

**REFORMED**

# Perspective

**A MAGAZINE  
FOR THE  
CHRISTIAN  
FAMILY**

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*A case for  
Age-integration in Bible studies*

# I don't have to save the world

Social Studies teachers, you have to understand, are a unique group. Math teachers want to teach about numbers and French teachers want you to learn proper verb conjugations and sentence structure. We Social Studies teachers, however, don't really want to set out the facts of Confederation, the U.S. Civil War, or the geography of the Canadian Shield. Social Studies teachers want to save the world.

It's a sort of occupational hazard.

Social Studies teachers spend a lot of class time talking about government structures, poverty, standards of living, racism, and the Third World. At some point, you start to wonder what you can do about it and if in some tiny way you can put a stop to these problems. Amid all the discussions about social issues and things that have gone wrong, you quite naturally hope for and look for something to go right. You can either become cynical because the task is so huge or you can become idealistic and set out to save the world.

## **No matter how amazing the teacher...**

It was a group of these idealists that I joined last week to discuss fascinating approaches to teaching history in the Social Studies classroom. This was a group full of amazing people. Any Social Studies teacher worth his salt would have to feel just a little intimidated in the middle of this group. Their ideas were innovative, and their success in getting the students to accept and buy into their ideas astounded me.

Their innovative teaching, and creative projects had ensured that their low-achieving, dispirited students were encouraged to take steps to defeat racism or even attack poverty. Let me tell you, these teachers had accomplished some amazing things.

Yet there was a point during my workshop when someone realized that however many students we got to live, decent, moral lives, and however many projects we ran to end poverty, or racism, or whatever plagued people's lives, ultimately we really weren't going to change anything. The world was still going to be a nasty, brutish place.

As that realization sunk in, a cloud of depression hung over the room. You could feel the gloom as people realized that, when push comes to shove, our best efforts really don't make a significant difference. Our part of the world could be tidied up just a bit, but the soil from the rest of the globe was just going to dirty it again.

## **A biblical, realistic outlook**

What struck me at that moment was that I wasn't depressed. Every day I go into my Social Studies classes and teach my students about government structures, standards of living, racism, and poverty. I challenge them to get out and do something about it. Yet however brilliant my teaching, and however masterful my lesson, I know that it probably won't change much. That's not defeatist; I'm only being properly humble.

My Calvinist worldview reminds me that people



are basically a mess and to expect that to be different is unrealistic. So it's no surprise that those students who I do manage to motivate are highly unlikely to change the world. And I'm okay with that.

### The proper understanding of success

My job as a Christian teacher isn't to change the world. That's far too big for someone as small as me. My job is to help my students develop their talents to the glory of God. That may mean some of them go on to battle poverty in Africa, or disease in Asia, or homelessness right here in the worst part of this city's downtown. It may mean that others become housewives, businessmen, taxi drivers, restaurant servers, or garbage men. Some might even become Social Studies teachers. Whatever they do, I hope - and pray - they'll do it to God's glory. If they "succeed" or "fail" at their chosen tasks, the final results are not really up to them. They're up to God.

I find that very comforting. If the students seem impossible, and my lesson seems improbable, and the end results look, at best, unclear, I can rest assured that someone has control of the situation who is far more powerful than I am or could ever aspire to be. On those days when it's all too overwhelming this is an enormous help.

As I think about it, I'm honestly puzzled how my secular colleagues who believe in the innate goodness of humanity can get up and go to work in the morning. As that group of idealistic teachers in my seminar silently acknowledged, we have no real hope of solving the big issues. If you're trusting in humanity to save itself, the best you can hope for is depression because you have no real hope.

I thank God I don't have that problem.

*James Dykstra teaches Social Studies in  
Winnipeg, Manitoba.*



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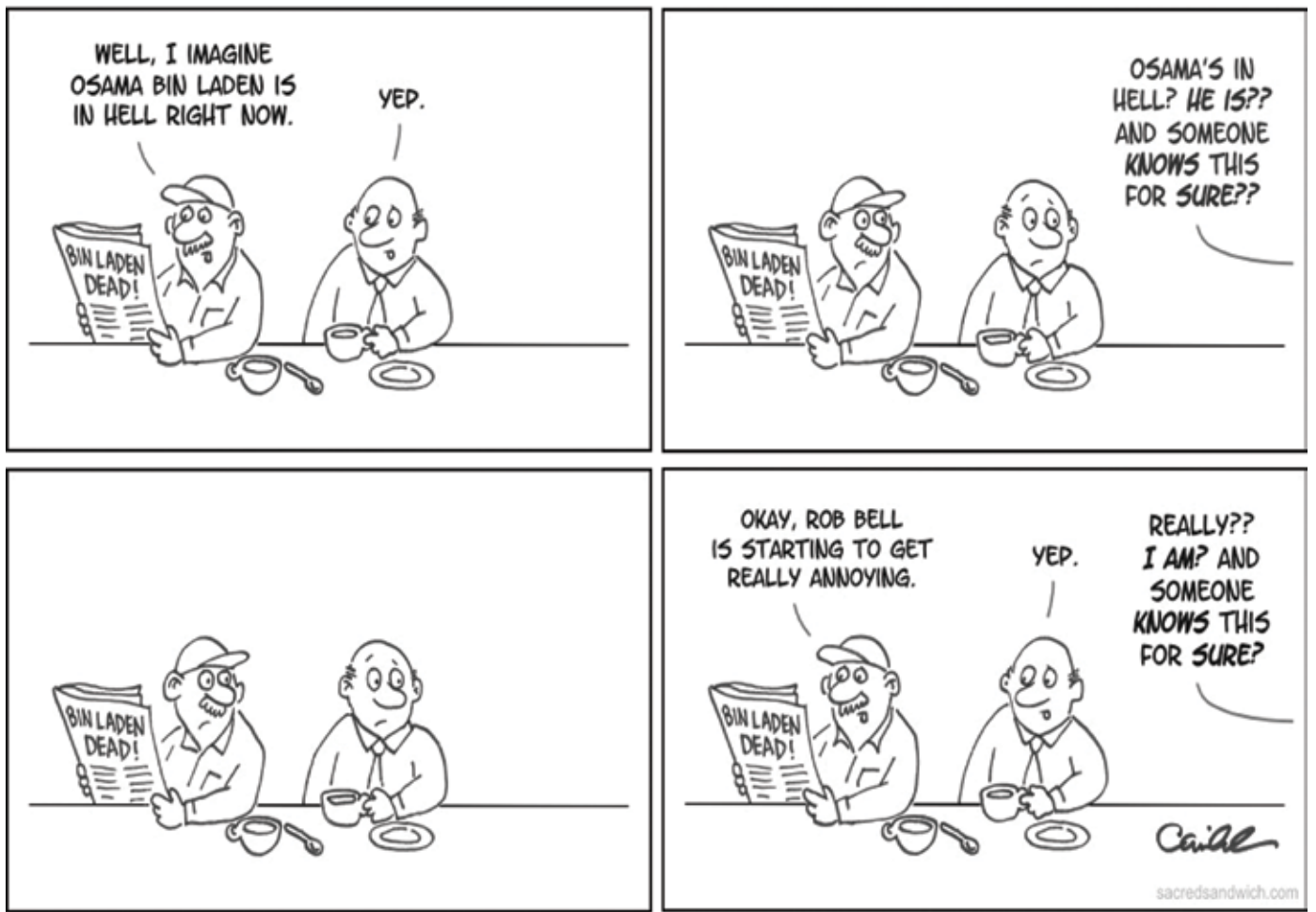
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# Nota Bene

## News worth noting



### The sudden end of *News of the World* by Jeff Dykstra

In July, *News of the World* – a British tabloid with a circulation of over 2 million, and a history reaching back 160 years – was forced to close its doors when it lost most of its advertising revenue. The advertisers left after it was discovered that the paper had, allegedly, been hacking into the cellphones of celebrities, deceased soldiers, terror-attack victims and even a 13-year-old girl who was found dead after going missing.

Owner Rupert Murdoch announced the closing, saying,

“While we may never be able to make up for distress that has been caused, the right thing to do is for every penny of the circulation revenue we receive this [last] weekend to go to organizations – many of whom are long-term friends and part-

ners – that improve life in Britain and are devoted to treating others with dignity.”



Outrage over the newspaper's methods caused several advertisers and a veteran's association to end their contracts and contacts with the paper, and this “boycott” started without any formal campaign, petition, or government action. If Christians are as quick to end our patronage

of institutions that offend our values, or to start shopping exclusively at places operating in harmony with God's law (for example, no sales of pornography or lottery tickets; no Sunday hours), the effect could be equally dramatic.

SOURCE: [usatoday.com](http://usatoday.com), 7/7/2011, as found on [www.pluggedin.ca/cultureclips/2011/2011-07-11.aspx](http://www.pluggedin.ca/cultureclips/2011/2011-07-11.aspx)

### Six-day shirts that speak by Jon Dykstra

Following in the footsteps of the pro-life group Abort73.com, Creation Ministries International (CMI) has started using clothing to publicize their website address. The campaign is called “Question Evolution” and this slogan, along with the Creation.com website address, are being printed on T-shirts, hats, stickers and cups.

The reason for the campaign is simple: like the folks at Abort73.com, CMI has an amazing website with answers to almost any conceivable question a skeptic might ask. However the website is not widely known outside of Christian circles, so CMI hopes to broaden its impact by using supporters as billboards. In addition, the shirts will help Christians who understand that God created in six-days, but who may not feel comfortable speaking up – the shirt can serve as their means of taking a stand, and as a way of answering those who have inquiries: “You have to check out this website!”

The one notable difference between the Abort73.com campaign, and the one being conducted by CMI is the variety and appeal of the shirts. Whereas Abort73.com offers dozens of varieties in a host of different colors and designs, so far the CMI campaign has only two designs, on white T-shirts. So perhaps someone out there with design expertise can give them a hand.

For more information on the campaign see [Creation.com/question-evolution](http://Creation.com/question-evolution). And to order shirts, hats or cups, see [www.cafepress.com/creationstuff](http://www.cafepress.com/creationstuff).



## Canada's NDP shows its true colors

by Jeff Dykstra

If anyone doubted that the NDP is hostile to Christianity in action, all you need to do is look at the latest resolution, unanimously passed by NDP delegates at their recent policy convention in Vancouver, to revoke the charitable status of groups like Exodus, which seek to help homosexuals leave their same-sex attraction behind. The NDP resolution was supposedly based on the latest scientific consensus.

LifeSiteNews.com's report on this event makes it clear that there is abundant scientific research demonstrating the benefits of leaving the homosexual lifestyle. Of course, Christians do not need the latest research to realize the problems with a sinful lifestyle or the benefits of leaving it.

Besides confirming that the officially pro-abortion NDP opposes our Christian values, this event also shows that Christians are desperately needed in Parliament and in the field of psychology to bring forward clear Christian thinking about the benefits of morality and the need for true freedom of religion in society.

SOURCE: <http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/canadas-opposition-ndp-call-for-removal-of-charitable-status-for-ex-gay-gro>

## Canada leaves Afghanistan - was it worth it?

by Jeff Dykstra

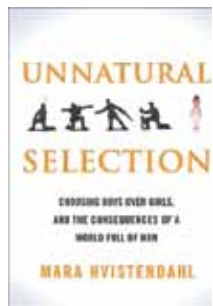
Canada is winding up its military presence in Afghanistan, with the vast majority expected to leave by December of this year. As Canada leaves, Neil Reynolds, a *Globe and Mail* columnist, asks and answers the question as to whether its mission there was worth the cost in dollars and lives. He gives a qualified yes.

His reasoning matches up with a command found in the Bible – the government is charged with using force to punish evil (Romans 13). Reynolds notes the actions of the U.S., Canada, and others punished the Taliban for harboring and training those who organized the 9/11 attacks (which also killed Canadian citizens).

As well, Canada's presence in Afghanistan matches what Psalm 82 says

## Pro-choice author presents the stark consequences of abortion

by Jon Dykstra



Journalist Mara Hvistendahl supports abortion but doesn't like one of its results – girls are being aborted at a much higher rate than boys. In *Unnatural Selection: Choosing Boys Over Girls and the Consequences of a World Full of Men* she outlines just how high that rate has become. Normally there are 105 boys born for every 100 girls – that is the natural rate. Today, however

“...in India there are 112 boys born for every 100 girls. In China, the number is 121 - though plenty of Chinese towns are over the 150 mark... But the imbalance is not only in Asia. Azerbaijan stands at 115, Georgia at 118 and Armenia at 120.”

Over the last 30 years Ms. Hvistendahl estimates that at least 163 million girls, who by biological averages should

have been born, are missing. This is a result that even a pro-abortion advocate like Hvistendahl objects to and her solution is to make it illegal for parents to learn the gender of their child. Abortion would still be allowed, but not “sex-selection” abortions. However, as *The Wall Street Journal's* Jonathan Last notes:

“...[I]f ‘choice’ is the moral imperative guiding abortion, then there is no way to take a stand against ‘gendercide.’ Aborting a baby because she is a girl is no different from aborting a baby because she has Down syndrome or because the mother’s ‘mental health’ requires it. Choice is choice. One Indian abortionist tells Ms. Hvistendahl: ‘I have patients who come and say “I want to abort because if this baby is born it will be a Gemini, but I want a Libra.”’

“This is where choice leads. This is where choice has already led. Ms. Hvistendahl may wish the matter otherwise, but there are only two alternatives: Restrict abortion or accept the slaughter of millions of baby girls and the calamities that are likely to come with it.”

SOURCE: *The Wall Street Journal*, June 18, 2011, Jonathan V. Last's “The War Against Girls”

about protecting the weak. Our soldiers there have certainly helped the women of that country experience freedom from Islamist oppression, and have opened a door for the spread of the Gospel there.



However, whether it was wise for the U.S. to invade countries in the Middle East is a matter on which Christians can and do disagree. For example, Charles

Colson does not believe that the war in Iraq fit a Christian view of just war theory. And others have noted that Christian persecution continues in these countries – in Afghanistan there is still a law against the conversion of Muslims. So some question how much good has been done.

One clear lesson we can take from the wars of the last ten years is that our armed forces – as powerful as they might be – do not offer us a simple solution to the troubles we face. We must not pin our hopes on them; we must not make an idol out of our military power. Let us pray even more for

our leaders to exercise Biblical wisdom both in the goals and the strategies of international conflicts.

SOURCE: *Globe and Mail* July 11, 2011, “Defining ‘success’ in Afghanistan and Iraq”



### Commercial exposes pro-choice hypocrisy with humor

by Jon Dykstra

It looks like a typical baby shower but instead of what you might expect, the sign on the wall reads: “Uterine Contents Shower.” This is the opening shot in a very creative commercial by the BC-based pro-life group Signal Hill.

The commercial, called “Language of Abortion,” captures the common events that happen during a pregnancy – baby showers, doctor visits, and getting the nursery ready – but uses pro-choice terminology to talk about them. So from the “Uterine Contents Shower” we cut to a doctor’s waiting room where one lady asks another, “So, is this your first lump of cells?” In the last scene, a mother rubbing her large belly sings “Hush little blob of tissue, don’t say a word...” The commercial ends by pointing out that “The Language of abortion is confusing. What are we trying to hide?” and then provides viewers with information on how they can learn more.

So far almost a half million people have seen this commercial on YouTube and on various university and state pro-life groups’ websites. It effectively exposes how dishonest abortion advocates’ language really is, but because it does so with humor, the message reaches many who would otherwise have turned away and refused to hear. Because of its creativity it stands a good chance of being heard... and being considered. Bravo Signal Hill – keep them coming!

To check out their “Language of Abortion” commercial for yourself see [YouTube.com/user/TheSignalHill](http://YouTube.com/user/TheSignalHill)

SOURCE: [www.thesignalhill.com](http://www.thesignalhill.com). Picture provided by Signal Hill

### A pro-life horror film?

by Jon Dykstra

The film’s plot summary seems like something straight out of pro-abortion Hollywood – radical pro-lifers kidnap three pregnant young women from an abortion clinic and hold them prisoner for seven months, until it is time for them to give birth to their babies. However *The Life Zone*’s producer says this is a “pro-life horror film” with a twist at the end that will highlight the anti-abortion moral.

Is a horror film the appropriate vehicle for conveying a pro-life message? Abortion involves horror, certainly, but it

is not to be found in the actions of pro-lifers. We don’t abduct and terrorize vulnerable young women, and any film that portrays pro-lifers as out to control women and their bodies is promoting the abortion advocates’ caricature of the pro-life movement.

Other films have shown that it is possible to present the pro-life message in a compelling way onscreen. Two recent ones, *Bella* and *Sarah’s Choice*, both show a young pregnant girl choosing not to abort, and wrestling with the difficulties that follow. A drama, in which we see relatable characters reason through the decision-making process, would seem a much

### Standing up for modesty

by Anna Nienhuis

European Championship basketball tournament officials recently said they would ban Israeli player Naama Shafir from playing if she insisted on wearing a T-shirt under her uniform, as tournament rules state that all team members wear identical uniforms.

An Orthodox Jew, part of Shafir’s religion observance requires modesty, including keeping your shoulders covered. Her T-shirt was never an issue while playing college basketball in the United States, where efforts were also made to schedule team practices around the Sabbath, as practicing constituted “work” according to her religion, which meant she had to refrain (though actually playing in games was considered “recreation” and therefore allowed on the Sabbath).

Shafir says she hopes to be an inspiration to other Orthodox girls who feel they must choose between religion and sport, and she refused to compromise, vowing not to play if she could not maintain her modesty standards. After an appeal, an agreement was reached in which she could wear skin-toned elastic sleeves and so compete for Israel in the Championship.

While we may not agree with the legalistic and seemingly contradictory nature of Shafir’s religious beliefs, her determination to stand up for them is admirable.

Source: “T-shirt spat might sideline female Israeli basketball star”; [foxnews.com](http://foxnews.com), June 9, 2011; Zach Silka’s “Shafir stays true to her beliefs”; [toledoblade.com](http://toledoblade.com), Apr 5, 2011 and “UT’s Shafir allowed to compete for Israel”, June 19, 2011



Scene from *The Life Zone*

better vehicle for the pro-life message.

Source: Rebecca Keegan’s “Two movies with anti-abortion messages seek distribution”; [latimesblogs.latimes.com](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com); June 7, 2011 & “Pro-life horror movie premieres in New Jersey”; [conservativebyte.com](http://conservativebyte.com); June 6, 2011 & Irin Carmon’s “A horror film where women are forced to give birth”; [jezebel.com](http://jezebel.com); June 3, 2011



# Premier and preacher

Ernest Manning offered Christian leadership in an age of increasing Secularism

by Michael Wagner

The life of a Christian in Canadian politics is frequently difficult. A Christian who isn't shy about his faith will often be vilified – just recall how Stockwell Day was treated when he was leader of the Canadian Alliance. So it's accepted wisdom that it's best for a believer to keep quiet about his Christianity and issues like abortion and homosexual rights. Generally speaking, this is the current approach of the Christian MPs in the Conservative Party caucus.

## What is, wasn't always

But it wasn't always like this in Canada. The man who still holds the record as the second longest-serving provincial premier was, at that same time, also *an evangelical radio preacher!* During the 25 years he was Alberta's premier, Ernest Manning continued his "other job" and at its height, his radio program was carried on over 90 stations, reaching all across Canada.

He was an openly conservative Christian (publicly describing himself as a "fundamentalist") and did not separate his religion from his work as a political leader.

In 2008 the first complete biography of Manning was written by Brian Brennan, *The Good Steward: The Ernest C. Manning Story* (Fifth House Ltd). It's an excellent introduction to the man that the *Calgary Herald* in 1963 called "probably the most successful provincial premier in Canadian history."

## Understudy Manning

Ernest Manning was a Saskatchewan farm boy in the early twentieth century. As a teenager he became converted to evangelical Christianity through the radio

ministry of William "Bible Bill" Aberhart of Calgary. Manning moved to Calgary to attend Aberhart's new Bible college, the Calgary Prophetic Bible Institute, in 1927. He was the first graduate of that college and became Aberhart's closest associate and right-hand man in the ministry.

William Aberhart was an influential figure in Alberta by the 1920s. He taught a popular Bible class and was a respected high school principal. The main source of his influence, however, was his radio ministry which broadcast in much of Alberta and also into parts of Saskatchewan.

Alberta was severely affected by the Great Depression that began in 1929. In searching for an answer to that economic crisis, Aberhart stumbled upon a new theory known as "Social Credit." Social Credit is a confusing theory that combined some aspects of established economics with some controversial conclusions about money creation. Aberhart used his radio platform to introduce Albertans to Social Credit as a solution to their economic problems, and many people believed Aberhart was right.

The Alberta Social Credit Party was formed and won the 1935 provincial election in a landslide. Aberhart became premier and appointed Manning to the cabinet. At 27 years old, Manning was

the youngest cabinet minister in the British Parliamentary family since William Pitt in 1782.

Since banking and monetary affairs are in the federal jurisdiction, the numerous attempts of the Alberta government to implement actual Social Credit policies were disallowed by the federal government, struck down by the Supreme Court of Canada, or left unsigned by the lieutenant governor of Alberta.

## Premier/preacher Manning

During his time as premier, Aberhart continued operating his radio ministry



**Ernest Manning:** Premier of Alberta for 25 years, and Preston Manning's father.



with Manning as his chief assistant. When Aberhart died in 1943, Manning was selected as premier and he remained in that position until 1968.

During his time as premier, Manning continued to preach weekly on the radio program known as Canada's National Back to the Bible Hour. In fact, during this time he managed to expand the program out of its Alberta base into other parts of Canada. As his biographer Brennan notes, in 1951 "the program was being heard on fourteen stations across Canada and claimed an audience of one million."

Despite his political responsibilities, he would not discontinue national radio evangelism. Brennan writes, "His mission of leading people toward a personal relationship with God, and turning Canada into a nation of Christian citizens, would continue throughout Manning's premiership and for many years afterwards."

Alberta became a prosperous province as a result of the discovery of oil at Leduc in 1947 and undoubtedly Manning's government benefited from that prosperity. His government was generally frugal and the few minor instances of unethical conduct by members of his government were dealt with quickly and decisively. Manning resigned as premier in 1968. Brennan recalls that at the time it

"was noted that he still believed in keeping the Christian Sabbath as a day of rest, despite public opinion to the contrary. He alienated young urban voters by refusing to let theatres show movies on Sundays, and absented himself from the legislature when the House approved a measure permitting professional sports to be played on Sundays."

Manning was the second-longest serving premier in Canadian history (after George Murray of Nova Scotia). Considering Manning's and Aberhart's tenures together, "Thirty-three years of overt Christian leadership in Alberta had thus ended when Manning retired as premier."

The Social Credit government continued after him until 1971 when it was defeated by the Progressive Conservative

Party (which has remained in power ever since).

### Senator Manning

In an unusual move, Manning was appointed to the Senate of Canada by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1970. This surprised both Social Crediters (who were generally conservative and anti-Trudeau) as well as Alberta Liberals. It has been speculated that Trudeau did this to woo Manning supporters in Alberta. Manning sat as an Independent Senator until 1983. He continued preaching on Canada's National Back to the Bible Hour until 1989.

When he died in 1996 there were numerous tributes to his statesmanship. No one questioned his honesty or integrity.

### Conclusion

The key point of this brief biography of Ernest Manning is to demonstrate that until relatively recently in Canada, conservative Christians could play key roles in the political process without the media flying into fits of panic. Manning would have been a Senator, and perhaps even a premier, during the lifetime of many *Reformed Perspective* readers.

Of course, elements of the media did criticize Manning for his conservative religious principles while he was in public life. But that criticism had a negligible impact when judged by his stellar popularity in Alberta and his constant re-election, usually with lopsided majorities. The Manning name was so well-entrenched in Alberta that when Preston Manning (Ernest's son) decided to start the Reform Party of Canada in 1986, he was instantly embraced by thousands of Albertans.

Looking back over Canada's history, then, we can see how greatly things have changed. While much of the political change since the 1960s is bad from a Christian standpoint, it's important to understand that Christian political influence is not alien to Canada. Courageous Christian leaders were once involved, influential, and respected... and we can hope and pray that they will be again.

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# Why do radical Muslims hate us?

Dinesh D'Souza says both the right and left have it all wrong

by Jonathon Van Maren

In *The Enemy at Home: The Cultural Left and Its Responsibility For 9/11*, former White House policy analyst and noted scholar Dinesh D'Souza successfully challenges the ideological sacred cows of both the right and the left, presenting a new theory that will offend just about everyone.

He tackles, head on, a question that is the subject of much debate: Why do the radical Muslims hate us?

## The Left/Right says...

The left, of course, blames this on past and current imperialism, stating that if we had left the Muslims to rule themselves in peace, they would never have bothered to attack us, and we would be living in a world filled with sunshine and roses, albeit one with more than few rather nasty dictators.

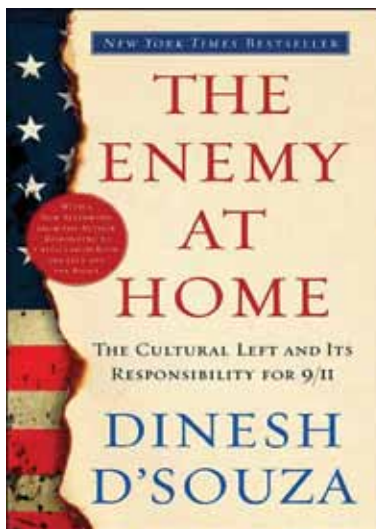
The right holds to the rather schizophrenic idea that:

1. These Muslims despise freedom and would like nothing more than to burn down the Shining City on a Hill.
2. If we could only kill off the radicals, the rest of the Islamic world will happily accept Western democracy and join us in the ranks of the civilized.

## D'Souza says...

D'Souza's argument is quite different. In his own words:

"The cultural left has fostered a decadent American culture that angers and repulses traditional societies,



especially those in the Islamic world that are being overwhelmed by this culture. In addition, the left is waging an aggressive global campaign to undermine the traditional patriarchal family and to promote secular values in non-Western cultures. This campaign has provoked a violent reaction from Muslims who believe that their most cherished beliefs and institutions are under assault...Thus when leading figures on the left say, 'We made them do this to us' in a sense they are correct. They are not correct that America is to blame. But their statement is true in that *their* actions and *their* America are responsible for fostering Islamic anti-Americanism in general."

## An argument that angers everyone

This statement is incendiary for obvious reasons.

The left values freedom – unfettered

freedom – in the area of sexuality, so they promote promiscuity, homosexuality, gay marriage, abortion and pornography. They are infuriated at the accusation that it is precisely these “values” which lead traditional Muslims to hate us in the first place.


The right deeply resents the implication that America could in any way be responsible for the vicious acts of terrorism perpetrated against her by Islamic terrorists, or that America could offend groups based on her popular culture. This resentment was abundantly clear during the 2008 Republican primary debates: when Texas Congressman Ron Paul insinuated that Muslim terror was “blowback” caused by our foreign policy, the other candidates answered him with loud and repeated demands that he apologize.

## But is he correct?

But polemics aside, the facts must be examined.

D'Souza painstakingly examines the literature of the famously “radical” Islamic groups to expose what they say makes them despise America. From Mohammed Qutb to Ayatollah Khomeini to Osama bin Laden, a pattern emerges: far from radical Muslims condemning America as “too free” or “too Christian,” the writings of the radicals themselves reveals that the most common complaint is that America is not Christian enough, at least when it comes to morality. American popular culture, exported by institutions such as Hollywood, generally focuses on recreational drug use, all manner





One of the buildings in the World Trade Center complex

# Confronting the darkness with light

There *is* an answer to Islamic terrorism

by Ron Gray

It's time the world stopped fooling itself about Islamic terrorism. There can be no secular answer to this problem, because the problem isn't secular – it is religious.

## It's not secular...

If the problem were secular, then the Netherlands' Geert Wilders would be the man we should turn to for advice. This agnostic politician has, at the risk of his life, offered a thorough secular analysis of Islam's militant element. He thinks it is a secular problem – in his speeches and article he presents Islam as an all-encompassing political ideology, rather than a religion. His solution is to pass laws against Muslim immigration to the West, and enforce those laws militarily.

We would use force to defend our borders and threaten Muslim militants with retaliation.

But this solution won't work, because the threat of death to the jihadis of Islam isn't a threat, it's an accommodation: they believe that if they die in a *jihad*, they'll be rewarded with 72 beautiful, dark-eyed virgins in Islam's sexualized idea of "paradise."

If it was a political problem, then a different political system might be the solution – democracy might be the answer. But it isn't a political problem, and bringing democracy to militantly Islamic countries only results in the election of militant Muslims.

The problem is not an economic one

either – many of the terrorists come from wealthy families; this is not about oil or money.

It's not technological. We could flood the Middle East with iPads so they can access the Internet but what would they see? Mostly images of Western decadence and that would only increase their disdain.

It's not a matter of education. Many of the terrorists were university-educated; but the society in which they were a part of the intellectual minority – Muslim society – remains unable to rise above medieval poverty for its majority.

## Getting to the real problem

No, this is a matter of religion. And



of explicit sexual actions, and a rigid iconoclasm when dealing with religion.

**We are offensive**

To be clear, D’Souza isn’t arguing that the culture of radical Islam is somehow more admirable than the hedonistic tailspin of American pop culture. He readily admits that in most Muslim nations, women are not considered equal, civil liberties are trampled if even existent, and even in the more modern Muslim nations the majority of the populace agrees with giving the death penalty to Muslims who convert to Christianity. D’Souza is not trying to validate the actions of radical Muslims (and he is certainly not suggesting that North American hedonism somehow justifies these terrorists’ attacks). But he is trying to answer the simple question “Why do they hate us?” The answer from the horse’s mouth is that they find us to be iconoclastic, drug-addled, sex-crazy degenerates. Viewing the average episode of a North American TV sitcom, it’s not hard to guess why.

In retrospect, I find it interesting that more traditional, social conservatives have not considered this theory earlier. In one of my Middle Eastern studies classes

at Simon Fraser University, a Muslim student started a presentation by first showing a photo of a woman in a burqa, and then of an advertisement displaying a woman in a string bikini. “Which is scarier?” she asked, “I would say both objectify women.”

.....  
“...he is certainly not suggesting that North American hedonism somehow justifies these terrorists’ attacks.”  
.....

Indeed, in the memoirs of Iraqi general Georges Sada, *Saddam’s Secrets: How an Iraqi General Defied and Survived Saddam Hussein*, Sada, while generally quite complimentary of the United States and the comportment of its troops in Iraq, noted:

“We’re more conservative about matters concerning women and girls, especially their clothing. Not very many women in Iraq wear the veil

anymore – we’re already Western in that way... But why should a young woman walk around with half her body exposed, as teenagers in America do? Any teenage boy would be glad to see a girl dressed in that way, but our culture is not prepared for it. Modesty is a good thing and I hope we never lose it.”

**Conclusion**

As a conservative, I find it a bit hard to stomach D’Souza’s argument in some ways, so I understand the anger he provokes from some of my fellow rightwingers. Ironically many on the right have been drawn to the witty and fiery denunciations of Islam by atheist Christopher Hitchens. But while he does stand against Islam, as D’Souza points out, the America that I as a social conservative desire and the America that the atheist Hitchens has pushed for are markedly different. Liberal values such as abortion, free dissemination of pornography, and an “anything goes” attitude are the values he seeks to preserve. Perhaps it is time that we recognized these values as part of the problem.



therefore the answer must be spiritual. People are born with an innate impulse to worship. That impulse can be the fountainhead of great culture, as it once was in the West; or it can be perverted into a great menace, as it has been in Islam.

Secular solutions only exasperate the real *spiritual* problem. The real problem is that these religious fanatics love death. As the God of the Bible says, “*Those who hate Me love death*” (Prov. 8:36).

Thus, there’s only one answer: teach them to love, not hate, their Creator, the God of the Bible - the God whose word declares that He is love. That’s why we’ve been in Afghanistan: it is love that brought us there to protect women and children from the oppression of the mullahs, and give the next generation a chance to grow up with a measure of liberty and a sense of purpose – a sense that their Creator cares about them.

**Being the light**

But before we can convert their culture, we’ll have to restore and renew our own. We must first purge our own culture of pornography and abortion and perversion and violence and the greedy exploitation of one another. We have to be able to show them a culture of real love, before we can convince them that there is a God who *is* love.

How can we renew our own culture? It starts in our churches. It will have to start with men and women who love their own children so much that, instead of trying to buy the affection of their offspring with *things*, they’ll be willing to give up some of the trappings of materialistic “success” so one of them can stay home and raise their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). And they’ll have to be willing to confront their own ignorance of God, and learn more about Him, so they’ll be able to

teach their children.

In short, we’ll have to overcome the spiritual disobedience described in Daniel 9:11—the delusion that we can write our own rules, in defiance of the Creator’s rules—if we hope to escape the curse described in Daniel 9:11.

Such families – I’ve seen some – produce wholesome, confident, articulate young adults who are willing to expend their lives in loving service to downtrodden people like the majority of Islam’s victims. As the Bible says of them, “*The people who know their God will be strong, and carry out great exploits*” (Daniel 11:32). Once they’ve learned at home how sacrificial love works, they’ll know how to show that kind of love to people who are still suffering in medieval darkness.

It won’t be a short-term solution. But it’s the only answer that will work.



# Are You My Daddy?

**Anonymous sperm donation:  
How should we think on an issue  
that is, from the start, immoral?**

by André Schutten

Perhaps you remember the classic children's book *Are You My Mother?* by P.D. Eastman. It's a cute story of a little chick that hatches from its egg while the mother is off searching for food in time for the baby's arrival. When the baby bird breaks out of its egg and finds itself alone in the nest, it sets out looking for mother, and asks the repeated question "Are you my mother?" of dogs, cats, machines and other such things.

Any child to whom this story is read is immediately concerned for the poor little baby bird; the chick knows it has a parent, but simply doesn't know who the parent is, or what the parent looks like. And every child seems to know, intuitively, that the chick has a right to know who its mother is.

## Anonymous no more

But that's a story about fictional animals. For mere human beings in real life, the standard is much different. Human reproductive material has, in many ways, become a commodity; producing children has become focused on the interests of the parent rather than the rights or needs of the child; and with the anonymity given to sperm donors, children are left wandering and wondering, "Are you my mother?" "Are you my father?"

This situation took a turn for the better on May 19 of this year when in the British Columbia Supreme Court, Justice Elaine Adair ruled that not allowing a child to know the identity of their father or mother is "harmful to the child, and it is not in

the best interests of donor offspring." In the ruling, the judge struck down provincial legislation that protected the identity of sperm donors, noting that children of sperm donors have the same right to know their parents as any other children.

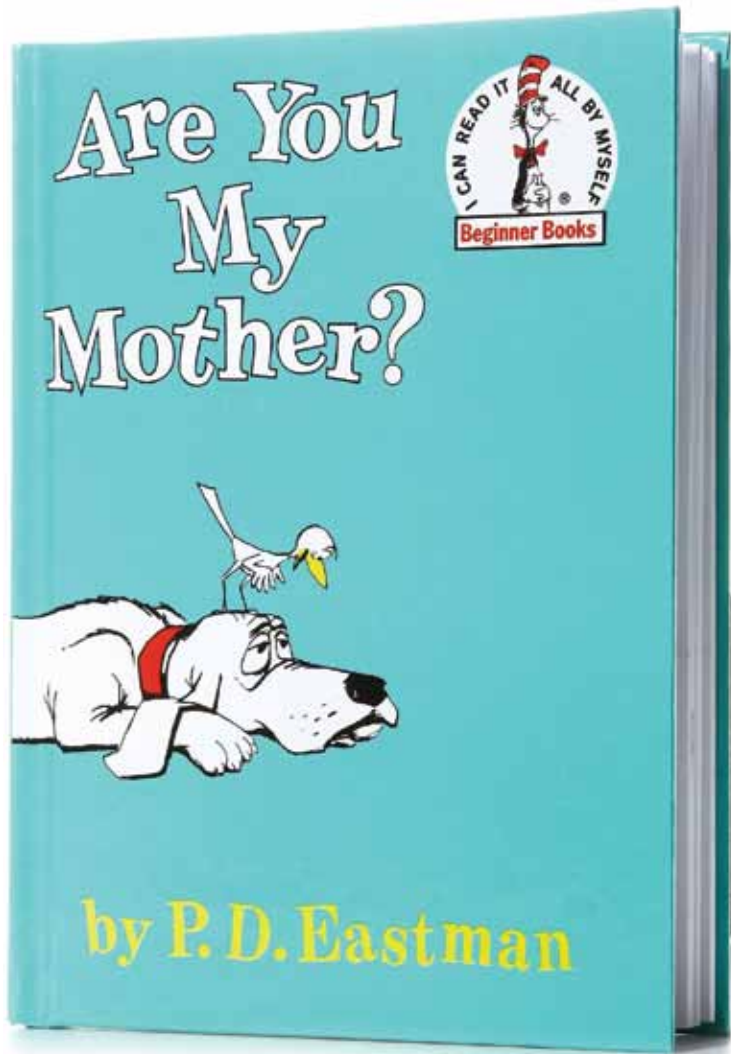
Ms. Olivia Pratten had to fight for years to find out who her father was, only to discover after many years of searching that the doctor had legally destroyed the records. Thankfully, for the benefit of so many other children of gamete donors, Ms. Pratten refused to let this pass and brought the suit against the provincial government on behalf of others like herself.

## Manufacturing babies

Our society needs to shift its thinking about human reproduction and the

production of children. Children are not commodities. They should not be produced on a whim, or designed to be the perfect product to meet the desires of any individual. When such a person makes use of donated reproductive cells, the focus is on the desires of the adult who wants a child.

When we refuse to consider allowing a future child to know his or her biological parent, we treat children as chattel.



Children are human beings, created with inherent dignity, who have the desire – and for many, the need – to know who their father and mother are, for their own physical, emotional and spiritual health and wellbeing.

### Should we take a position?

But should Christians take a position on an issue that is, from the start, unchristian? Sperm donation - whether the father is known or anonymous - is problematic from a Christian perspective. The carefree, irresponsible or casual trading in or donating of reproductive material shows a dismissiveness of the sacred nature of the egg and sperm. A mother who chooses to use donated sperm to get pregnant, or a man who freely donates his sperm without consequence, does so with little to no thought of God's created, natural order. The Bible gives a clear message that "the seed" of man must be treated with respect; it is a special ingredient, indeed only one of two, with which God is pleased to use to create us.

And God has made it clear that he wants to use the sperm of the male and the egg of a female who are in a married relationship together. When sperm from another man enters into a marriage covenant, either naturally or by artificial means, this is a gross attack on the sanctity of the marriage bed.

And yet it is done. Sperm donation is a Canadian reality. And this is the issue that we, as Christians, are faced with - should the children be permitted to know who their fathers are? The deeper issue here is, what are Christians to do when confronted with situations in which things, from the start, conflict with God's wishes?

### Do what good can be done

I suggest that Christians must do as much right as can be done. We are fallen people in a fallen world, surrounded by so many others crushed by the misery of sin. We understand that earthy fathers are a gift from our Heavenly Father. So when there are children in this world who know no father through no fault of their

own, Christians who do know their fathers should show compassion for those who don't have that blessing and advocate for them. Of course, we can then also share with them in every opportunity about the relationship with a Father who never disappears, who never wants to remain anonymous, who maintains relationship with His children.

So provincial governments across this country should be encouraged to bring their legislation in line with this court ruling. And Christians can lead the charge on that level and should also work to raise the issue of children's need to know their parents, and how anonymous sperm donation robs the child of this crucial part of their existence. While it may be okay for a baby bird in a storybook to wander around looking for its parent, no child should be left wondering, "Are you my mother?"

*André Schutten is the Ontario Director & Legal Counsel for ARPA Canada*



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# How the American budget crisis yields a silver lining

## Scientists may become more responsive to the public's wishes

by Margaret Helder

Who would ever have imagined that a budget crisis could have a silver lining? That, however, appears to be the case in the United States. The situation is certainly very worrisome for the US – though they made it through a debt-ceiling crisis in April, Americans are still faced with a projected deficit for the year of \$1.5 trillion dollars, which is more than half as large as the tax income. The country is spending 50 per cent more than it is taking in!

And the impact on the scientific community is proportionately much larger. A large portion of the federal budget consists of non-negotiable programs such as defense and Social Security. The discretionary spending component of the budget is actually quite small. Of that, spending on science forms a large component. Thus scientific and environmental programs in the United States have been subjected to a lot of scrutiny as areas where cuts might be made.

In the face of limited tax dollars, scientists have become somewhat more responsive to public wishes concerning what to and what not to fund. Science, after all, is very expensive, particularly some disciplines, and over the years, some scientists have seemed a little contemptuous of public opinion. These scientists expected generous funding to seek answers to questions they wanted to ask, but which were not necessarily what the public wanted answered. But maybe there is a middle ground where each side considers the interests of the other. The American budget crisis of 2011 may be just such an opportunity to consider public input into science policy.

### Obama proposed spending more

It all happened like this.

In February of 2010, President Obama presented his budget for the fiscal year 2011 which was to begin on October 1, 2010. Despite the worrisome deficit

numbers, the President asked for strong support for scientific research and for education. In fact he sought an overall increase in spending of 6 per cent or \$66.8 billion. This would include a 12 per cent increase for the Department of Energy (DOE), 9.1 per cent for the DOE's Office of Science, a 44.4 per cent increase to \$3.2 billion for research on alternative energy technology and a 13 per cent increase for the National Science Foundation. NASA would stay at 2010 funding levels and the National Institutes of Health would see a 1.5 to 2 per cent increase.

In the normal course of events, Congress and the Senate would pass the budget before the September 30 deadline, and funding would begin on October 1 at the newly mandated rates. But for whatever reason, the budget was not passed by the deadline. Thus the country entered the new fiscal year in very tentative fashion, supplied only with *ad hoc* provisions for continued funding at 2010 levels until such time as Congress and the Senate and the President could agree on a budget. Altogether seven continuing resolutions were passed before a budget was finally accepted in mid April, more than six months into the new fiscal year.

The fourth continuing resolution covered the period from December 21, 2010 to March 4, 2011. This proved to be a highly eventful period. On February 14, 2011, the President released his budget for 2012. His hopes and plans for the future fell on deaf ears.

### Congress proposed big cuts

Five days later, in the early morning hours of February 19, Congress passed an astonishing bill. In the fall, congress had been dominated by Democrats who nevertheless had failed to pass the budget. Now in 2011, following mid-term elections, Congress was dominated by Republicans who think very differently

from the Democrats. The Republicans do not support efforts to mitigate against global warming (if any), nor do they support strong environmental initiatives connected to industry. This bill mandated a \$60 billion cut in expenditures rather than an increase. The vote supported a \$4 billion cut to energy and climate research.

Among other initiatives, the budget of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) was to be cut in half! Among specific provisions, the bill declared that no money was to be paid to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and NOAA was specifically prohibited from funding a new Climate Service (presumably connected to climate change initiatives). Other measures included a prohibition on the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) from enforcing emissions rules on power plants and cement manufacturing plants, a prohibition on mandated increases in ethanol in gasoline, and a denial of funding for a White House Advisor on climate change.

Wow!

The press had a great time writing about the astonishing provisions of Congress' bill. However, unless the Democratic-controlled Senate and the President agreed with it, its significance was merely as a basis for future negotiations.

The situation did give Republicans the opportunity to ask embarrassing questions concerning the IPCC. Energy and Commerce Committee Ranking Member Joe Barton of Texas asked the Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, what the United States had contributed to the IPCC over the past decade and what obligations were attached to the funding? Had the Department of State audited the IPCC-related funding to ensure it was used as authorized, and what internal controls did the Department of State have to oversee the spending contributions to the IPCC?

Similarly he asked if the IPCC budget and related spending had been audited and what internal controls did the UN exert to make sure expenditures by the IPCC were appropriate?

Prior to this, the media might have ignored such questions. President Obama, for his part, declared that Congress' bill was a "non-starter." Nevertheless he needed the support of Congress to get any budget passed into law.

### **They meet somewhere in the middle**

The fifth continuing resolution for funding from March 4 to March 18, passed on March 2, 2011. The sixth continuing resolution for funding through April 8, passed on March 16, 2011. Each continuing resolution meant that funding was still at 2010 levels.

Such a delay in the finalized budget meant that any cuts would have a more dramatic effect than normal since the reduced funding would have to achieve a year's worth of cuts in six months or less. Finally on April 8, with barely one hour to go before the deadline, Congress agreed to a budget mandating \$38.5 billion in cuts from 2010 spending levels. Details were to follow.

When the dust of battle had settled, the Republicans had managed to deny any money to NOAA for a new National Climate Service. This budget represented the biggest overall non-defense spending reduction since World War II. For a start, all non-defense discretionary spending suffered a 0.2 per cent cut across the board. In general however, the cuts were far less severe than the Republicans had hoped, but the latter took comfort in the fact that there were cuts and not increases. The Department of Energy for example, was handed a reduction of \$25 million from 2010 levels. However this meant they were going to receive \$866 million more than they would have in the budget proposed by Congress! The National Institutes of Health suffered a cut of \$260 million (0.8 per cent less than 2010 levels), a reduction much less than the \$1.6 billion sought by the Republicans. And the National Science Foundation ended up with \$53 million less than in 2010 (0.8 per cent cut).

So nobody came out of the exercise all that happy and the fate of the 2012 budget

is, of course, similarly in doubt. One of the major impacts of this situation has been the canceling of major scientific programs, especially in physics and astronomy. This could well lead to a much reduced prestige on the world's stage for American research. One of the first casualties is the closing down of the Tevatron particle accelerator which has operated since 1985. Since the advent of the LHC (Large Hadron Collider) in Europe, Tevatron was reduced to being the second most powerful accelerator in the world. Some scientists had hoped to keep the Tevatron working however for three more years, but the operating cost of \$35 million per year, could not be found. This affects 1,200 physicists and concedes supremacy in the field of particle physics to the Europeans.

Some scientists consoled themselves that the closing of Tevatron would free up funds to support the Long Baseline Neutrino Experiment at the Deep Underground Science Engineering Lab in South Dakota. However, the National Science Foundation has now decreed that it will not fund that laboratory after this year. This situation affects another 1,200 physicists. The public may care little about particle physics, but the scientific community does care and for them it will be sad to see the research pass to other countries.

NASA has terminated several cooperative efforts with other countries on space exploration. The Suzaku (X-ray satellite run by NASA and the Japanese agency JAXA), will lose its US support in 2012. Europe, for her part, has declared that she will move ahead without American support on a future ambitious space mission. Loss of American support means that the budget for the program is reduced 40 to 50 per cent. But as the other partners move ahead, there is more loss of prestige for American science.

The Allan Telescope Array, an American program to search for extra terrestrial intelligence, has also fallen victim to funding cuts. The 42 radio dishes, operating since 2007, were shut down April 22, 2011. Operated by the University of California at Berkeley and the SETI Institute of Mountain View California, its cut in funding from the National Science Foundation and the State of California, sealed its fate. Obviously it wasn't entirely

funded by private donations as many had supposed. Probably few among the general public will regret these difficulties for SETI.

One of the most dramatic impacts of the budget disaster was the funding for vehicles to access space. Constellation was President Bush's program to develop heavy duty rockets suitable to reach the moon and beyond. President Obama cancelled that program in October 2010, but as continuing resolution succeeded continuing resolution, the Constellation program continued to be funded at a rate of \$200 million per month (2010 levels). Now Constellation has indeed been cancelled, but a similar Obama-mandated project has retained many of the Constellation related contracts. The Republicans, for their part, are anxious to retain as many space related jobs as possible. A major problem with the space shuttle's demise, is that NASA faces many years with no way to send people into space. They hope to rely on private rockets (yet to be perfected), and Russian vehicles. This certainly represents a loss of prestige and control. Quite a number of space related jobs have been lost already with the end of the era of space shuttles.

### **Scientist might have to listen closely**

The era of heavy funding for science therefore may be over, at least for a while. Funding agencies may thus be forced to consider voter preferences to a greater degree than in the past. This may well impact environmental policies such as initiatives connected to climate change. In addition, Republicans, who generally are more stingy with tax dollars than the Democrats, seem poised to increase their control of Congress. A news release from the US census bureau (December 2010), revealed that the American population is shifting to Republican-leaning centers like the western states. This will serve as the basis for redistribution of Congressional seats. Thus even if President Obama and the Democrats retain control of the Senate in future elections, protracted negotiations with Congress over spending may become more routine. Thus faced with reduced funding, many scientists may seek to consider public preferences to a greater extent. And what happens in the United States, could well influence attitudes in other countries.



## BEST BOOKS: Two about *the Book* reviewed by Sharon L. Bratcher

### GUARDING THE TREASURE: How God's People Preserve God's Word

by Linda Finlayson

*Guarding the Treasure* was published in 2011 to mark the 400th anniversary of the King James Version Bible. However, it deals with far more than one translation.

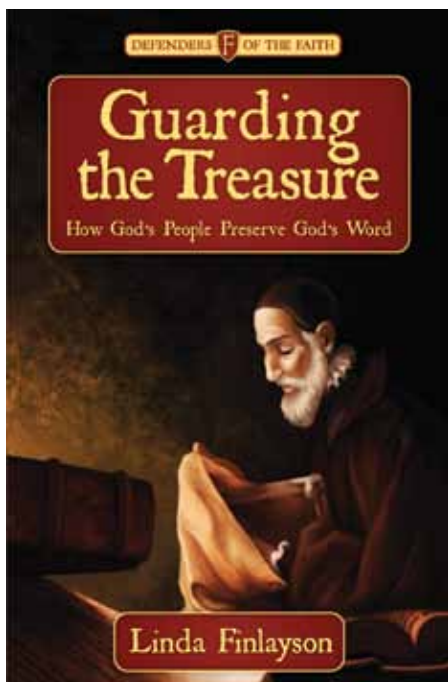
In a unique biographical style guaranteed to capture the attention of the under 15 crowd, Finlayson traces how God's Word was carefully prepared and faithfully preserved and passed down through the centuries. Excitement pops on every page as we follow the trail from God's writers such as Moses, David and Paul, to wise church fathers such as Athanasius and Jerome. Harrowing adventures of translators like Tyndale and Luther inspire the reader towards gratitude and service.

Useful information at the end of some chapters describes such things as ancient scrolls, the making of paper, and life in a monastery. Every effort is made there and in the glossary to ensure that each reader will fully understand the entire experience that brought us God's Word.

Extensively researched, *Guarding the Treasure* is likely to instruct adults in a most palatable way as well, particularly regarding the lesser known historical figures such as King Alfred and William Whittingham and Laurence Chaderton.

*Guarding the Treasure* could be useful in a Bible curriculum in schools, as well as around the family dinner table. History is the telling of who has done what, where, when, why and how. Linda Finlayson's fine work outlines History, and *How God's People Preserve God's Word*.

Please note the present tense in the title. The job is not yet finished!



### THE STORY OF THE BIBLE: The fascinating history of its writing, translation and effect on civilization.

by Larry Stone

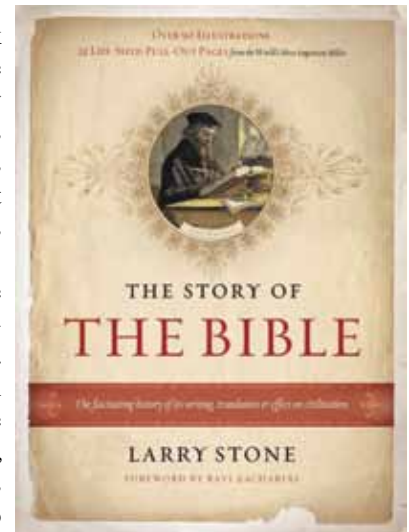
This wonderful book was also published in time for the 400th anniversary of the KJV. It boasts "Over 90 illustrations and 23 life-sized pull-out pages from the world's most important Bibles."

It's a very readable history book, in a one-inch thick 9x12 hardback. It is a simple but thorough way to learn about the writing, canonization, translation, and usefulness of the Bible. It would also make a good text for non-Christians to use to understand the history and integrity of God's Word.

The reproductions of the ancient artwork are lovely to study, but what impressed me the most are the 10 built-in plastic pouches scattered throughout the 96 pages. Each pouch has one to three folded pages that show a picture of what each type of Bible looked like, with a good description on the other side. Here is a page from the Vulgate – Jerome's translation into Latin, and here is Luther's German Bible. The decorated edges and text are amazing to behold. The teacher inside me immediately looked for someone to share it with!

The inspiring story is told of the 16-year-old Welsh girl Mary Jones who saved her money for six years and then walked 25 miles barefoot in order to buy a Bible for her family. This led to the beginning of the Welsh Bible Society and similar groups dedicated to making God's Word more available both at home and abroad. The book ends by saying that at least some of the Bible has been translated into 2,400 of the world's 6,900 languages: there is still more work to be done.

One caution: *The Story of the Bible* speaks more highly of some translations than we, in our Reformed circles, might. It also briefly promotes *The Jesus Film*, which features an actor playing the part of the Son of God - a problem with the second commandment view of "no images." But overall, it's an inspiring and helpful addition to any family, school, or church library.





## MAKING YPS BETTER

# Mentors have a lot to contribute to our Young People's Societies

by Garrett Vane

Why do many Young People's Societies' (YPS) meetings lack good discussion, and why are they often short on any real Scripture learning? There are a number of reasons, but it isn't likely that many of them are good ones. Is it a legitimate excuse that young people have too much energy and a limited attention span? Is there any valid excuse to be unfocused while studying the Bible and learning about Christ? No, and no.

Something has to change.

### Older input

The change we tried in the Aldergrove Canadian Reformed Young People's Society this past year involved having mentors. The process began when a number of the YP leaders met with several of the elders to discuss the idea of having mentors. With the elders encouraging us, we then talked to a handful of the young adults in our congregation and asked them if they would be willing to serve in this role. Our goal was to have one or two mentors at each of our meetings and because we had asked several to help out, we asked each mentor to commit to coming every second or third study.

The intent was simply to have them sit in. They weren't meant to take over the meeting - they were there to assist rather than lead. The mentors helped our discussions by contributing their understanding of the Scriptures, and by relaying some of the experiences that they had as young peoples. I found more than a few times that their input into the study was very helpful in generating meaningful discussion. Being young

.....  
**They weren't meant to take over the meeting - they were there to assist rather than lead.**  
.....

adults who still remembered their own time in YPS, they were able to relate to our questions and to our struggles. And they were very helpful in our discussions of how to deal with these struggles

Another positive side effect of their presence: having someone older there helped deter less attentive youth from distracting themselves and others.

### Mentors are the biblical norm

So asking for some help and guidance from those older than us was a good idea. But it wasn't just a good idea - it's a biblical one!

Where in the Bible can we find instruction for youth to study the Scriptures with other youth? I think we would be hard pressed to find such verses. Rather, Scripture indicates that the youth should be willing and ready to learn from the wisdom of those more mature in the faith. This could come from many people including parents, teachers, elders or any others in our life that we receive instruction from.

Adults can and should have some involvement with youth in the church. There are many examples of mentors in the Bible. Some of these were Moses, who received guidance from his father-in-law Jethro, Naomi, who gave assistance to Ruth, and Jesus, who

received instruction from the teachers in the temple court as a boy. Paul also instructs first the women and then the men in the church to lead the younger generation:

"Then they (older women) can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us." (Titus 2:4-7)

### Conclusion

As a result of mentor participation, the Young People's Bible study in Aldergrove this past year was improved over the year previous. Their presence aided in increasing the maturity level and focus of everyone involved in the study.

After learning from our experiences with mentors over the last Bible study season I would encourage other Young People's Societies to think about implementing this too. After all, our study sessions should be about focusing on learning about the Bible and how to embrace and implement these teachings in our lives. Why not take advantage of the help that those with greater experience can offer?



# MAKING YPS BETTER

## A case for age-integration in Bible studies

by Raoul Kingma

“Why do we even have Young Peoples society?”

This pointed question was borne from an animated online discussion on the typical problems facing Young Peoples’ Societies (YPS) and on the possible solution for them. What followed was a discussion that revealed a deep problem in our churches with segregating groups by age. Just look around your church lobby after the Sunday worship service, and you will see several groups divided by age and/or marital status. This is also abundantly clear in our model used for Bible Study Societies, where the young are separated from the old, and where you can find a Bible study that fits your every station in life.

This is not the biblical model – our current system may not be wrong but

it can certainly be improved. We must examine what has brought about the age-segregation mindset, and revisit what the Bible teaches us concerning age, learning, and Bible study.

### Are we borrowing from Darwin?

How then did we get to our current mindset of age-segregation? What gave us our understanding that teenagers are immature, that we shouldn’t expect too much of them and that they are

disconnected? The modern view of “teenager” or “adolescent” is a recent development stemming from Darwinian evolutionary thinking in the last 150 years.<sup>1</sup> For example, there was no impetus to segregate ages in the days of the one-room schoolhouse. Everyone learned together, without the extended psychoanalysis of being considered ahead or behind of what is “normal for your age.” Young men and women were expected to take on adult responsibilities, and act

**How can we make YPS better?** Adding the elderly to the mix is a good start.



maturely at a much earlier age, and they generally responded accordingly.

However, with Darwin’s evolutionary thinking came a whole new attitude towards youth that has led to our current state of affairs.

Granville Stanley Hall (1844-1924) was one of the pioneering thinkers in applying evolutionary theory to a person’s age. He emphasized that people evolve throughout their lifetime in much the same way that mankind has evolved. In addition, he taught that adolescence is an incredibly important and tumultuous time, and thus teens should be separated from those both older and younger.<sup>2</sup> Further, in keeping with evolution, he taught that each generation is superior to that which preceded it, giving rise to the thought that youthful rebellion is inevitable in the life of every teen – he was arguing that teens really were smarter than their parents!

John Dewey (1859-1952) applied these principles in his reforms of the public school system, creating high schools to separate the teens from the rest.<sup>3</sup> These developments illustrate the shift that was caused by a general acceptance of Darwin in our society. It is this that has led to the youth sub-culture and the worship of youth that we see rampant in our society today. Our culture now believes (and the church as well) that young people in their teen years are going through tumultuous changes so we shouldn’t expect too much in the way of obedience, maturity and contribution. Why are we so surprised when they live up to our expectations?

**Worshipping our youth...**

This mindset has affected the churches in a large way. One does not have to look long or far into the wider evangelical church to see a capitulation to the desires of youth, from entertainment-based worship to youth ministries dedicated to catering to “youthful needs.”

Though in Reformed circles we have not caved in completely (thankfully), we have also followed along with this line of thinking. Up until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the idea of youth Bible studies had been largely non-existent. Today the thought of integration is appalling to many. A large generation gap exists in our churches,

with both young and old complaining of how they cannot “connect.” Immaturity is reinforced in the young people because they spend very little time (in Bible study, or otherwise) learning from those older and wiser members who have many more years of life experience under their belts.

**...is hurting our youth**

The negative effects of age-segregation show themselves most clearly in a typical YPS meeting. There is generally a disconcerting lack of leadership, with many young men primarily concerned with impressing the young ladies through smart comments and goofing off rather

.....  
**The age-segregation mindset does not end with just the YPS. Our whole model of Bible study is based around age or life situation.**  
.....

than stepping up to the plate. Clearly, an opportunity given does not equal an opportunity taken as far as learning leadership.

Discussions suffer because of a general lack of knowledge, partly due to insufficient preparation, but primarily due to a lack of years. Serious members find themselves feeling like babysitters, and, tired of dragging the dead horse, graduate to other study societies, leaving the YPS situation that much the worse without them.

And what solutions have been offered? Smaller groups, mentoring couples, meeting at houses instead of the church, better outlines – you name it. Though these have desirable effects, they are only band-aids which simply don’t address the heart of the matter.

**What of the generation gap?**

The age-segregation mindset does not end with just the YPS. Our whole model of Bible study is based around age or life situation. Once done with YPS, we advance to College and Careers, then to

Young Couples, then Men or Women’s Society, and finally, in some cases, to a senior Bible study. Contrary to our belief, this generation gap is caused by believing that there is and ought to be one, which could be called a self-fulfilling prophesy. We cannot justify age-segregation by appealing to the generation gap.

**Looking to the Bible**

But for the most convincing reason to change the status quo, we must appeal to our only standard, God’s Word. A cursory reading of the Bible gives no hint of this presumed generation gap. Quite the opposite in fact, and we must start at the center of all this, which is the home. Bible study and “youth ministry” is the responsibility of the father, and should never be delegated to the church. Churches with huge youth ministries betray the fact that they are a church where fathers have abdicated their place as the spiritual leader of the family.

But what of the wider church setting? Is there guidance to be had in how we formulate and plan our Bible Studies? First off, the Bible is full of praise for the wisdom that comes with age.

- Proverbs 16:31 - “Gray hair is a crown of glory, it is gained in a righteous life.”
- Proverbs 20:29 - “The glory of young men is their strength, but the splendour of old men is their grey hair.”
- Job 12:12 - “Wisdom is with the aged, and understanding in length of days.”

Furthermore, there are also directives for the young to respect and honor the wisdom of the aged, and learn from them.

- Psalm 92:14 - “[The righteous] still bear fruit in old age; they are ever full of sap and green.”
- Leviticus 19:32 - “You shall stand up before the grey head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.”
- Titus 2:3-4 - “Older women likewise...and so train the young



women...”

This is only a small sample, but the Bible is very clear that wisdom is found with age, and older are to teach younger. This starts in the family and leads into the wider church community. We are one body of Christ, young and old, not two separate bodies who happen to share church services. Thus each is called to use their particular gifts and talents for the up-building of everyone and practically this must be acted upon, most obviously in the setting of corporate Bible study.

This means abandoning a Bible study model of separate age groups in favour of all-ages meetings, which will help build congregational unity, and will provide a place for anyone to feel welcome. Yes, there will be growing pains. Young and old will both have to make adjustments. Young people attending adult Bible studies will have to grow accustomed to not being the center of attention, and will learn to spend more time listening than being concerned about how much they can contribute. The older will have to exercise patience, as the young peoples’ storehouse of knowledge and wisdom has not had time to be filled up. But these should not turn into excuses.

### **A practical approach to implementation**

Practically there are also many considerations in making all-ages Bible study a reality. The easiest is to scrap our current study societies, and build new ones which incorporate all ages. However, this is a drastic change, so most will be more comfortable with working with our current plethora of societies to reach the same goal through combined meetings.

If we are going to work with the current groups, then the first important question is how often to meet. Going out on a limb here, I think more often is better, meaning one combined meeting per month (or more often) during the study season.

For example, one congregation plans to join their adult Bible study and YPS every other meeting, so that there is one regular YPS meeting and one combined meeting every month. Similarly, another congregation is combining all the societies once every month, with each society (men’s, women’s and YPS) taking turns

organizing the combined meeting. Thus there is an extra Bible study every month in addition to the regular meetings.

But what if we were to replace all the current study groups with ones that were no longer segregated? The next obvious question is, how would we organize the replacement groups? One suggestion is to divide the congregation into small groups (of 5-10) with a range of ages, and give each group a number. At any given meeting, two groups will be assigned to meet together in various homes in the congregation. This gives continuity from one meeting to the next, yet allows a person to study with many different people in their congregation. Another idea is to meet communally in the church with one large group listening to an introduction before breaking into smaller discussion groups (with group leaders appointed at the start of the meeting).

It may be a challenge to organize age-integrated Bible studies, but if we recognize that this is the more biblical approach, this challenge shouldn’t stop us.

If we are to take the task of “teaching the next generation” seriously, we need to change our model for establishing Bible societies in our churches. And this means real change; finger-wagging, or lamentations and hand-wringing over what has gotten into our young people, and empty excuses about how logistically hard it might be to make changes are simply not good enough.<sup>4 5</sup>

### **End notes**

<sup>1</sup> Christopher Schlect, *A Critique of Modern Youth Ministry*, Canon Press: Moscow, Idaho, 1995; p.3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid; p.5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid; p.6.

<sup>4</sup> “Our Philosophy of Age-Integration,” [http://www.familyministries.com/HC\\_ages.htm](http://www.familyministries.com/HC_ages.htm).

<sup>5</sup> Many thanks to all the contributors to the fruitful Facebook discussion which spurred the writing of this article.

*Raoul Kingma is active in the world of YPS, despite reaching the grand old age of 24.*



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# Snared in the Work of their Own Hands

by Christine Farenhorst

*The Lord has made Himself known,  
He has executed judgment;  
The wicked are snared in the work of their  
own hands.* - Psalm 9:16

History verifies the above verse and title. You have only to read about the end of dictators, of evil perpetrators, of liars, to know that this is a fact. The wages that are meted out in the end to wicked men and women alike, are death and God's judgment.

One of the most striking stories in the Bible that illustrates this, is the tale of Haman and his greedy, power-hungry family. In the final analysis how did it profit them? The latter part of Esther 7 records:

“Moreover, the gallows which Haman has prepared for Mordecai, whose word saved the king, is standing in Haman's house, fifty cubits high.’ And the king said, ‘Hang him on that.’ So they hanged Haman on the gallows which he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the anger of the king abated.”

## Strange dream...

There is a story recorded which takes place during the mid 1700s. This story deals with a man by the name of Adam Rogers, an Irish innkeeper, who experienced a strange dream one night. He dreamt that he saw two men together on a nearby mountain. It was a mountain he himself often frequented – a lovely spot, idyllic and green with soft grass.

In the dream, Adam noted that the two men were traveling companions. Physically they were opposites. One was

small, almost frail-looking to the point of sickly, whereas the other man was a large fellow, strong and heavy. He observed the two men for some time and then, to his horror, saw the smaller man murder the larger one.

So realistic was the dream, that Adam Rogers awoke in a state of sweat and consternation. He shook his wife until she awoke, related the story to her and, the next day, also related it to others. As well, hunting later that week with a Mr. Browne, Adam Rogers visited the green knoll on the mountain, recounting to his hunting companion that this area had been the scene of a murder in his dream.

Although initially the story was on his mind constantly, over the course of the next few days he stopped dwelling on the episode and was able to return to his usual occupation of keeping the inn and earning his living.

Yet, not many weeks later, Adam Rogers was startled to see two men, traveling companions, enter his establishment asking for a room. They were men who nudged his memory and who appeared very like the two men in his dream – one frail and the other strong. He immediately alerted his wife and both studied the visitors carefully that evening. Both members of the Rogers' family were apprehensive about letting the smaller man, a Mr. Hickey and a gentle, refined and obviously wealthy character, travel on with the stronger man. They recalled in puzzlement how it had been the smaller man in the dream who had murdered the stronger, but observed that the stronger man in their establishment was rough and uncouth. After serving them refreshments,

Adam Rogers took the smaller man, a Mr. Hickey, aside and assured him that he would guide him on to his destination in the town of Carrick. However, nothing he said could dissuade Mr. Hickey from going on with his companion, a Mr. Caulfield.

“We have traveled a long distance together,” Mr. Hickey rejoined, “and we shall, no doubt, be fine company for one another until we reach Carrick.”

There was nothing more either Adam Rogers or his wife could say short of disclosing the dream. They both felt strongly that disclosing the evidence of a dream would make them appear foolish in the eyes of Mr. Hickey and they also were not certain that, indeed, such a dream should be interpreted as they had interpreted it.

Yet the facts disclose that barely an hour after Mr. Hickey and Mr. Caulfield had left the Rogers' inn, Mr. Caulfield murdered his small companion. Striking him on the back of his skull with a stone, stabbing him several times with a knife, the final act of villainy was that of severing his head from his body. Mr. Caulfield then stole Mr. Hickey's ample supply of money, took most of his clothes and proceeded on to Carrick alone. Mr. Hickey's body was discovered later that day by some field workers on their way home.

When Adam Rogers and his wife heard of the murder, they alerted the sheriff and Mr. Caulfield was apprehended. Brought to trial at the assizes, the man was convicted. He had been caught just before he was able to take passage on a ship headed for Newfoundland. A young boy testified that he had seen blood on Mr.





Esther Denouncing Haman, by Ernest Normand c. 1915

Caulfield's shirt, but that Mr. Caulfield had given him a half a crown to promise not to speak of it. As well, Mr. Hickey's shoes were on Mr. Caulfield's feet and the shoes which Mr. Caulfield had worn at the inn were found on Mr. Hickey's feet. When it was inquired, by the jury, why Mr. Rogers would take such note of the dress of men passing casually through his inn, Mr. Rogers finally gave his dream as testimony. He called on his wife, his neighbors, and his friend, Mr. Browne, to corroborate his story.

The jury, consequently, found Mr. Caulfield guilty. And after he was found guilty, Mr. Caulfield openly confessed to the crime. Mr. Caulfield was tried and sentenced by a Sir George Caulfield, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, in 1760.

There is an extreme danger in putting faith in one's dreams and we can only speculate on this one. The truth we can

extrapolate is that God will have justice and that justice will, in the long run, be served.

#### Snaring themselves

Martin Luther relates a story, also one of a traveler, who fell into the hands of robbers. Cruelly beating the man, so that he lay dying, they stripped him of his clothes and valuables and fled the scene. The prostrate man, in his last moments, seeing some ravens flying overhead, called out to these black feathered creatures who had been the only witnesses to the foul deed.

He exclaimed to the birds, as the robbers were fleeing away, "I call upon you to avenge my death."

The sneering laughter of the murderers as they mocked his admonition to the ravens was the last thing he heard.

Three days after the murder, the robbers walked into a town and took a room at an

inn. It so happened that some ravens were perched on the roof of the inn.

One of the men, noting the black birds, said to his companions in a rather loud voice, "I suppose that these are the ravens come to avenge the death of that fellow we killed the other day."

A worker at the inn, overhearing these words, notified the town's magistrate. As a result, the men were arrested. After an inquiry, they were convicted of murder and hanged.

#### All are subject

The wicked are, indeed, snared in the work of their own hands. So says Psalm 9:16 and we can take comfort in this verse. All history, every single experience, is surely subject to the righteous justice of God.





# Aesthetics as apologetics

Want to better understand secular worldviews, and how to respond to them?  
Nancy Pearcey says we should study Art History

by Conrad van Dyk

I recently discovered that many of my students no longer believe in marriage. I was discussing some novel with a university class when the topic came up. Especially the men felt that marriage is outdated and obsolete. It's nice for the girls and it helps with your taxes, but otherwise it's really rather expensive to get married and marriages don't last anyway. So why bother? Monogamy is monotony.

It's sometimes hard to know how to respond to such cynical sentiments. From a secular point of view, marriage is merely a legal contract and holds

little in the way of moral obligation. The problem is acutely shown in the British television detective series *A Touch of Frost*, where the main character, detective inspector Jack Frost, is about to tell his wife of many years that he's leaving her, when she tells him that she has been diagnosed with terminal cancer. He feels it's in bad taste to leave her now, so he stays.

Young people maybe don't always factor in illness, the possibility of children, and other "contingencies" that might require a longer

lasting devotion or "love." Relationships are for pleasure and convenience and for many there's sadly some truth to the aphorism, "Men don't need women – they just need certain parts of their anatomy."

But it's not only young people who feel this way – sometimes young people are just more honest in expressing their feelings. So where are these ideas coming from? Why is it that people don't believe in moral absolutes? Why do people hold that ethics is

just about personal "values" (rather than facts)?

## Insight via Art

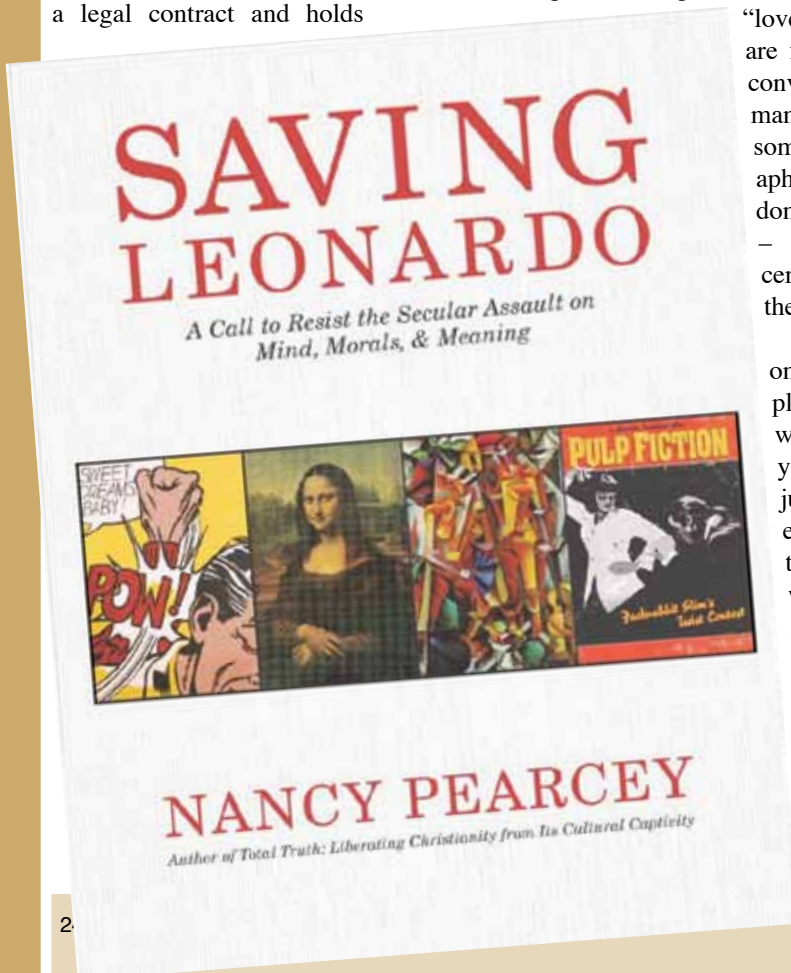
In her new book *Saving Leonardo: A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, & Meaning*, the evangelical scholar Nancy Pearcey brilliantly engages with these and many other questions. Pearcey argues that if you want to share the gospel in the secular west, you will be more effective if you understand the history behind people's worldviews. Pearcey points out that often Christians will respond to her talk of worldview issues with the simple question, "What's wrong with just preaching the Word of God." In response, she quotes J. Gresham Machen, who writes, "False ideas are the greatest obstacle to the reception of the gospel."

And so Pearcey has decided to explain contemporary worldviews by looking at the history of art. A seemingly esoteric approach to be sure, but Pearcey argues that "learning to interpret the arts can be a powerful strategy for understanding the monolithic secularism that is spreading around the globe today."

It turns out to be a good choice, as this is a remarkable book that should be required reading for anyone who wishes to engage with secular culture in a meaningful and Christian manner. And of course the book is also about politics, science, ethics, among other things, so not to worry if you've flunked art history.

## Secularism undermines all values, including its own

As in her earlier book *Total Truth*,



Nancy Pearcey likes to use various diagrams to explain how western worldviews have become fragmented. The most important diagram (borrowed from Francis Schaeffer) is as follows:

### **The two-story concept of truth**

#### **VALUES**

Private, subjective, relative

#### **FACTS**

Public, objective, universal

What does this mean? Pearcey argues that for many people subjects like religion, philosophy, morality, and art are restricted to the upper story (personal values), whereas things like science are part of the lower story (the realm of facts).

The split has become more pronounced in our post-modern age, so that people now demonstrate their supposed tolerance by saying that anything in this upper story of values, - including religion and philosophy - is “true” only in the sense that it gives comfort to its own adherents. To each his own, it is said – true for you, but not necessarily true for me. But of course this acceptance of all values as “personally” true is nothing less than saying everyone who makes these sorts of truth claims are actually wrong (except for the post-modernist of course).

The problem with secularism is that it preaches freedom and liberty but provides no objective basis for such values and morals.

Pearcey insightfully points out that one frequent response to this moral malaise is to reference evolutionary psychology: “Typically the argument goes something like this: You Christians claim that it is impossible to have values and morality without God. Well, we’ve solved *that* problem. Evolutionary forces can produce empathy, cooperation, mutual aid, and all the other forms of social bonding. These behaviors are selected for because they help secure genetic fitness and promote survival.” But as anyone who has read Nietzsche can tell you, all these virtues are signs of *servile* behavior and thus hardly fit the pattern of survival of the *fittest*. According to Pearcey, morality “makes sense only in a world imbued with

meaning and purpose.”

In any case, secularism is not consistent in its application of Darwinism to morality. For instance, when it comes to abortion “virtually no ethicist denies that the fetus is human: biologically, genetically, scientifically human.” Since science supports the pro-life position, liberals have to turn to the upper story of the fact/value dichotomy to defend pro-choice – the facts are against them, so they switch the debate to something more subjective. The question, they say, turns on when the fetus becomes a “person.” No one, unfortunately, seems to agree when this transformation occurs.

Each secular worldview is thus selective in what aspect of reality it focuses on, and Christians have to train themselves to have a holistic viewpoint that sees the whole picture. This is where art history provides a good training ground.

### **On to Art History**

When I was in Amsterdam a number of years ago I visited various art museums – in particular, the Rijksmuseum (where you can see many of the Rembrandts), the Van Gogh Museum, and the Stedelijk Museum. The latter houses mostly modern works, and after the first two it was frankly underwhelming. I grew up in a house filled with books on art history, and yet I’ve never really enjoyed modern art. I’m not surprised that when people see a painting that consists of paint wildly thrown at the canvas they shake their head and mutter, “even my grandmother could do better than that” (no offense to grandmothers!). When you tell them that at one point Marcel Duchamp simply submitted a urinal to an exhibition and called it art (the infamous “Fountain” from 1917) they give up altogether.

The result, as Pearcey points out, is that Christians either tend to dismiss art as irrelevant (and so they alienate the artists in their midst), or they

“are so concerned to show that *they* are not narrow or fundamentalist – that *they* are cultured and sophisticated – that they find something ‘redemptive’ in virtually everything.”

A worldview approach is more subtle, since it allows us to understand the ideas that have shaped art and culture generally. It also shows how Christians can work in various styles and contexts without giving up their biblical principles.

### **The Enlightenment and Romanticism**

The year 1789 was the year of the French Revolution, and for historians it also signals a break between the Enlightenment period and Romanticism. However, while each movement was dominant at some point in European cultural history, it’s maybe better to think of them as two tendencies that have existed side by side. According to Pearcey, it’s these two worldviews that neatly capture the two main paths to modern secularism.

So what’s the difference? Well, the Enlightenment, to simplify, tended to see the world in a deterministic light. All we can know with certainty is the world of matter. Humans can use their reason to understand the laws of the universe, but there is no personal God, or if there is one He is far away. As a result, nature seems cold and emotionless. Against this view of nature as “a great machine,” the Romantics came up with “an organic metaphor – nature as alive, growing, free, imbued with spiritual force or life.” And so the essential conflict became one between facts and values, and between materialism and the realm of ideas.

What does this mean in practice? Well, each art form tends to be inspired by either the Enlightenment or Romanticism. Take for instance Impressionism – the nineteenth century art form that has ironically become domesticated these days by Hallmark, the maker of greeting cards. Impressionist artists include Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and Camille Pissarro. Most people would assume that these artists are essentially romantic in their depiction of nature. However, the fact is that the Impressionists were following the dictates of positivism (a radical form of empiricism) which suggests that our only knowledge of reality comes from our senses. And so the impressionists “turned art into a record of optical sensations.” They painted streaks

of color and light hitting objects, but they refused to interpret exactly where one object began and another one ended. It's no wonder that the great Catholic novelist G. K. Chesterton referred to Impressionism as "that final skepticism that can find no floor to the universe." Art is always a reflection of a worldview.

Pearcey thus takes the reader on an illuminating excursion through the world of art, and there's no need to repeat all of her examples here. Even as simply a study of art (excluding the Christian worldview angle), this book with its glossy pages and many illustrations is one of the best introductions to art history I've come across. It's given me many ideas for teaching the western tradition to my students while making them more aware of where their own worldviews have come from.

### Reaching the youth

Pearcey makes the shrewd observation that even as Christians have become hyperactive in American politics, young Christians are increasingly becoming more apathetic. The reason, she muses, is that secular culture teaches them that it's wrong to push your values on others (secular values excluded). And so young people feel uncomfortable about political activism and cultural engagement.

There is thus a great need to help young people develop biblical worldviews that give them the analytical skills to understand their culture. And this is something that I think has to start in Christian elementary and high schools. How many Christian art programs *really* teach children the meaning behind works of art? Often the approach is something like "Well, today we're all going to do an Impressionist drawing" or "today we'll write a limerick." The result of this piecemeal approach is that art (and culture

generally) is relegated to the sidelines – something you do on a whim, to express your personal taste and creativity. Pearcey writes at one point, however,

"Every local church is a letter from Christ to the world. Outsiders will be drawn in when they see the beauty of relationships marked by grace and forgiveness, the beauty of justice for the oppressed, the beauty of creativity in every field of human endeavor."

My church hopes to have its own building one day – I hope they will remember that aesthetics is one form of apologetics.

I'd like to finish by mentioning that Pearcey has strong Reformed roots. Like Francis Schaeffer, her mentor, she has been strongly influenced by elements of Dutch Calvinism, especially the transformative view of culture. She frequently invokes the common grace paradigm, and she likes to quote Herman

Dooyeweerd (a Kuyperian philosopher), among others (e.g., Alvin Plantinga and Hans Rookmaaker). There has been a resurgence of Reformed thinking about worldviews in recent years, and it's important to support this work.

As Pearcey argues, this is revolutionary work:

"We are called to revolt against false idols and the power they exert over minds and hearts. Christians should be on the front lines fighting to liberate society from its captivity to secular worldviews. And who is better equipped than artists to communicate that liberating message – to jar the church out of its complacency, tear away the veil of religious euphemism, expose hypocrisy and self-righteousness, and create works that reveal the breathtaking beauty of salvation?"

Who indeed?



**An impressionist piece by Claude Monet:** "Impressionists 'turned art into a record of optical sensations.' They painted streaks of color and light hitting objects, but they refused to interpret exactly where one object began and another one ended."



# Trust & obey

The only way to stop being scared to speak up is to start speaking up

by Harma-Mae Smit

My heart thudded inside my chest. My palms were clammy. I avoided meeting the gaze of the students rushing by me. *Don't stop and ask me questions, don't stop and ask me questions...*

I was sitting at a table that our university pro-life club sets up every Friday on campus. The whole reason I was there *was* to answer questions – questions about our club, questions about being pro-life, questions about the unborn. But I felt incredibly unqualified to talk to anyone about abortion. What if someone from the pro-choice group decided to come and talk to me? Even though I've been pro-life all my life, I felt like I knew very little about how to defend my position. The last time I'd gotten into an abortion discussion, it had ended up with me unable to get a word in edgewise while the other girl attacked me. This time, though, I was with another volunteer who was quite experienced at speaking up. I relaxed a bit as she demonstrated how to handle different types of questions.

While we didn't get too many people stopping by to talk that day, the experience made me wonder: if I felt uncomfortable just sitting at a table that said "pro-life" on it, could that be the reason why Christians so often fail to speak up about our beliefs? Do we sometimes fail to get involved because we're just plain scared?

## Tackling fear

Though there are many pro-life Christians on our campus, very few join the pro-life club. I didn't join until someone personally invited me, because I

was nervous about talking to people who disagreed with me. I wasn't sure how to handle being ridiculed or yelled at. It was far easier for me to agree with the whole pro-life cause in my heart, without actually doing anything about it. It was easier to talk about abortion only with my friends at church.

It's a lot more nerve-racking to step out and actually do something about it.

Realizing that I was giving in to fear opened my eyes, and I recalled 1 Peter 3:15: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone..." If I kept avoiding the debate I'd never feel prepared to give an answer for why I was pro-life. The very same verse urges me to do this "with gentleness and respect." Far too often, the debate surrounding abortion has descended into insults and name-calling, but I am called to learn how to stand firm in my own beliefs without insulting the other person. And I can only get better at this with practice.

## Breaking the silence

At some point I had to step up. If I just kept quiet about what I thought, to avoid having others shout me down, then I wasn't being honest about what I truly believed. Then I wasn't acting like I really knew this was a matter of life and death. In fact, my silence would be hurting the unborn - if enough people keep silent, abortion becomes less and less of an acceptable topic to speak about, and it becomes that much harder for anyone to speak up.

Now some people like to convince themselves it's useless to talk about the unborn because the issue is closed. It's seemingly a relief to conclude that this

argument is over – the politicians aren't going to re-open the debate, so then there's no point talking about it anymore. Right?

Wrong. Avoiding a resolution to this issue is exactly what our country's been doing these past twenty-three years. That's why we have absolutely no restrictions on abortion in Canada. And if one considers that a resolution to the debate, well, it's not exactly a resolution Christians should be satisfied with, is it?

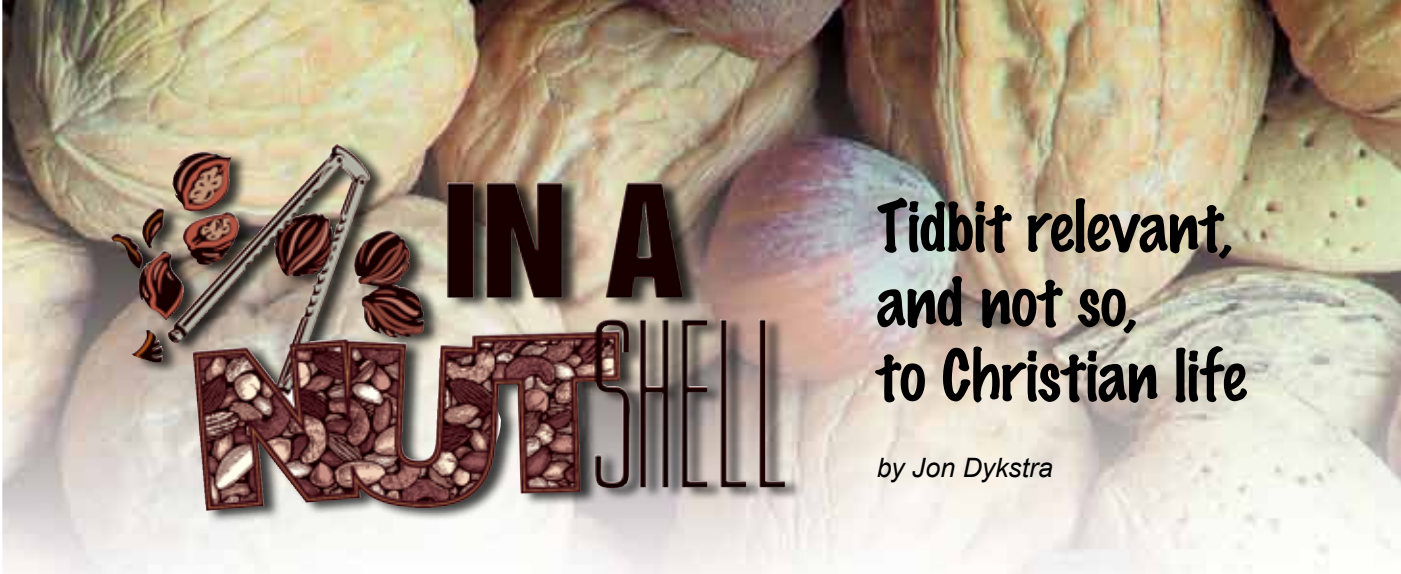
## Bearing witness

The unborn need people to stand up and support them. Large number of supporters gathered together is one important way to send politicians the message that no, not all Canadians think this issue is closed. Now maybe you don't have the time or money to organize rallies, run for office, or talk to everyone you meet about abortion. But we can all do something. If anything is going to change, that's what we all need to start doing – at least something.

This spring, I participated in a March for Life rally for the first time. I was shaking in my boots as we set off to march through the downtown. But, as I took small tentative steps forward, the realization sunk in that this really does matter. As a Christian in this world, God calls on me to represent Him. I was supporting the pro-life position not because *I* believed in it, but because God cares about each and every life. To stand among a crowd of like-minded people to send our politicians the message that this issue is not dead – it is a very small part of bearing witness for God as I, as a Christian, am called to do.



Photo by Joanne Dieleman



# Tidbit relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

.....  
**To the masses... about marriage**

Some estimates put the number of people who watched the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton, this past April, at more than 2 billion. If accurate, that means almost a third of the planet heard the Bishop of London make an instructive point about marriage in his homily to the couple – don't make an idol out of your marriage or your spouse:

“As the reality of God has faded from so many lives in the West, there has been a corresponding inflation of expectations that personal relations alone will supply meaning and happiness in life. This is to load our partner with too great a burden.”

SOURCE: Chuck Colson's Breakpoint column June 13, 2011 "Inflated Expectations How not to Treat Your Spouse"

.....  
**On the Arab-Israeli conflict**

“If the Arabs would lay down their arms, there would be no war. If the Israelis would lay down their arms, there would be no Israel.”

- Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

.....  
**Of course you're insulted...**

If you want to be insulted you can, with enough effort, twist whatever anyone is saying into an insult aimed at you. This was demonstrated recently by American radio talk show host Glenn Beck.

During the very strained budget debates

**Pelosi: GOP = Satan**  
Friday, Jul 15, 2011 at 11:47 AM EDT

Headline from TheBlaze.com

this past July, Democrat Nancy Pelosi said that she wanted:

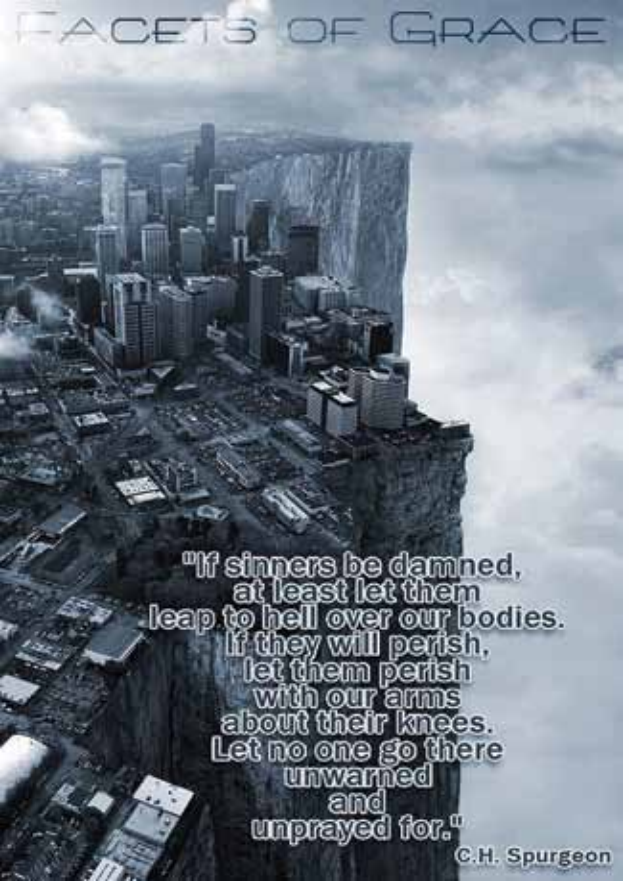
“to commend the president. I had never seen, Job is no place compared to this president in terms of patience. He doesn't even begin.”

She was complimenting the President for his patience. We could legitimately criticize her for exaggerating the President's patience (and if we wanted to be picky we could say something about her grammar) but the folks at GlennBeck.com didn't simply want to criticize – they wanted something we could all be *outraged* over. The title they gave to their piece on Pelosi's comments captured their spin on the story: “Pelosi: GOP = Satan”.

How did Glenn Beck's crew justify this hyped headline? Well, if the President is being compared to Job when negotiating with Republicans (the GOP), and Job was contending

with hardships brought on by the devil, then clearly, Pelosi was saying that the GOP are Satan. Did you follow that? It takes the worst possible meaning out of what Nancy Pelosi says, and then attributes this horrible spin as her true intent.

The Bible tells us to do unto others what we would want them to do unto us (Matt. 7:12) and that includes how we take what they say. It is only by keeping this rule in mind that we can hope for some type of civil political (or personal) discourse.



from CalvinisticCartoons.blogspot.com



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### Joke o' the month

On our way home from church my young son Joel asked me about Mr. Smith, a man sitting behind us during the service: "He can't sing very well, can he?" It was true, but I didn't want my son critiquing everyone's singing so I explained to him: "Joel, Mr. Smith sings from his heart, and that's what makes it good."

Several days later Joel and I were singing along to the car radio, when Joel stopped, and said to me: "Daddy, you sing from your heart, don't you?"

SOURCE: Adapted from a joke making its way around the Internet

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### The not so "green" machine

by Anna Nienhuis and Jon Dykstra

One of today's most popular buzzword

used to sell products is "green" and one area where "green" is being marketed is the auto industry, as cars are often designated as major offenders in the emissions department. So cars that run on electricity, and not gas, are being marketed as the environmentally friendly transportation option.

However, a recent British study has found that electric cars could, in fact, have a bigger negative environmental impact than their traditional counterparts, due to the energy required to produce their enormous batteries. The take-away lesson: more often than not, the "green" label is about selling goods, rather than helping the environment. Before buying green, we should demand proof that real, substantive good is being done.

Source: Doug Powers' "British study: Electric cars not so green"; breitbart.com, June 9, 2011 & Levitt and Dubner's "Superfreakonomics"; HarperCollins, 2009

.....

### What the Lord's Prayer isn't about

The following is a poem about the Lord's Prayer that Ronald Reagan copied out and kept in a note card box along with other material that he thought might be useful additions to the many speeches he made.

*You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer  
& even once say "I,"*

*You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer  
& even once say "my."*

*You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer  
& not include another;*

*You cannot ask for daily bread  
& not include your brother.*

*For others are included in each  
& every plea;*

*From the very beginning  
it never once says me.*

SOURCE: *The Notes* by Ronald Reagan, as he copied it out from *Christian Reader* Vol. 32, No. 3



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## SOUP & BUNS

# Ridiculously happy

**“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”- Matt. 11:28**

by Sharon L. Bratcher

*“I feel ridiculously happy when I climb into bed at night.”*

My good friend Faith posted this on facebook and it “stuck in my head” because I like the wording. “Ridiculously happy.”

Days are full of activity and emotion. We toil for hours in physical labor at home and at work. We experience stress from arguments, concerns, illness or grief. That fatigue often comes as a surprise late in the day when it knocks us over all at once, and we realize that even without physical labor, we are awfully tired.

The day finally ends and we climb the stairs one last time, prepare for bed, pull back the covers, and slide into bliss. Ahhhhhh. “Why didn’t I come to bed sooner?” we ask. Each muscle relaxes and lets go, and our favorite sheets and soft pillow match the name of our bedding: they are comforters.

It seems ridiculous because it is such a small, everyday, mundane thing: to lie in bed at the end of the day. What’s the big deal about that – we do it every day! But at that moment in time, I often feel a complete and total happiness, and know that there is nowhere in the world where I would rather be. It is peace, and joy, and rest. And it is not guaranteed in our world of woe.

This reminds me to be thankful, concerned, and diligent.

Not everyone in the world has a comfy bed to slip into, nor a safe home in which to sleep. Some have lost everything in an earthquake or an economic tsunami that

overcame their financial shoreline. Some have only a cardboard box and the bare, hard ground. And not everyone has loved ones with whom to share their home.

I do not speak out of pride – “hey, look what I have that you don’t!” No, rather, it’s a sense of awe and joy and gratitude to our Lord for everything He has provided. What do you feel thankful for? Each “thing” we own is a treasure: our cars, homes, stoves, clothing, and yes, our beds, sheets, pillows and comforters too. That moment of “ahhhh” is not just about being ridiculously happy to climb into bed – it’s about being thankful for every aspect of life. It leads directly to thankfulness for spouse, children and extended family, and church, job and country as well.

And *that* leads directly to prayer for all the concerns. Prayer for those who live in hardship, and for unbelieving sons and daughters, relatives and friends. Prayer for the concerns and outreach of the church, and for ineffective or evil political leaders who are not beyond the strong arm of our Almighty God. We ask for wisdom and courage to reach out to others more than we have been. We ask for wisdom and direction for voting and for encouraging our leaders in a godly direction, in every way that we can.

“Ridiculously happy” often happens when we are glad that a day is finally over.

We end our day’s hard work and feel the blessing of rest and peace that God gives to us.

Our strength is gone, we can barely

think straight, and our nerves are raw; it is not the best time for deep discussions, as we may have run out of tact. How wonderful it is that the Lord gives rest to the weary, rejuvenating us in body and soul! What a wonderful picture it is of the complete rest that He will provide for us someday in Heaven.

We also need to be diligent to take care of our bodies, making time for the rest God will give to us. Just as we often choose the frills and thrills of life over time spent reading God’s Word, we also sometimes choose them rather than ensuring that we get a good night’s sleep. Dr. Archibald D. Hart has written an excellent book entitled *Sleep: It Does a Family Good. How Busy Families Can Overcome Sleep Deprivation*. I was amazed to learn the many benefits of sleep! If we think that we can get by on only 5-6 hours of sleep a night, we are probably only evaluating our daily functionality. There is no way that we can evaluate our total health which relies on the rejuvenation of our cells which only happens when we are sleeping.

It is odd, but exhilarating to realize that even by going to bed at night, we are serving Him well! Among the many blessings we receive from the Lord, let’s thank Him for the ridiculous happiness of rest!

*“When you lie down, you will not be afraid; when you lie down, your sleep will be sweet.” Prov. 3:24*



# ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

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

## CHESS PUZZLE # 180



## NEW PUZZLES

Riddle for Punsters #180 –“A bad tree cannot bear good fruit!”  
You can tell that an apple is rotten on the inside if there is evidence of \_\_\_\_\_-uption.

Problem to Ponder #180 –“Row, Row, Row Your Boat...”

Two boats were entered in a 8 kilometre rowing competition. The first took 12 minutes to speed up uniformly from 0 to 20 km/h (and so had an average speed of 10 km/h during those 12 minutes) then travelled the rest of the way to the finish line at that speed of 20 km/h. The second boat took 20 minutes to speed up uniformly from 0 to 24 km/h (and so had an average speed of 12 km/h during those 20 minutes) then travelled the rest of the way to the finish line at that speed of 24 km/h. How long did each boat take to reach the finish line and so which boat won the 8 km long race?

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

## SOLUTIONS TO THE JULY/AUGUST PUZZLE PAGE

Answers to Riddles for Punsters #179 – “Another bunny is not funny!”

What did the farmer say after years of failed attempts to chase rabbits away from his property? “I guess those furry animals are ha re to stay. If I give this farm to one of my sons, he will in-ha re-it them as well!”

Answers to Problem to Ponder #179 – “Hot Dog Stand at the Beach”

With the onset of warm, sunny days many people head to the beach for fun and relaxation and even a tan. Eventually children playing in the water or building sand castles get hungry. Jessica has three children and gives each child a \$5 bill to take to the hot dog stand. Including taxes, a hot dog costs \$1.35, an order of french fries \$1.55 and a milkshake \$2.50 at the hot dog stand. How much change will be left from the \$15.00 if each child has a dog, a shake and SOME fries?

If, instead of a milkshake, each child buys a bottled fruit juice for \$1.70, a) how much change will be left after each child also buys a dog and order of fries? b) altogether how many dogs and fries would have to be bought in order to get back as little change as possible?

Since  $\$1.35 + \$1.55 + \$2.50 = \$5.40$  which exceeds the \$5.00 given per child, it is not possible for each child to order all three items. However, it is possible for each child to get a hot dog and milkshake and “SOME fries” if two orders of fries are shared between the three children. The three were given a total of \$15.00 and the cost of 3 hot dogs, 2 orders of fries and 3 shakes is  $3(\$1.35) + 2(\$1.55) + 3(\$2.50) = \$14.65$  and so the change that is left is  $\$15.00 - \$14.65 = \$0.35$

a)  $3(\$1.35 \text{ for hot dog}) + 3(\$1.55 \text{ for fries}) + 3(\$1.70 \text{ for fruit juice}) = \$13.80$  and so the change that is left is  $\$15.00 - \$13.80 = \$1.20$

b) If each child gets a fruit juice the cost is  $3(\$1.70) = \$5.10$  which leaves  $\$15.00 - \$5.10 = \$9.90$  available for dogs and fries.

$7(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 0(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$9.45 leaving 45 cents change

$6(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 1(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$9.65 leaving 25 cents change

$5(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 2(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$9.85 leaving 5 cents change

## SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 179

WHITE to Mate in 4  
Descriptive Notation

1. QxP ch K-B1
2. Q-R8 ch BxQ
3. RxB ch K-N2
4. R/R1-R7 mate

Algebraic Notation

1. Qh3xh7 + Kg8-f8
2. Qh7-h8 + Bg7xh8
3. Rh2xh8 + Kf8-g7
4. Rh1-h7 ++

BLACK to Mate in 2  
Descriptive Notation

1. ----- Q-R6 ch
2. K-N1 Q-R8 mate  
OR N-B6(or N-Q7) mate

OR

2. K-Q1 Q-R8 mate



Algebraic Notation

1. ----- Qe7-a3 +
2. Kc1-d1 Qa3-a1 ++  
OR Ne4-c3 (or Ne4-d2) ++

OR

2. Kc1-b1 Qa3-a1 ++

$4(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 2(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$8.50 leaving 140 cents change

$3(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 3(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$8.70 leaving 120 cents change

$2(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 4(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$8.90 leaving 100 cents change

$1(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 5(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$9.10 leaving 80 cents change

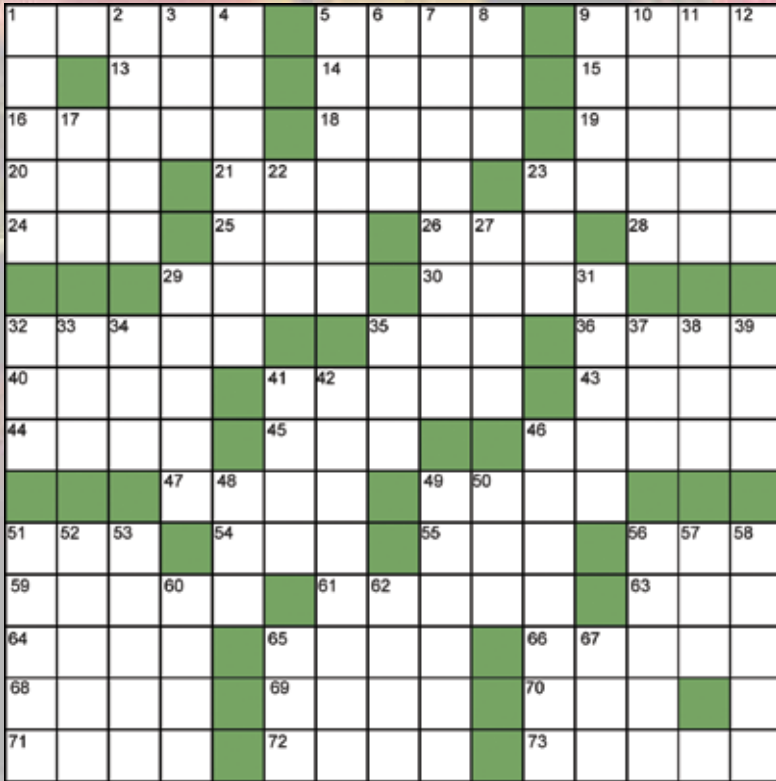
$0(\$1.35 \text{ dogs}) + 6(\$1.55 \text{ fries})$  cost \$9.30 leaving 60 cents change

Thus, 5 hot dogs and 2 french fries would have to be bought in order to get back as little change as possible.

# Crossword Puzzle

Series 18 No 7

Last Month's solution  
Series 18 No 6



|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P | O | S | T | S |   | E | L | E | V |   | A | M | E | S |   |
| A | D | I | E | U |   | L | U | X | E |   | R | U | T | H |   |
| T | O | T | E | M |   | A | D | E | R |   | E | L | H | I |   |
|   | R | U | M | M | Y |   | A | C | I | D |   | T | O | N |   |
|   |   |   | S | E | S |   | U | T | I | L | I | S | E |   |   |
| A | R | E |   | R | E | C | I | T | A | L |   |   |   |   |   |
| G | A | G | E |   | R | U | N | E | S |   | S | T | A | R |   |
| A | N | G | R | Y |   |   | G |   |   | B | E | A | C | H |   |
| R | I | S | E |   | S | P | O | R | T |   | E | U | R | O |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | E | M | O | T | I | O | N |   | T | E | D |
| S | P | E | A | K | E | R |   | D | R | I | P |   |   |   |   |
| H | E | I |   | E | A | T | S |   | E | M | O | T | E |   |   |
| O | L | D | S |   | R | A | T | E |   | B | L | O | A | T |   |
| R | E | E | K |   | E | G | O | S |   | L | A | R | S | A |   |
| E | E | R | Y |   | D | E | P | T |   | E | R | N | E | S |   |

## ACROSS:

1. Remove by cutting
5. A stableman, in India
9. Search and Rescue Transponder
13. The night before
14. Coffee cup transporter
15. Award for plays Off Broadway
16. Fatigued
18. Flower
19. Positively charged groups of atoms
20. Magazine "commercials"
21. Computer graphic symbols
23. Dependence on hope
24. Fish eggs
25. Own, Scottishly speaking
26. Expression of triumph
28. Your, in Paris
29. The dross of metal
30. Large vessels for dyeing
32. Certain parents
35. Golf term
36. The seed of a vetch
40. Give off light or heat
41. Involuntary muscular contraction
43. Burden
44. Special ceremony
45. Out of office abbr.
46. Conceit
47. Being an assistant, usually as a chef
49. Read attentively
51. Letters of distress
54. It's in the eye of the beholder
55. Experimental allergic encephalomyelitis
56. Map abbr.
59. Serve food to
61. A mammalian blood cell
63. Bird sound
64. All right
65. History
66. Rest
68. Hawaiian goose
69. Italicized, for short
70. European Article Number
71. Finishes
72. French father
73. Get ready for the day

## DOWN:

1. Indian lute
2. Line of metrical writing
3. First lady's name
4. Phones again
5. Powerful
6. Metal
7. Edible tuberous roots
8. Face part
9. French evening
10. Concerning
11. Wash out with water
12. Trials
17. Bachelor's last words
22. Central Intel. Agency
23. Work at tatting
27. Physical or mental injury
29. Gluts
31. Vending place
32. Each
33. French pal
34. Fruit core
35. File name extension for computers
37. Black cuckoo
38. Redness; blush
39. Direction
41. Sweet's opposite
42. Write a later date on a cheque
46. Ironed
48. Boat accessory
49. Herb crusher
50. Tree
51. English tea accompaniment
52. Wood-like
53. Lose the lap
56. Play subdivision
57. Foot part
58. Long cords
60. Observes
62. European river that flows into the Danube
65. Bird disorder
67. Ancient Roman god

*Joyce*