stands there. Whoever divorces the work of redemption from the framework in which it stands in Scripture no longer allows the Word to function as the norm that determines everything. There has been no temptation down through the centuries that theology has been more exposed to than this temptation. There is no danger that theology has more to fear than this danger.

The author, an OPC minister, is a professor emeritus at Westminster Theological Seminary. He quotes the ESV. The above article is taken from the March 2012 edition of New Horizons with permission.



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Should Introverts be expected to act like Extroverts?

by Sharon L. Bratcher

“You are a wonderful person, and I like you. But now please shush.”

This quotation from a tongue-in-cheek article by Jonathan Rauch in *The Atlantic Monthly* summed up his premise that Extroverts do not understand or fully appreciate Introverts. Although I knew that I was an Extrovert, I found the actual definitions a bit surprising.

Tiring... or energizing?

Introverts are people who “find other people tiring,” who need to re-charge after a certain amount of socializing. They mull things over inside their brains and then talk about them. Being alone with their thoughts is as “restorative as sleeping, as nourishing as eating.” One suggested motto for them is, “I’m okay, you’re okay... in small doses.” Rauch’s own formula is that he needs “two hours alone for every hour of socializing.” A Google search estimates that about 25 per cent of people are truly Introverts, but in the “gifted” community they are a majority.

Extroverts are “energized by people, and wilt or fade when alone.” They figure things out by discussing them with other people, and think by talking. They tend to dominate social settings with their “endless appetite for talk and attention.”

Understanding is a one-way street

Society in general views Extrovert behavior as more desirable, and this can sometimes be taken to a fault when Introvert behavior is criticized or not appreciated for its strengths. For instance, an Extrovert might be described as outgoing, happy, bighearted, vibrant, warm, and as a confident leader who is “a real people person.” Introverts are often described as loners, reserved, guarded, and taciturn (inclined to silence, reserved in

speech, reluctant to join in conversation). It is as though an individual’s worth is determined only by their observable interactions in a group.

Rauch suggests that Introverts more often understand Extroverts because the latter put all of their thoughts and feelings out on the table. His concern as an Introvert is that

Extroverts have no idea of the torment they put us through.... Extroverts have little or no grasp of introversion. They assume that company, especially their own, is always welcome. They cannot imagine why someone would need to be alone; indeed, they often take umbrage at the suggestion.

I wonder if any other Extroverts find themselves cringing and remembering times when they, too, felt offended because someone didn’t want their company.

Other differences

Extroverts tend to think that a lull in conversation is a bad thing, and they can feed off small talk or deep conversation and enjoy large groups. Introverts need more time to think through what they will say and tend to dislike small talk while enjoying more meaningful discussion, especially in a more private setting.

Extroverts feel a need to “draw out” the Introverts and get them to participate, because to them participation is essential. Since they cannot imagine that a person might enjoy sitting quietly off to the side, they take on the role of *encourager*. Unfortunately, it often comes across to the Introvert as *controller* instead.

Smiley face ☺

Expectations exist regarding facial

expressions, too. Smiles are expected as part of good manners, so we give them whether we feel like it or not. Often if a person’s face goes to its default serious expression, people jump to the conclusion that he is upset or depressed, whereas he might just be pondering a weighty subject or listening to conversations around him. Rauch suggests that Introverts may be less smiley, but not necessarily less joyful.

The differences are something to be considered with regard to church and family activities. As one Introvert explained to me, “At Ladies’ Bible Study, I often start formulating an answer to a question, but by the time I figure out what I want to say they have all gone on to a new subject or maybe even several subjects, so I rarely get to say anything.” Perhaps this is why some people feel more at home studying the Bible and praying with only a few friends. I wonder if our quick-sound-bite culture has lured us away from valuing long pauses with time to reflect? I’ve read that in some Japanese company meetings, they present the information and then sit in silence for a long time while everyone just thinks. What an Introverted thing to do!

My friend went on to say, “The same thing happens when our entire family is together.” Some family members would prefer more two-on-two social activities and fewer or less lengthy whole group situations. It is possible to consider both the Extrovert’s and the Introvert’s preferences.

Conclusion

God tells us to love one another, and the more we understand one another, the more we will know how to keep this commandment. We may have lived our entire life thus far “not knowing what we didn’t know.”

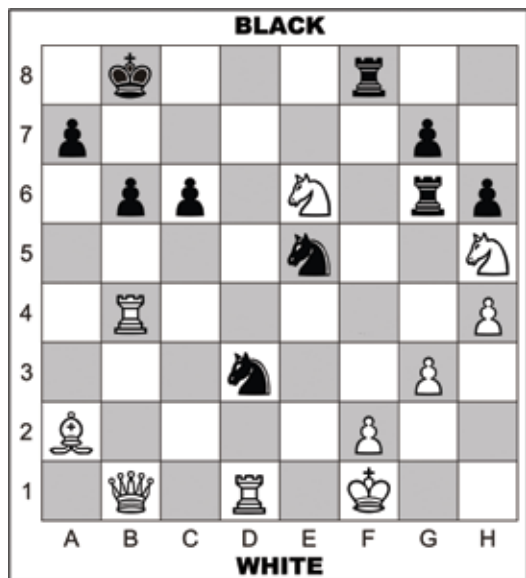
But now, we know.



ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

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

Chess Puzzle # 188



WHITE to Mate in 4
Or, if it is BLACK's Move,
BLACK to Mate in 3

NEW PUZZLES

Riddle for Punsters #188 – "Counting on Mathematics"

S__ students are really good at math and later on, when they have a full time job, they can make a big d_____e in how p_____e they are, and their work can produce big d_____, especially for company shareholders!

Problem to Ponder #188 – "Lawn Care with Cash to Spare?"

Benjamin has a lawn area of about 600 m². A flyer from a lawn care company indicated that they would, during the spring and summer, apply fertilizer and weed killer a total of three times for \$129 (tax included). Ben decides to do his own lawn care. For bags of fertilizer that will each cover 900 m² he pays \$22.95 plus 12% tax. Ben also pays \$19.00 plus 12% tax for concentrated weed killer (that he adds water to before using). The diluted weed killer will treat his lawn three times with some concentrate left over. To apply the weed killer Ben needs a large pump sprayer for which he pays \$29.00 plus 12% tax.

- How much money does Benjamin save by doing the lawn care himself?
- If he spends 3.5 hours total preparing the weed killer and applying it and the lawn fertilizer, how much money does he "pay himself" per hour, using the money he saved by "buying and applying" everything himself?

SOLUTIONS TO THE APRIL PUZZLE PAGE

Answers to Riddles for Punsters #187 – "Counting the Cost of Continuing"

Mr. Mortgagemaker wanted his daughter to work in his credit union when she was finished college. However, she had not shown much interest in a career in a financial institution and he did not want to teller what to do. At least they could spend time fishing together on a local river bank.

Answers to Problem to Ponder #187 – "The Winner's Name Begins with 'D'"

Five boys at Marty's fifth birthday party decided to have a race across a field. In alphabetical order, the boys' names were Dale, Dan, Dave, Dennis and Doug. Dave beat at least two boys, including Dennis. Only two boys finished behind Dan but Doug was not one of them. Dennis did not finish last nor did Dave finish first. In what order did the boys finish the race?

The order of finishing the race, from first to last, was:
Doug, Dave, Dan, Dennis and Dale.

SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 187

WHITE to Mate in 4

Descriptive Notation

- QxP ch NxB
- N-R6 ch K-B1
- N-K6 ch K-K1
- KBxP mate

IF

- QxPch K-B1
- N-K6ch K-K1
- KBxP mate

Algebraic Notation

- Qh2xh7 + Nf6xh7
- Ng4-h6 + Kg8-f8
- Nf4-e6 + Kf8-e8
- Be4xg6 ++

IF

- Qh2xh7 + Kg8-f8
- Nf4-e6 + Kf8-e8
- Be4xg6 ++



BLACK to Mate in 2

Descriptive Notation

- R-Q8 ch
- RxR RxR mate

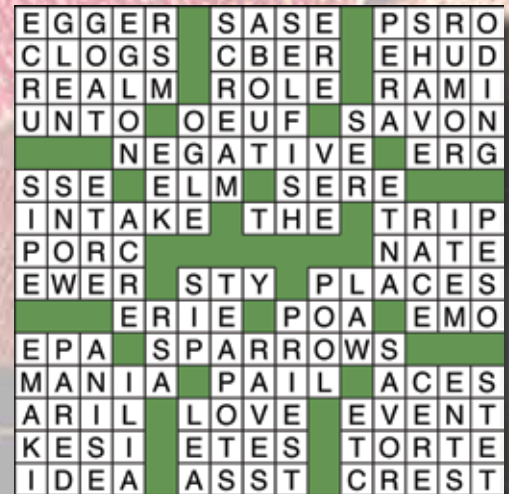
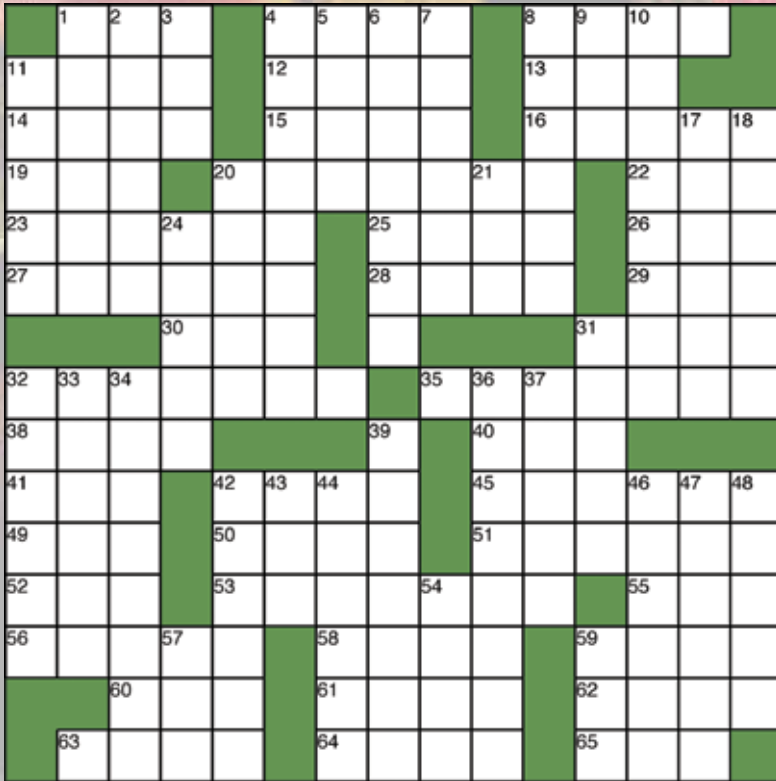
Algebraic Notation

- Rd7-d1 +
- Rh1xd1 Rd8xd1 ++

Crossword Puzzle

Series 19 No 3

Last Month's solution
Series 19 No 2



ACROSS:

1. A sibling, for short
4. History
8. Source of heat
11. Long journey
12. Hoop's partner
13. Lyric poem
14. Woven fibers used for tying things up
15. Makes angry
16. Makes a home for eggs
19. Suffix for certain groups of people
20. Sloped
22. The heavy metal weight of a pendulum
23. Pure, or stainless
25. Rat-sized burrowing rodent
26. Mineral
27. Regard highly
28. Border
29. Ribonucleic acid, for short
30. Absente ____, in the absence of the defendant
31. Sly look
32. Spiny anteater
35. Grants, or bestows

38. An inexperienced person
40. US tax service (abbr.)
41. Explosive material
42. Member of a South African people
45. French siblings
49. Decay
50. ____-Ude, Russian city
51. Castle topper
52. Man's name
53. "Still waters ____"
- (2 words)
55. Consumed
56. Female given name; Spanish opera singer
58. Wing-like
59. Small cut
60. Et cetera
61. Sea eagle
62. Certain colored horses
63. Bach. Of Sci. in Chemistry
64. Female given name, in Old English, meaning "eagle"
65. King of Judah

DOWN:

1. Thin soup stocks
2. Say again
3. Unit of weight in Turkey
4. NT Bible book
5. Atmosphere or sensation
6. Slim
7. Tried the flavor
8. Swiss dish of hot liquid in which food is cooked
9. Integrated Drive Electronics (abbr.)
10. One who returns something to its original state
11. A very short time, of old
17. Rotated
18. Asparagus stalks
20. Horse
21. Breakfast item
24. Computer font
31. One who does not win
32. Snare
33. Plant used for cooking oil
34. Ancient peoples of the Old Testament
36. One of the large spaces under the arachnoid membrane
37. Bad coughing condition
39. One who makes into bundles
42. A certain lake, or city in Switzerland
43. Inuit knife
44. Woolly
46. The planet that is seventh in order from the sun
47. Part of the eye
48. Stair parts
54. Make a living
57. Toronto Transit Commission, for short
59. Specific dynamic action (abbr.)

Joyce