

Volume 23 Number 4 February 2004

REFORMED

Perspective

A MAGAZINE
FOR THE
CHRISTIAN
FAMILY

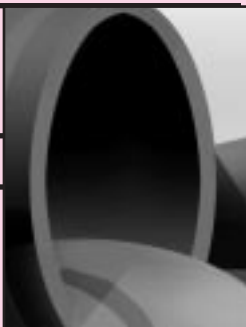
The Economic Market Who decides\$?

What's inside?

Living with
Post-Partum
Depression

The Galileo Myth

Sewage:
not out of sight –
out of mind



Two Tales of Trade for Teens

Editorial

by Jon Dykstra



As Christians we know that man is prone to all sorts of evil, but we often forget that man is also prone to all sorts of stupidity. Much damage is done by well meaning people who embrace a bad cause – they aren't trying to do evil, just the opposite in fact, but evil is done because these "good" people are acting out of their ignorance.

In Economics this well meant ignorance has often caused serious harm. For example, most of us would be against any sort of child labor. We abhor child labor, especially when the alternative is sending these same kids to school instead. But when the compassionate campaign against child labor moved Nike and Reebok to close plants in Pakistan and lay off 50,000 child workers in Bangladesh, these children didn't go to school instead. The reason they were working in the first place was because they needed the very basics of life, so when they were laid off, thousands turned to prostitution, crime or simply starved to death.¹

Compassion, coupled with ignorance, forced these children from a barely tolerable situation to one that was much, much worse.

When talking to youth about Economics I've found they are even more susceptible to doing the wrong thing for the right reasons. Enthusiasm combined with inexperience results in an ardent teen who just wants to "Do something!"

Christian youth, who know that "the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil" (1 Tim. 6:10), seem prone to a specific type of economic error – they are often deeply suspicious of the rich and the rich First World countries. Many are convinced that when a rich country trades with a poor country, if the rich get a good deal, it must have been at the expense of the poor. This in turn leaves them leery of free trade.

The truth is, it is not through trade, but through the lack of it that rich countries victimize the poor. Yes, if there was only a fixed amount of wealth to go around, then any country that got more wealth could only have done so by taking wealth away from someone else. But wealth can be created, and is created through trade.

This is a hard concept to explain, but it is relatively easy to demonstrate, as the fictional story below illustrates.

How trade creates wealth

A university professor was trying to explain to his students the benefits of trade. After lecturing on the subject for an entire week he found his students were still unconvinced. Thinking about it over the weekend he had a brilliant flash of insight and headed down to the local dollar store where he bought a range of small inexpensive toys. He bought

20 different toys in all, ranging from a whoopee cushion to a bag of marbles.

When the students entered their Economics 101 classroom that Monday they were each given one of the small toys. Most of the students thought their presents were kind of neat, all except for the girl who received the whoopee cushion. She wasn't quite sure why, but she was offended. The professor then began the class by asking each student to rate their present on a scale of 0-5 with a 5 meaning they really liked it. The twenty students gave their presents a combined rating of 38. The whoopee cushion girl rated her toy a zero.

The professor then allowed the students five minutes to trade their presents but only with students immediately to the right or left of them. The unhappy whoopee cushion girl managed to trade it to a frat boy for a package of giant playing cards. She was much happier with the cards, and the frat boy was strangely ecstatic with his new possession too. Five minutes later the students were asked to rate their presents again, and the combined rating improved to 54. The frat boy gave his whoopee cushion a five.

It is not through trade, but through the lack of it that rich countries victimize the poor.

Finally the professor allowed the students to trade with anyone in the room. The combined rating after this exchange was boosted to 65.

No new products were created, but free trade allowed the students to obtain what they really wanted, or in the case of the whoopee cushion girl, it allowed her to get rid of what she didn't really value. The professor was overjoyed because his students finally understood how trade could create wealth. He let out a contented sigh and dropped down into his chair... which then produced another, decidedly more rude, sound.

The frat boy loved free trade.

When I first published this illustration in the *Canadian Student Review* some students still insisted that trade couldn't help poor countries. They argued that the poorest countries have absolutely nothing of value to offer in trade.²

This objection has no basis in fact. Whether it is natural resources, or simply cheap labor (even cheap child labor), every country has something to offer. As a response I ended up writing a second story to illustrate how free trade would help even when some countries have much less to offer than others.

REFORMED Perspective

A MAGAZINE
FOR THE
CHRISTIAN
FAMILY

www.reformedperspective.ca

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

How trade helps even poor countries

It was a regular lunch hour in Mrs. Embargo's grade 6 classroom and the kids were trading their snacks behind the teacher's back. One of the kids, Ulysses Sam Austin (USA for short) always had at least a hundred Oreo cookies. He had so many he didn't value them like he once did when his mom only packed five or ten in his lunch. Canada's mom (some kids have names like Dallas and Dakota, so why not Canada?) always stuck an entire banana bread loaf in his lunch. The other kids weren't quite so well off, and had a variety of snacks ranging from a handful of chips to a couple of carrot sticks.

The carrot stick kid desperately wanted some banana bread because his mom didn't have an oven so she couldn't make it. It took a bit of bartering but eventually he managed to trade one of his carrot sticks for a small slice. It wasn't a lot, but it was more than he could have gotten any other way.

USA was getting quite sick of Oreos and was practically giving them away. It wasn't that he was softhearted – some even accused him of being the class bully – but he had a surplus of cookies, and they weren't very useful to him. He traded ten of them to the carrot stick boy for his last carrot.

The next day Mrs. Embargo decided to crack down, "You children are just going to have to eat what your parents packed in your lunch!" That made all the children very sad: USA because he was now stuck with only Oreos, Canada because he had nothing orange to eat, and especially poor carrot boy, because Mrs. Embargo's protectionist stance prevented him from trading for the banana bread he loved so dearly.

* * * * *

The truth is, it is not through trade, but through restrictions on trade that rich countries victimize the poor. In this illustration, without trade the poor carrot stick boy/country would never have gotten a slice of banana bread, as he was completely incapable of manufacturing it at home. In the real world poor countries in Africa can often produce agricultural goods at a lower cost than we can in the west, yet instead of allowing them to compete with us, we slap huge tariffs on their goods and spend almost a billion dollars a day on farm subsidies. As columnist Elizabeth Nickson puts it, "these barriers dramatically reduce what poor countries can earn from farming, which is what most of their people do. [It is] estimated that protecting our markets from African produce costs these countries \$100 billion US a year, or twice what they receive in aid."³

Free, fair trade is a win-win prospect for both sides – the poorer nations wouldn't trade at all if they didn't think they were getting a benefit. If we as Christians want to help the developing world in a substantial manner – far in excess of any material good we can do through our charitable giving – one of the most compassionate things we can do is tell our government to reduce tariffs and agricultural subsidies that, while helping our own farmers, do so at the expense of the poor.

¹ "Green power, black death" by Elizabeth Nickson, *National Post* Jan. 9, 2004

² Letter to the Editor *Canadian Student Review* July/August 2000

³ "Green power, black death"



Address for Administrative Matters (Subscriptions, Advertisements, Change of Address):

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

Editor: Jon Dykstra

Address for Editorial Matters (Letters and Submissions):

Reformed Perspective
13820-106A Ave., Edmonton, AB
Canada T5N 1C9
E-mail:
editor@reformedperspective.ca

Associate Editors:

Peter Veenendaal, Assistant Editor;
phone/fax: 1 (204) 745-6238
Wilhelm Gortemaker,
Managing Editor

Regular Contributors:

Jane deGlint, Christine Farenhorst,
Margaret Helder, Johan Tangelder,
Rene Vermeulen

Board of Directors:

Jacob Kuik, Chairman;
James Teitsma, Secretary/Treasurer;
Peter DeBoer, Wilhelm Gortemaker,
Allard Gunnink, Henk VanderVelde,
John Voorhorst.

Secretarial Address

(Board Matters):

James Teitsma,
90 Ranchgrove Bay
Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada
R2C 4Y3

Contact Address for South Africa:

Arie Roos, Box 584
Kuilsvrivierv
7580 Republic of South Africa

Contact Address for Australia:

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

This periodical is owned and operated by the Foundation for the publication of a Reformed Social-Political Magazine, a nonprofit organization, whose purpose is described in Article 2 of its constitution: "to publish periodically a magazine promoting Reformed principles in all spheres of life, especially the social, political and economic realms." In carrying out its objectives, the society is bound by the Bible, God's infallible Word, as it is summarized and confessed in the Belgic Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, and the Canons of Dort (Article 3 of the constitution).

If you are interested in the work of Reformed Perspective Foundation and in the promotion of Reformed principles in all spheres of life, especially in your local area, and you need help, call Peter Veenendaal at 1 (204) 745-6238.

Annual Subscription Rates:

Canada \$45.00*
(2 years \$80.00, 3 years \$120.00)*
Canada Airmail \$61.00*
U.S. (U.S. Funds) \$40.50
(2 years \$74.00, 3 years \$108.00)
U.S. Airmail (U.S. Funds) \$51.00
International Surface Mail \$58.50
(2 years \$108.00, 3 years \$158.00)
International Airmail \$81.50
* including 7% G.S.T.
– G.S.T. No. R118929272RT

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publication Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Cancellation Agreement

Unless a written subscription cancellation is received we assume you wish to continue to subscribe. You will be invoiced prior to the subscription renewal date.

Registration: ISSN 0714-8208

Charitable Organization under
Canada Income Tax Act
Registration No. 18929272RR0001

RETURN UNDELIVERABLE

CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:
One Beghin Avenue, Winnipeg, MB R2J 3X5

In This Issue:

Editorial — Jon Dykstra	2
In a Nutshell — Jon Dykstra	4
Report from Australia — Rene Vermeulen	5
Homefront — Jane deGlint	7
Economics	9-14
The Deep Dark Place — Jan Bredenhof	15
The Covenant — Christine Farenhorst	19
Apologetics (I) — Johan D. Tangelder	20
The Galileo Myth — Reuben Bredenhof	24
Sewage — Margaret Helder	28
Puzzle Page — Bob Leach	31
Crossword Puzzle Series II, No. II	32



Tidbits relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

Part of this is true

In theory legislators are paid to write law and judges are paid to interpret law. In Canada our judges do the work of two – they interpret the law and often write it as well. For example, homosexuality was given a boost when the courts decided to create a new section in the Charter of Rights forbidding discrimination based on sexual orientation.

But after doing both their own work and the work of the legislators, Canada's federal judges have complained that they are underpaid. As Pierre Bienvenu, a representative for the judges, put it, "The government does not hesitate to leave the most divisive societal issues for determination by the courts." He cited gay marriage as an example of a pressure packed issue the judges should be paid more to deal with.

In related news a group of federal legislators have also filed a complaint about their pay. As one MP put it, "Now that we've foisted our work on the judges we're really getting overpaid for what we do. Someone should cut our salaries!"

SOURCES: *National Post* and *Edmonton Journal* Feb. 4, 2004.

1984 in 2004

In France the government has proposed banning on all "conspicuous" symbols of faith from all state institutions. The law seems to have been prompted by fears of the growing Muslim presence in France, but the ban would impact all religious groups – Muslim veils, Jewish skullcaps, and even large Christian crosses would all be prohibited. In an Orwellian twist, the government says the law is actually supposed to increase tolerance for all religions. . . by banning the outward expression of any religion.

Canadians with long memories may find it interesting the way some Sikhs in

France are trying to evade the ban. They have argued that their turbans should be exempt because turbans are only cultural, not religious clothing.

But in Canada, 14 years ago, a Sikh member of Canada's national police force caused a nationwide controversy when he asked for permission to wear his turban rather than the traditional Stetson. His request was eventually granted because his turban was recognized as an important part of his religion. So in Canada turbans are religious, but in France, in another bit of Orwellian doubletalk, they are merely cultural. SOURCES: *nationalreview.com* "Heady Concerns" posted Feb 3, 2004; *National Post* Jan. 22, 2004.

Joke of the month

Two cars were waiting at a stoplight. When the light turned green, the man in front didn't seem to notice. The woman in the car behind him did though, and she started pounding on her steering wheel and yelling at the man to move. But he didn't. The woman began to go ballistic inside her car, ranting and raving at the man and pounding on her steering wheel and dash.

When the light turned yellow the woman let out a long blast on her car horn, flipped him off, and screamed something out her window about "male drivers." This finally got the man's attention and, looking up, he saw the yellow light so he put his foot on the gas and scooted through the intersection just as the light turned red. This left the woman practically beside herself with rage – the man had made her miss her chance at getting through the intersection! In mid-rant she heard a tap on her window and looked up to see the barrel of a gun held by a very serious looking policeman.

He told her to shut off her car and "keep both hands where I can see them." She complied, speechless at what was hap-

pening. When she got out of the car the policeman quickly cuffed her and hustled her into his patrol car. Too bewildered by the chain of events to ask any questions, she was driven to the police station, fingerprinted, photographed, searched, booked and placed in a cell.

After a couple of hours, a policeman approached the cell, opened the door, and escorted her back to the booking desk where the original officer was waiting with her personal effects. "I'm really sorry for this mistake," he said "but when I pulled up behind your car you were blowing your horn, flipping that guy off, and cussing a blue streak at the car in front of you. When I noticed your 'Choose Life' license plate holder, the 'No Jesus, No Peace; Know Jesus, Know Peace' and 'Follow Me to Church' bumper stickers, and the chrome plated Christian fish emblem on the trunk I naturally assumed you had stolen that car."

SOURCE: Adapted from a joking winging its way around the Internet

Egyptian gods take a beating

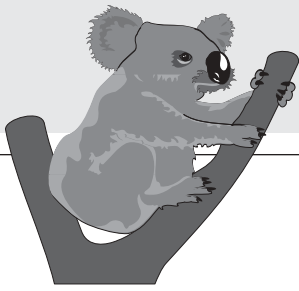
Author James Nickel calls the ten plagues "one of the greatest blessings that ancient Egypt ever received from God." A blessing for Egypt?

Yes, the ten plagues didn't just show how powerful the true God was and is, but also showed how powerless the Egyptian gods were. The first plague turned the Nile into blood, showing that Khnum and Hapi, two gods associated with the Nile, were powerless. The plague of frogs mocked Heket (Heqt), a goddess with the head of a frog. The plague of darkness strikes at the very heart of Egyptian worship, humbling Ra the Sun god. The final plague, the death of all the firstborn, mocked Pharaoh himself, who was worshipped as a god – he couldn't even save his own son and heir.

So God blessed the Egyptians by bringing judgment on their false gods (Numbers 33:4). And in Exodus 12:38 it sounds like some of the Egyptians took to heart what God was showing them, and joined up with the Israelites.

SOURCE: James Nickel's *Mathematics: Is God Silent?; Logos Quarterly* Volume 3, Numbers 3 and 4





Pauline Hanson: **a politician with problems and no solutions**



Some months ago the founder of the One Nation Party, Pauline Hanson, was jailed for having committed fraud against the state of Queensland. The charges against this lady were brought because it was said she falsely declared that her party had 500 members, as required in Queensland to receive money from the state for electoral expenses. It was claimed that the party never had 500 members even though she received \$500,000 from the state to recompense her. The state prosecutor argued that the names she had submitted were supporters and not members. That in short was the charge. The Supreme Court of Queensland found her and her co-director David Ettridge guilty and sent them both to jail for 3 years.

But after eleven weeks in jail, the Queensland Court of Appeal overturned their convictions and made it quite clear that the court considered the convictions malicious and totally unfair. Ms. Hanson said the whole sorry episode was nothing but a political ploy to destroy her, her party and her career. It has left her absolutely devastated.

Who is this lady?

Ms. Hanson first rose to prominence in Australia in 1996 when she won the seat of Oxley as an independent after being disendorsed by the Liberal party. In the following years her One Nation party won seats around Australia on a platform based on xenophobia, which my dictionary describes as: dislike, hatred, fear of strangers or aliens.

.....

***Many Australians, most
very conservative, voted
for her and supported
her cause.***

.....

There is without doubt such a dislike, especially among older Australians. After all, it is not that long ago that either officially or unofficially some jobs and occupations were not open to those not native born Australian. Pauline Hanson honed in on this and used it in her campaigns for all

it was worth. She opposed the migration of people not of white, Anglo Saxon stock. She advocated harsher penalties for criminals, and – shock! horror! – the re-imposition of the death penalty.

Without wanting to make too much of it, it must be said that her message appealed to quite a number of people, especially those who felt that the mainstream political parties were ignoring them.

Learning my lesson

Their perception is that Australia is being overrun by people from countries in Asia, so they think that they are losing their heritage. All this is, of course, a little far-fetched and narrow-minded. It reminds me of a “discussion” I had some 35 years ago with a Chinese lady. This lady speaks excellent English and we were having a rather strong discussion about migrants to this country, especially from Asia. Anyhow my comments were not very friendly toward Chinese in general, and, I hasten to add, I still blush a little when I think about it. But the end of the discussion with this lady went something like this: “Where were you born, Rene?” “In

the Netherlands.” To this the lady replied: “I was born in Sydney and so was my father who was a professor at one of the major universities in Sydney.”

I might add that I still see her regularly and we are always on friendly terms, but I will never forget that discussion.

It taught me a lesson not to look at people through European eyes but to see them for what they are – so very similar to ourselves. If there is a difference it is in the matter of faith. But in that respect a Chinese Christian is just as much a brother or sister in Christ as that very Dutch sounding Australian or Canadian.

Hanson has no real solutions

But while I learned my lesson the question that remains is, has Pauline Hanson learned anything? Her utterances after her release make one doubt it very much. For that matter, does it matter whether she has or not? I suppose it doesn't really matter.


What concerns me is that so many Australians, most very conservative, voted for her and supported her cause. That only goes to show that conservatism is no answer for the real concerns faced by our fellow citizen, who see what is happening in the big cities and don't like what they see. They see around them a world which has drastically changed in the last ten or twenty years or so. But they have no answer. Just as Pauline Hanson has no answer. To tackle the real problems that Australia faces in areas such as migration, crime, morality and population it needs politicians who have a principled rather than a popular approach. What is often not realized by ordinary people is that Australia has lost its Christian character. The nation's founders spoke an entirely different language, as can be seen in the preface to Australia's Constitution: “WHEREAS the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland; and Tasmania, humbly relying on the blessing of Almighty God. . . .”

What has really changed is that most people, certainly most people below 40 years of age, have never heard the message of the Gospel. This was born out at a recent Remembrance Day service where the officiating minister on calling on the Lord Jesus Christ found some of the young people sniggering. A caller to one of our radio stations explained why the youth were sniggering – since any and all forms of Christianity have been banned from the public schools an entire generation is growing up who have only heard the name of our Savior used as a swear word!

It means that these same people have no answers to much that is happening in our country. They do not have an answer when they perceive that the moral standards are being eroded, because they have lost the basis on which these standards are based. When one confronts these people with the Christian message and its imperative that its laws based on the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ should be obeyed, they look at you as if you come from another planet. They do not realize that they have lost that which alone can bring a blessing on their lives.

God-given wisdom

Reformed people in Canada as well as in Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere have the wonderful blessing that much work has been done in the past to provide answers for us. Unfortunately, one often has to be able to read Dutch to read the work of men such as G. Groen van Prinsterer, Dr. A. Kuyper and many others who studied the Word and who helped us understand the world we live in. Still, we can all learn the background, the basis on which our view of the world is founded.

If we do that then there will be little need for the Pauline Hansons of this world. In fact, the faithful minister who weekly confronts us with the Word will make us much wiser than any of those who are regarded as important in this world. 

For
\$45
you can. . .

1. Go to three hedonistic movies
2. Order two greasy pizzas
3. Play one round of frivolous golf
4. Buy two nihilistic CDs

or you can. . .

5. Subscribe to this oh so fantastic magazine for an entire year!!!

Send a cheque or e-mail a request to:

One Beghin Avenue,
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
R2J 3X5
subscribe@reformedperspective.ca

Subscription Rates
Canada (Canadian Funds)/
U.S. (U.S. Funds)
1 year \$45.00 / \$40.50
2 years \$80.00 / \$74.00
3 years \$120.00 / \$108.00

International (Canadian Funds)
1 year \$58.50
2 years \$108.00
3 years \$158.00

REFORMED
Perspective

The magazine for the whole family.



HOMEFRONT

Survival of the Weakest

by Jane deGlint

Push the weak to the side! Who wants them? They slow us down and make us feel bad. They irritate us with their awkwardness. They take advantage of our accomplishments without contributing anything useful. They interfere with our importance by drawing attention to their oddities. Move them out of the way!

Pity? We should have pity, you say? Do not offend us more. We have pity. We are willing to put the weak in special schools. We provide them with institutionalized care. We allow them to live. Some of us even raise funds for them. If that does not show a charitable attitude, what does?

But now that you've mentioned pity, take a look at the big picture! We may not lose sight of the healthy progression of humankind. If we want to survive and excel, we should nurture the strong, not the weak. The process of survival must run its course. Once the defenseless have been eliminated, our human race will be stronger and smarter and wiser and better looking and more creative. It is time to be bold. We must look after ourselves. Let us take heart and apply the laws of nature to humankind: survival of the fittest!

It would be easy to dismiss this attitude of extreme selfishness to the gentiles of our modern age. But that would be nearsighted. Disdain for the weak has been with us since the fall into sin and will continue to plague us till the end of this age. Throughout the centuries people have worshipped the strong and despised the disabled. In the middle of the eighteenth century Charles Darwin placed this aversion to weakness in the large framework of evolution. He observed how nature is able to survive and even to improve itself through the process of natural selection. The strong members of a species gain the upper hand, while the weak naturally disappear.

These beliefs about the survival of the fittest struck a cord with fallen man. For many centuries man's instinct to worship strength had been kept in check by the Christian church. However, at the dawn of the modern age around the sixteenth century, the Christian influence started to fade. Through the rise of reason and experience as masters of knowledge, human excellence was placed centre stage again. As a result Darwin's doctrines found an easy inroad. His theory of evolution as coping mechanism of the strong made natural sense. Moreover, these enlightened interpretations resonated with the deepest layers of man's darkened mind.

.....

***The aversion to
weakness is very
deep-rooted.***

.....

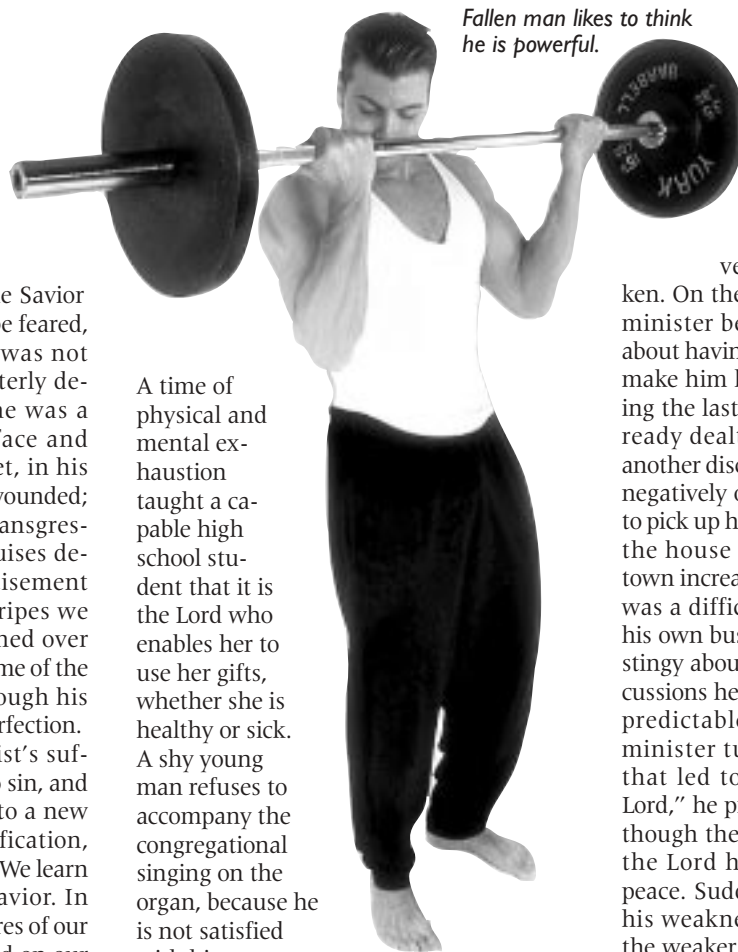
For fallen man likes to think he is powerful. In his pride he considers himself stronger and wiser than God. By erecting the Tower of Babel men of old sought to provide the evidence that they could rely on their own resources. Trusting his own strength Esau sold his birthright to his weakling brother Jacob. Ahaz, king of Judah, depended on his own cunning when he tried to buy favors from the Assyrians with the silver and the gold of the House of the Lord – to his own downfall. These tokens of defiance came from people to whom the Lord had revealed himself. They knew the Lord's strength, but they had no regard for it. By promoting themselves they demoted the Creator. The Lord laughs them to scorn. Their self-willed glory is doomed to shame.

The aversion to weakness is very deep-rooted. The disgust people feel for the flaws in others is only equaled by the repulsion they harbor for their own imperfections. People cannot stand their own shortcomings. Out of fear for the reaction of their fellowmen they rather lie to appear perfect, than own up to the truth. Knowing that one's neighbor could be as evil as oneself, man puts on a show of strength. He must outdo his fellowman. With ingenuity he has to outsmart him. Ruthlessly he promotes himself. Without pity he oppresses the poor and needy. He allies himself with the mighty, poised to take advantage of them. Never does he tolerate any weakness in himself. Ultimately, he would rather be dead than weak.

Those are the methods of fallen men. All their ways are dead-end streets. Even those who excel do not have a future. Their glory only lasts for a time. Eventually the downward turn toward decline sets in. Also the very strong become dependent on the mercy of the improved next generation. The irony bites. Who dares to be weak after he has cruelly usurped his power? There is no trust for those who have oppressed.

It belongs to the mysteries of the Gospel that it can change this bleak outlook. The Word does not need the wisdom and strength of this age. Its glorious message does not desire to measure up to the scientific method. Its aim is not a superman whose physical proportions and mental capacities come closer to perfection. The Good News is that ultimately our strength lies in our weakness.

Especially in the New Testament there is a great emphasis on the insignificance of human strengths and accomplishments. It greatly distances itself from the Greek philosophy, which pursued wisdom and perfection. Instead it redirects the focus to the work of the Savior Jesus



Fallen man likes to think he is powerful.

Christ. Salvation is from God, without any contribution of man.

The saving work of our divine Savior shows that weakness should not be feared, but welcomed. Our Lord Jesus was not afraid of shame. He appeared utterly despicable to the world. Surely, he was a weakling. He was spat in the face and mocked for his thorny crown. Yet, in his weakness he was strong. He was wounded; but his wounds wiped out our transgression. He was bruised; but his bruises destroyed our iniquities. His chastisement made us whole, and with his stripes we were healed. Our Savior triumphed over death, because he suffered the shame of the cross and the agony of hell. Through his weakness he accomplished our perfection.

God's children share in Christ's suffering. With him they have died to sin, and with him they have been raised to a new life. This is the process of sanctification, which the Holy Spirit works in us. We learn to surrender ourselves to our Savior. In him we are able to give up the desires of our old nature. We learn not to depend on our own strength anymore. Strong in the healing power of our Savior, we learn to put on our new nature. Dead to sin, we live in Christ. "In him you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of flesh in the circumcision of Christ; and you were buried by him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead" (Colossians 2:11, 12).

This is not merely a dogma about salvation. It is a lesson we have to learn over and over again. We have to practice it daily. We have to train ourselves to apply this Gospel message to our lives. We have to exercise our minds and hearts to become truly dependent on our Lord, without trusting our own strength. We have to learn that we can only survive the attacks of the evil one, when we are weak.

The Holy Spirit most prominently displays his power through us, when it is obvious that we were not able to trust our own resources. The evidence abounds to those with eyes of faith.

A time of physical and mental exhaustion taught a capable high school student that it is the Lord who enables her to use her gifts, whether she is healthy or sick. A shy young man refuses to accompany the congregational singing on the organ, because he is not satisfied with his own perfection; till he realizes that not his perfection, but the Lord's glory is at stake. A middle-aged woman is happy to have learned that coping with her deteriorating handicap in her own strength left her weak, while accepting the help of fellow-believers made her strong in the experience of the Lord's care.

Ultimately our strength lies in our weakness.

The minister of a large congregation was mentally preparing himself to visit an unmarried woman in her mid-thirties. A few months ago she stopped attending church. During a previous visit he had felt very intimidated by her. She boasted impressive academic credentials and dressed with the sophistication of this present world. She had several issues with the

church, about which she was very educated and very outspoken. On the day of the scheduled visit the minister became increasingly oppressed about having to talk to her again. She could make him look like a fool. Moreover, during the last four months his consistory already dealt with three withdrawals. Yet another discontented member might reflect negatively on him. Because he had agreed to pick up her ward-elder on the way, he left the house quite early. The ride through town increased his tension. The ward-elder was a difficult man. Very impressed with his own business successes, he was always stingy about the stipend. In consistory discussions he was often interruptive and unpredictable. With a heavy heart the minister turned into the long driveway that led to the ward-elder's estate. "O Lord," he prayed, "What do I do?" And although the prayer was somewhat selfish, the Lord heard it. He sent his Spirit of peace. Suddenly the minister did not fear his weakness anymore. He realized that the weaker he would be, the more powerfully the Spirit could work through him, and through the ward-elder for that matter. As the minister put his car in park, his mind came to rest on the words of the Savior, "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:26, 27).

The battle for survival is difficult. Even the fittest of this world will succumb to the forces of evil. The only hope lies in surrender. The more we are able to rely on the Lord's strength, the more suitable we are as instruments in his service. He will supply our wants and fill our empty cups. As we strip ourselves of our own might, he will dress us with clothes of righteousness. He provides the strength to live, now and forever.

"He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it."
Matthew 10:39



THE CAPITALIST, Laissez Faire, *Competitive*, Free Enterprise, Market System: **VICE or VIRTUE?**

by John Boersema

In any economy several fundamental decisions need to be made; they involve What, How and Who. *What* products and services are to be produced? *How* are those products to be produced? And, *Who* is to receive output? The answers to these questions affect us all. They might, for example, determine what will we be able to buy and where we will work.

So who decides these questions?

Mixing Capitalism and Communism

Essentially, there are two types of economic systems. In the capitalistic, free market (free enterprise) system the questions above are answered by the “market” – individuals and companies who voluntarily exchange their labor and products. Individual companies decide *what* to produce, *how* to make it and *who* to sell it to. Individuals are free to work wherever they are needed and can buy what they choose.

In communist, command economies these decisions are made by the state – the government. State owned factories produce all the goods and services according to some centrally drawn up plan. You work

where the government tells you, make the products they want you to make and buy what the state planners have decided that you need.

In reality, of course, these extremes no longer exist. All countries, including Canada, are some type of *mixed* economic system. Some of these economic decisions are made by the market; others are made by the state.

Countries differ significantly, however, as to the degree to which the market is left to operate – with the United States probably considered to be the most market-oriented and Cuba and China somewhere toward the other extreme. A major disagreement exists, in fact, among economists, politicians and concerned citizens concerning the question, “How much should governments intervene in the market?”

Even among Christians, there is little unanimity. We find¹, on the one hand, those that argue that the market is evil. Their justified concern for the poor causes them

to opt for the government intervention/direction of socialism. On the other hand, we find Christians who argue that capitalism, free enterprise is essentially good – *the* Christian economic alternative. Which view is correct? This article argues that neither is. As I have argued in more detail in my book, *Political-Economic Activity to the Honour of God*, I believe that Christians should have a preference for the free market because the market is the best means to achieve Christian economic goals. However, that preference should be *conditional* because the market is not a perfect means to this end.

A preference for the Market

The free market tends to ensure that God-given resources are used more *stewardly* than in a command economy. Essentially, it works. The market produces only those goods that are demanded. If companies in a competitive market produce goods that are unwanted, these goods will not be bought or can be sold only at a price below cost. A company continuing to produce





There are some services, like the police and army, that the State definitely should provide.

unwanted goods will soon go bankrupt. As consumers' needs and want change, companies will have to adjust or be left behind since competitors will do so. In a competitive market companies will also be forced to produce these products in the most efficient, least wasteful way. If not, competitors will be able to produce and sell at a lower cost and inefficient companies will eventually disappear. Moreover, consumers are free to use their money to buy that assortment of goods and services they most want after considering the costs involved. The free market, then, will best meet the needs of most of us.

Government economic involvement, on other hand, leads to bad stewardship. One reason for this is the *information problem*. In a free market, the price of goods and services acts as the critical information variable. As people want more of a good, its price is bid up. As the price goes up, businesses will produce more. If less of a product is desired, the price goes down and less

is produced. Price changes cause production to be automatically adjusted.

In a command economy, however, central planners must decide what and how much to produce. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for them to know what people want on an ongoing basis and change the production plan and the acquisition of raw materials, etc. as needed. Consequently, we see lack of choice and long line-ups for scarce commodities in communist societies. Planners just do not have the necessary information on a timely basis. Even in a mixed economy, government action through, for example, enforced minimum or maximum prices will distort the necessary price information. Rent controls, for example, will reduce the incentive of landlords to maintain their property and to build new housing. Putting a cap on the price of electricity causes us to waste it and reduces the attractiveness of building new generating plants.

A second reason to prefer the market is *incentives*. As noted, competition encourages free market participants to produce as stewardly as possible. Government ministers and bureaucrats, on the other hand, have no incentive to avoid wasting resources. Civil servants tend to be rewarded with salaries and promotions for expanding their empires rather than reducing government. Politicians stress the immediate benefits of their proposed actions – particularly during elections. Costs are ignored or played down and become apparent only much later. In fact, politicians are not motivated to make the best cost/benefit trade-offs since they do not themselves have to pay the cost. We can much better evaluate the value of a product to us if we must ourselves pay the costs. Moreover, there is no strong incentive to provide the best service at the lowest cost since there is no competitor that stands ready to provide a cheaper, better product. Finally, politicians are motivated to cater to high profile special interest groups who can grab media attention. The costs of providing such special benefits is averaged out over all taxpayers and less noticeable.

Government is also less stewardly of resources because it tends to be plagued by over-regulation and intervention. While

each individual regulation may well have made sense at the time, there is little motivation for civil servants and politicians to get rid of laws and regulations which have outlived their usefulness – particularly given the time-consuming nature of such deregulation (and self-interest of the civil servants who might lose their jobs). In addition, in Canada with federal, provincial and municipal/regional governments, we are blessed with massive duplication and cumbersome shared programs. One arm of government frequently does not know what the other is doing. The provision of services and web of regulations is so cumbersome that people often do not know where to turn. Overall, there is little incentive for governments to avoid waste and organize its economic interventions as stewardly as possible. From a stewardship perspective, a preference for the free market is, therefore, indicated.

Government assistance significantly reduces incentives to work.

Such a preference can also be confirmed by other reasons. In a free market economy people must provide for themselves and make economic decisions for themselves. e.g. where they will work, how much to spend, how much to save. The market, therefore, encourages *personal responsibility*, which, as I have detailed in my book, is an important Christian principle. The market also allows society to better *care for the weak*. It is essential in permitting the poor to help themselves through work. The poor in "capitalist" countries tend to be much better off than the impoverished in the Third World with socialistic and tribalistic economic systems. Even in developed countries, government assistance to the unfortunate, while absolutely necessary, has major negative implications. The "leaky bucket" analogy illustrates that when money is taken from the well-off (through taxation) and given to the poor, a portion

of that money leaks out to finance the administrative process involved. Moreover, “cradle-to-grave” government assistance significantly reduces incentives to work – for both those being helped and those forced to help. Those on social assistance are likely to be caught in a “welfare trap” where they are financially better off staying on welfare than to accept available work. In addition, the necessary higher taxation reduces the incentive for the average worker to do that extra bit when a large part of the reward will be taxed away. Why save for retirement when those who have not saved receive extra income supplements?² Less automatic government support, then, provides incentives to *work diligently* – another biblical requirement.

Finally, more emphasis on the free market provides more incentive for citizens to respect the authorities that God has placed over us. The fewer laws and regulations there are, the less incentive there is to disobey them. The fewer taxes there are and the lower the rates, the less likely that people will cheat and evade them and fail to pay “Caesar what is Caesar’s.” The less government grants, supplements, etc. that there are, the less scope there is for fraudulent use of them. Overall, the “virtues” of the market are such that we should prefer it where possible.

A conditional preference

On the other hand, the free market is not an unmitigated virtue. It certainly is not *the* Christian alternative; there are no biblical texts that mandate it. In fact, the market is not a perfect means to achieve biblical goals for the economy. Rather, there would be significant deficiencies in a pure market economy. Most people will recognize the need for some government action to rectify these deficiencies. The major political debate concerns the extent of such necessary action. A preference for the market implies, however, that the necessary action be kept as limited as necessary.

Deficiencies the government may have to rectify include:

1. Rules of the game

The government must first set “rules of the game” and enforce them before a

market can operate freely. That is, we need a justice system with laws to protect property, with courts, police and other means to enforce them. Without these, the strong would merely take from the weak and no free exchanges would be possible.

2. Lack of knowledge

The benefits of the market can be achieved only if buyers and sellers both have full information/knowledge about the product to be exchanged. The buyers can, then, evaluate what they are getting and compare with other alternatives. With today’s highly complex technology, equal knowledge is frequently lacking, leading to possible injustice to the weaker party. Consequently protection is needed for the unsophisticated buyer. Governments, for example, can set minimum safety and quality standards, require minimum guarantees, force recalls for unsafe items (e.g. automobiles) and permit cancellation of contracts within “cooling off” periods.

3. Property rights not defined

The justice system must protect private property against theft and fraud. Property rights are, however, not always clearly defined. Rather, they may change as society and government changes. Consider, for example, such intangible property such as computer software or patents on drugs. Copyrights, patents, water rights, air rights, radio and television airwaves are all forms of property rights that have varying degrees of clarity and enforceability.

The market can work only after government and/or society have defined (and possibly assigned) property rights¹ and developed the necessary means to enforce them. The argument about how long a drug patent should last and the issue of downloading music, movies and software from the Internet illustrate the ongoing debate in this area.

4. The poor and marginalized

Although the market has, as noted before, a significant ability to help the poor, it cannot do so perfectly. The problem is that only dollar votes count in the marketplace; if you don’t have money, you can’t participate in the market. Those who can-

not work – the physically or mentally handicapped, the uneducated, the unskilled, and the single mothers with small children – cannot participate in the free market. Moreover, if the initial distribution of resources is unjust – e.g. the white man owns most of the land taken at gunpoint from the natives, or the wealthy landowners in certain countries own the bulk of the acreage – free enterprise can do little to change that basic unjust distribution. Government action is, therefore, required to help those who cannot help themselves – although the extent and means of that action is subject to major discussion.

5. No satisfactory “equilibrium”

Most economists believe that it is unlikely that the market, if left to itself, will settle at a point where everyone that is able to work is employed and prices are relatively stable (no inflation). For years, under the influence of economist John Maynard Keynes’ theories, it was thought that government was able to solve this problem through “fine-tuning” the economy. Although, the government’s ability to precisely direct the economy to avoid the problems of unemployment and inflation is now viewed much more skeptically, some direction through fiscal and monetary policy is desirable.

6. Monopolies and concentration of power

The advantages of the market, in theory, accrue only in a perfectly competitive market in which there are many buyers and sellers so that no individual participant can influence the market. In real life, however, the ideal of a perfectly competitive market is the exception rather than the rule, although most of the benefits of the market still result as long as there is a “reasonable” amount of competition. Government action is, however, necessary to block mergers that will significantly reduce competition and to regulate monopolies that could otherwise take advantage of consumers.

7. Insufficient necessary goods and services

While the market goes a long way toward providing the goods and services that

society needs, there are certain goods that in a free market will not be produced at all or in insufficient quantity.

Some of these, known as “public goods,” such as the army, police and street lighting would not be provided by the market since they are indivisible and you cannot keep those who do not pay from receiving the benefits. For example, an effective army will provide the benefits of safety and protection of property for all citizens whether they pay for the service or not. Thus government has to ensure that everyone pays through taxation.

Other goods, sometimes referred to as “pseudo public goods,” such as education and healthcare, can be provided by the private market but would not be provided in adequate quantities since those who cannot afford to pay would go without. Since we believe that everyone is entitled to basic education and healthcare, the government must assist in providing that. It should be noted, however, that government does not necessarily have to provide these services themselves. They can, for example, subsidize those in need through vouchers or tax credits, pay private enterprises to provide the service, as well as providing the service itself. Our preference for the market suggests that the first two alternatives are more desirable.

8. Neighborhood effects

Another well-recognized market failure is caused by what are referred to as externalities or “neighborhood effects.” These are situations when “third parties,” those not involved in the market transaction, bear costs of or receive benefits from the transaction. By definition, these costs and/or benefits are not reflected in the market price of the goods or services and do not enter into the decisions related to whether to produce or consume the product.

A negative neighborhood effect would be a steel mill spreading noxious gases on the surrounding neighborhood. Without offsetting government action, the cost of such pollution is borne by the neighbors but is free to the steel company. Thus, it is not included in its determination of market price and the purchaser of steel products gets them at a lower price than is warranted. Other negative neighborhood effects include water and noise pollution

created by factories, the noise problem created by low-flying aircraft and unrestricted construction which blocks someone else’s view. Obviously, if the market is left uncontrolled, serious injustice may be visited on innocent neighbors whom God requires us to love. The government must, therefore, control and monitor such situations and rectify the situation, by, for example, making the polluter pay the cost.

.....

***The fewer taxes there
are, the less likely
people will cheat and
evade them.***

.....

9. Short-run orientation

It is argued that the market is too short-run oriented. Particularly, public shareholder owned companies are fixated on improving the next quarter’s earnings per share while long-term impacts are insufficiently considered. While there is some truth in this claim, we must also recognize that markets do have an amazing ability to adapt. Long before a resource like coal is actually used up, its price will rise, thereby providing an incentive for users to conserve on their rates of consumption, for producers to search out substitutes, and for extractive industries to improve techniques for discovering and removing previously unknown (or inaccessible) deposits.

If prices are allowed to reflect true scarcity, the market has the capacity to encourage the stewardly utilization of the potential God has provided. Thus, we cannot favor the conservation of our oil resources and at the same time complain when the price of gasoline goes up! But, that is unlikely to justify us in totally ignoring the future impacts not yet reflected in the market.

10. Non-economic goals

Finally, some of the above points can be summarized, and at the same time extended, by reiterating that pure market forces have only partial or no concern for non-economic goals. e.g. such communal goals as maintaining strong families, pro-

viding for the poorest, observing the Lord’s Day and treating employees “rightly and fairly.” Moreover, the decision as to which products should or should not be produced is made by the market strictly on economic grounds. Without constraints, the market would unquestioningly cater freely to the demands for abortions, prostitution, pornography, narcotics, etc.

Conclusion

Certainly, the market is not a perfect means to attain Christian goals; it is not pure virtue. Therefore, our preference for the market should be a conditional one. Free markets, when adequately controlled and assisted by governments are the best means to achieve biblical ends. However, where the market does not adequately attain biblical goals as noted above, the government has a role to play, which – given the sinfulness of men – cannot be minimized.

Nevertheless, when government action is required, that should be kept to the minimum amount necessary. The market should be used as much as possible. For example, while the government must ensure that garbage is collected, it does not have to do so itself. It can let private industry do it and ensure a competitive price by regular tendering. In education, it can leave freedom of choice and provide incentives through a voucher system. It can also assist those who cannot afford adequate housing by direct subsidy or tax credit rather than provide government housing.

From a Christian perspective there are no easy answers to economic problems. There is no biblically mandated Christian economic system. Rather, we must deal with economic problems on an issue-by-issue basis. In doing so, we should allow the market to operate as freely as possible. Only when we are convinced that the market cannot achieve our Christian goals and are relatively confident that government action will improve the situation, is such action to be encouraged.

¹See my book, *Political-Economic Activity to the Honour of God*, Premier, 1999 for details.

²Not that all such supplements as OAS and GIS should be abolished but such perverse incentives must be kept in mind when designing such government assistance plans.

Money for nothing

CAN WELFARE CAUSE POVERTY?

by Michael Wagner

Knock! Knock! "Hello there. I'm a candidate in the upcoming election and I was wondering if you had any questions you wanted to ask me."

"Just one. Do you think people are basically good, bad, or something in between?"

You may not realize it, but presuppositions about human nature have a significant impact on political decisions.

The political Left generally assumes that people are either good or morally neutral by nature. They'll admit that sometimes people do bad things, but that's not their fault; it's the fault of the society they grew up in. For example, the problem of poverty is often blamed on our society's capitalistic features. The Left assumes that poor people couldn't possibly be poor due to any fault of their own, so the way to help these individuals who have been "marginalized" by capitalism is for the State to give them money. These people are clearly victims of the capitalist economy, and if government financial support doesn't bring them out of abject poverty. . . well, then the answer is to give them even more money.

Christian conservatives, on the other hand, recognize that men are naturally sinful. This leads to somewhat different conclusions about the causes of poverty and how to handle that problem. If men are sinful, then generous welfare benefits will create incentives for people to pursue those benefits rather than gainful employment. Programs initiated ostensibly to help people overcome poverty and get back on their feet, may actually lead to a greater

number of people living in government-supported poverty.

Callous conservatives?

Leftists would undoubtedly see this view as extremely callous. There are, in fact, some people who end up in poverty through no fault of their own; leftists seem to assume this applies to all the poor, but it doesn't. Some people are poor, not because of unfortunate circumstances, but because of their own behavior. This phenomenon, and the role of the Welfare State in promoting it, is discussed in a recent study aptly titled *Behavioural Poverty* by Lucy Sullivan, and published by a prestigious Australian think tank, the Centre for Independent Studies (2000).

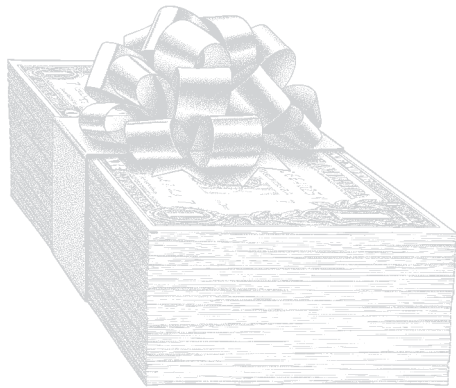
Although this book focuses on the experience of the Welfare State in Australia, the lessons are applicable to other countries, especially the other developed English-speaking countries. Human nature is the same across time and across borders, so

people will respond to financial incentives in much the same way regardless of the country that they live in. And as Sullivan points out, the expansion of the Welfare State has gone hand-in-hand with the growth of poverty in Australia. As she puts it, "the more money that is poured into welfare, the more the statistics of poverty increase" (p. 4).

No pity for the shiftless

Before the large-scale growth of the Welfare State in Australia that was underway by the 1960s, there were programs for relief of the poor. But these programs were very different from the Welfare State programs that replaced them. Those who received the earlier forms of relief were expected to behave responsibly. Those who were irresponsible would not receive relief benefits. "Ineligibility for payments on 'moral' (and decidedly practical) grounds, such as drunkenness and refusal to work, was policy until well into the second half of [the twentieth] century" (p. 7). People could not receive financial help and then just live as they wished. They were expected to live as good citizens. "The right to receive it was lost by deserting husbands and wives and by ex-prisoners, and it could be lost on account of criminal offences, including drunkenness. (Imagine withdrawing Unemployment Benefits from drug users today!)" (p. 17). In sum, "There were definite obligations of citizenship – of responsible behaviour and good use of the income received – associated with its receipt" (p. 17).





The kinds of incentives created by this system are quite clear: live right or starve. Whether intentional or not, this reflects the message of 2 Thessalonians 3:10, "If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat" (ESV). Thus the earlier policies served to reinforce responsible and virtuous behavior by refusing to subsidize vice.

This kind of "conditional charity" is resented by leftists who see the poor as victims of capitalist society and therefore not responsible for their own condition. Thus it was replaced by generous welfare programs untied to behavioral expectations. According to Sullivan, the switch from conditional charity to modern welfare reflected a "change of faith" which "meant that poverty could not be regarded as in any way dependent on behaviour – lack of thrift, irresponsibility, poor character – and the relief of poverty consequently could not be addressed by seeking to change these behaviours in the poor" (p. 32).

Free money for brats

But people are by nature sinful, so giving money with no expectations in return is "tantamount to offering aid to the cultivation of the vices of profligacy, incompetence and reliance on others" (p. 26). A striking example of the perverse effects of condition-free welfare is the "running away from home" allowances provided by the Australian government for teenagers in conflict with their parents. Teenagers as young as fourteen could receive welfare benefits to live on their own if they were having problems with their parents. That sounds bad enough, but consider this: government representatives "solemnly admitted supplying these benefits to children whose parents were entirely unabusive in any serious

sense of the word, but were merely resented because they were too strict (required that their children be home by a given hour) or too tidy (required that they maintain household standards of cleanliness)" (p. 34).

Giving government money to irresponsible teenagers is a recipe for disaster. "Of course, the large majority of these children ended up homeless on inner city streets, and subject to physical and moral danger" (p. 34). Financial incentives lead to certain consequences, and Sullivan makes the point clear: "Provision of state welfare for children created our homeless children problem" (p. 35). Furthermore, this government program has been "dividing the families affected and diminishing the ability of parents to deal effectively with difficult adolescents" (p. 39).

As this example clearly shows, poverty can be (and frequently is) the result of certain behavior, not unfortunate circumstances. The teenagers involved could have submitted to their parents and remained at home. Instead, encouraged by government subsidies, they left their families and frequently ended up homeless. From a Christian perspective, this was entirely predictable.

Paying people to live irresponsibly

According to Sullivan, government welfare provisions are sufficient for living at a decent and respectable standard of living. Yet poverty continues to exist. Why? "If we see the features of classical poverty in Australia today, it is not for lack of money. Poverty in Australia today is not financial, but behavioural" (p. 47). Thirty years of the Welfare State provides more evidence of the truth of the Christian view of man. If you pay people to live irresponsibly, you will get plenty of takers. In this respect the Welfare State is compounding the problem it was created to solve.

At least two things must be done to overcome the problem of behavioral poverty. For one, the Welfare State must be rolled back. The government should not offer incentives to irresponsible living. Sec-

ondly, cultural attitudes about the virtues of work, personal independence, and responsibility, need to be restored. Both of these are integral to a re-Christianization of our society. A Biblically-based Christian culture will encourage support for limited government and private-sector poverty relief programs that emphasize a man's responsibility to provide for himself and his own family. Restoration of a Christian culture is essential to solving the problems of the Welfare State, and even overcoming the Welfare State itself.



NEED A SPEAKER?

ONTARIO

Adrian Dieleman
Karen Dieleman

MANITOBA

James Dykstra
Peter Veenendaal

ALBERTA

Margaret Helder
Jon Dykstra

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Jane DeGlint
Sarah Vandergugten

AUSTRALIA

Rene Vermeulen

Reformed Perspective's Speaker's Bureau is a worldwide group who have written on any number of subjects. If you need a speaker for your rally or event we may be able to help.

For more information email:
editor@reformedperspective.ca

THE DEEP DARK PLACE: LIVING WITH POST-PARTUM DEPRESSION

by Jan Bredenhof

I sat on the kitchen floor early in the morning and leaned my head back against the cabinets. Outside the sky was dismally gray and an unending rain filled the gutters and spilled over onto the steps outside. From the nursery I could hear the baby start to cry again and a wave of despair pressed up against me, dark and unrelenting. My two-year old came into the room, curls askew, cheeks still red from sleep. Walking up to me, she squatted down, cocked her head and regarded me with unusual intensity. "Mommy," she said after a moment, "are you happy today, or sad?"

The sad truth of post-partum depression is that although it must be endured in the most personal way, the dreary reality spills over to affect friends, husbands, children, and babies. Although it is surprisingly common, it is widely misunderstood. Many of us mothers go through the ordeal silently, feeling that we are alone, feeling ashamed, feeling guilty. Perhaps there is a better way. Perhaps if we reach out to mothers suffering from post-partum depression we can learn to understand it, cope with it, heal from it, and grow from it.

Understanding

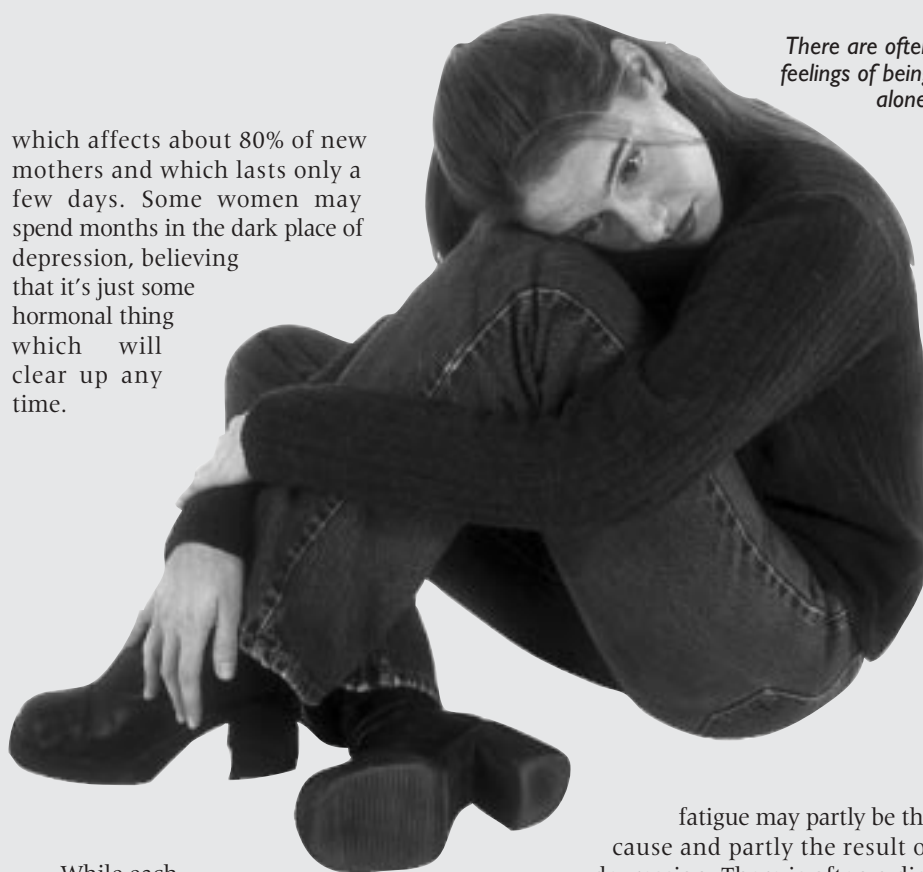
Although Post-Partum Depression (PPD) affects about one in five women, it frequently goes undiagnosed, untreated, and unspoken. It is not uncommon that a woman experiencing PPD does not realize that she is sick. If she does know that something is wrong, she may be unable or afraid to admit it to those around her. PPD is sometimes confused with the baby blues,

which affects about 80% of new mothers and which lasts only a few days. Some women may spend months in the dark place of depression, believing that it's just some hormonal thing which will clear up any time.

While each woman experiences PPD differently, there are distinct symptoms which can diagnose the problem, although any particular symptom may manifest itself in different, even contradictory ways in different women. PPD, like most forms of depression, has physical, psychological, social, and spiritual effects.

Physically, a woman with PPD will usually notice a change in her sleep behavior, either being unable to sleep or being sleep all the time. The generalized feeling of

There are often feelings of being alone.



fatigue may partly be the cause and partly the result of depression. There is often a disruption in eating habits; she may find herself unable to stop eating, or she may lose interest in food altogether.

Some of the psychological effects include being irritable, upset, confused, or angry, to a degree beyond what one might expect from the everyday experience of raising children. Many women find they can't stop crying and cry for no reason, others feel deeply sad but are unable to cry, and some find they are unable to experience emotion at all. It is not uncommon for a woman with PPD to have frightening

panic attacks. Some women become afraid to go out of the house, while others can't stand to stay in. Most women express feelings of having an inability to cope. There are often feelings of being alone, of guilt, of losing a sense of one's self, of being ugly. Sometimes a woman with PPD will experience disturbing violent fantasies.

PPD also affects the way women are able to function in social contexts. Some women find themselves unable to form any emotional bond with their baby; others worry about the baby constantly and compulsively. A woman may have feelings of resentment or anger towards other family members, especially husbands, or she may experience an overwhelming sense of neediness.

There is usually a loss of interest in sex. Women will usually feel that they either cannot get anything done, or they find they are unable to stop being busy.

They may be unable to get out of bed in the morning, or they may be scrubbing the refrigerator at 2 a.m. While many people experience some of these symptoms some of the time, women with PPD will have many of them for many weeks or months to the degree that it interferes with their day-to-day functioning.

It is not known for certain what causes PPD; there is probably not one single factor which is responsible. The dramatic changes in hormones after the birth of a baby are likely a major part of the cause. However, hormones alone cannot explain PPD entirely, since some women do not experience depression until many months after their baby is born. As well, PPD can also affect men and adoptive parents. The profound changes associated with having a baby are also thought to be a cause. We may have had unrealistic expectations about what motherhood would be like and how we would handle the days with a small baby, and feel overwhelmed at the isolation, or the unending mundane tasks that pile up. PPD can affect women after their first baby, or they may not experience it until their eighth. It can affect women both with traumatic or pleasant birth experiences, with easy or difficult babies, while breastfeeding or bottle feeding, mature or young, with or without a history of depression.

Coping

Somehow, we have to get through the day. Even in that deep, dark place there are mouths to be filled, diapers to be changed, laundry to be washed.

The day carries on, and

the needs are real. Yet from the depths of depression, the simple tasks of everyday take on frightening proportions. Whether we are hardly able to get out of bed, or whether we have our houses fanatically clean, the essential reality is the same – basic daily living becomes overwhelming.

The first step in coping is understanding that PPD is an illness. From there, we need help – help from others and help from ourselves. Sometimes it seems that asking for help is harder than enduring the depression alone. We don't want to bother other people. We don't want others to think we are weak. We are sure that if every other person we know can manage, so can we. We don't want to be selfish. And so we seldom sit down for a cup of tea, we seldom go out in the evening for enjoyment, we seldom get someone to watch our children while we are busy.

Part of our reluctance to ask for help may come from the shame and guilt associated with PPD, but it may also be the result of not understanding the gravity of depression. We should be able to shake it off. After all, we think, it's not like we are dying. But PPD is a very real and serious disease and should be treated as such. It can be life threatening. We should value our psychological and emotional health as much as our physical health.

If we were suffering from pneumonia and were hardly able to get up, no one would care if our vacuuming didn't get done as often as usual, we wouldn't feel bad about ordering take-out, and our husbands would probably figure out the washing machine. We wouldn't feel bad if ladies from our church came in to help us out, sent us a card, or looked after the children for an afternoon or two. We need to realize that those who suffer from depression often need just as much help as that woman with pneumonia. There are people who are willing to help. Usually, we just need to ask. Furthermore, we need to be aware of others in our congregation who may be suffering from depression, seek them out, and offer help.

Others feel deeply sad but are unable to cry.

The next step is to care for ourselves. That does not mean the our needs are more important than our children or husband, and it does not mean that we have to put aside our family's needs in order to meet our own. Rather, we need to care for their needs by preserving their wife and mother. We would not hesitate to put a new transmission in the family car if it was broken down, even if it meant not going out for dinner that month. That doesn't mean that the car is more important than the family. It means that we recognize that the car is indispensable to the functioning of the family life. Is the mother any less vital than the car? If we love our husbands and children, we need to take care of their wives and mothers. That may be something as simple as going out for a cup of coffee in a nice café after the kids are asleep. It may mean sharing with our husband the things we struggle with, and letting him know how he can help. Even something simple like making the lunches for the next day so you can have a brisk evening walk can make a big difference.

Many of us also have a fear of taking any medication. In my own experience of depression, I never took medication or sought any help from any health professional, and have often regretted that decision. While anti-depressants or other therapies are not always the only answer, they have helped many people in the recovery from depression. Even if you are breastfeeding, there are medications you can take. Imagine, would we look down on the woman with pneumonia for taking antibiotics? If your depression is interfering with your day to day functioning, it's time to talk to your doctor about different options.

Healing

Getting through the day is a significant accomplishment when a woman is suffering with PPD. If we are able to cope such that our family is taken care of, we have taken a huge first step in dealing with depression. But coping is not the

same as healing. For months I coped quite well with my depression. Few of my friends knew what I was suffering, and even my husband, who knew I was struggling, admitted that he never knew that during those times my heart was in such an incredibly dark place. I was coping well, and for that I was glad, because even while sick I had an office and calling to fulfill. But healing was far away for a very long time. Sometimes our coping may keep us from healing.

While there may be hormonal, physical, and emotional causes to PPD, I believe we will not really begin to heal until we realize that the ultimate reason for depression lies in God's purpose. He allows us to suffer various trials so that we will be better equipped to bring glory to his name. Christian women can find healing through the process of knowing God better. Perhaps we need to have a deeper understanding of his grace and forgiveness. Or maybe he wants us to have a more powerful experience of the reality of his presence in our lives. Maybe we will be drawn to connect in a stronger way with the community of believers in our congregation. Maybe he wants to draw us to a deeper

understanding of the Bible. In whatever way we feel ourselves being taught by the fatherly hand of God, it is through him that we will receive true healing.

Although healing comes ultimately from God, it is not an instant, passive, or lonely process. We confess that God makes all things well in his time. Sometimes we have to humbly accept the burden of depression for many months and still, at the same time, believe that God will grant us healing. If we expect a single prayer to zap us better by the morning, we may begin to lose faith in God's providential care, or we may resent his timetable. Though "we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28) that needs to become a gritty, tangible knowledge in the face of the possibility of many more days, weeks, or months of depression. There may be days when the fight to hold onto the comfort of Romans 8:28, and the wonderful Lord's Day 1, is more physical than theological.

The road to healing is God's road, but we must walk it. I am saddened when I remember the times I cried to God for healing and wondered why he kept me under that burden, yet my Bible remained closed.

Post Partum Support Group

Can you empathize with the author of this article?

If you are experiencing or have ever experienced PPD, would you be willing to join a group of women dedicated to helping each other through a difficult time?

A number of people have expressed an interest in forming a Reformed PPD support group.

For more information contact:

Jan Bredenhof

(604) 576-3916

jbredenhof@hotmail.com

I regret the days that I suffered, and did not reach out to the many people around who would have prayed for me and with me if only I had asked. If we want to follow God to healing, we need to get up and walk. There are many ideas for how we can make our life of faith more vibrant. Consider spending time in quiet meditation, or keeping a prayer journal. Write down in a notebook all the promises of God which you find in your daily Bible reading. Spend a minute or two in prayer as soon as you open your eyes. Talk to your elder or a trusted woman in your bible study. Ask for prayer.

The feelings of guilt and shame so common in PPD often keep us from admitting to others our need for help. Yet God has placed us within a community of believers for the very reason that we can help and strengthen each other. A friend may have insights that elude us in the darkness of depression. An older, experienced mother may be able to suggest a way of having your devotions that brings you closer to God's promises. An elder may be able to help you through self-examination and assure you of the reality of forgiveness.

Healing that comes through a closer walk with God is powerful healing indeed.

Growing

It was in the spring that I noticed an unusual sensation. I paused to examine the feeling, and it took me a second to recognize it. Happiness. I felt happy. It was something I hadn't felt in a long, long time. The feeling was exquisite. And yet, somehow it made me feel a little sad too. I realized it had been so long since I had felt happy that I could hardly remember what it was like. It brought home how many long months I had spent in so dark a place. How many months wasted, how many memories clouded.

But I have learned a lot too. I have learned to value peace over excitement,

contentment over happiness and, above all, the profound joy which is deeper than emotion. I have learned that smiles are precious and laughter like gold. I have learned the intense joy of opening my eyes to a new day.

Some of the lessons God taught me through my depression have been hard. I thought I was strong and that my faith could withstand any assault. I was wrong. In the deep darkness of my depression I did not hold onto God. My separation from God felt like an iron wall and, to my shame, I gave up trying to get through it. I now know that I am not

strong enough to hold onto God, and that knowledge is painful. Yet in the place where that self-confidence was, Father has put something infinitely more precious. You see, when I could no longer hold onto God, he held on to me. When I gave up hope and turned my face inward, he lovingly lifted my eyes upward again. He was faithful when I was faithless. And so my joy has become more profound than the happy days before I knew depression. God has taught me something my children already knew. I am weak, but he is strong.

RP

Put your pen where your pet peeve is.

Write for RP and let the younger generation know what's what!

Logic

March 20 deadline

Do we know how to argue? Do we need to know? How does ordered thinking help us study the Bible? Can we use logic to show people from other religions the error of their ways? Studying the Bible seems to require a good bit of rationality, but can we be too rational? Is reason the opposite of faith? Should Christians study formal logic? Was Jesus a great debater? How about Paul?

Movies

April 20 deadline

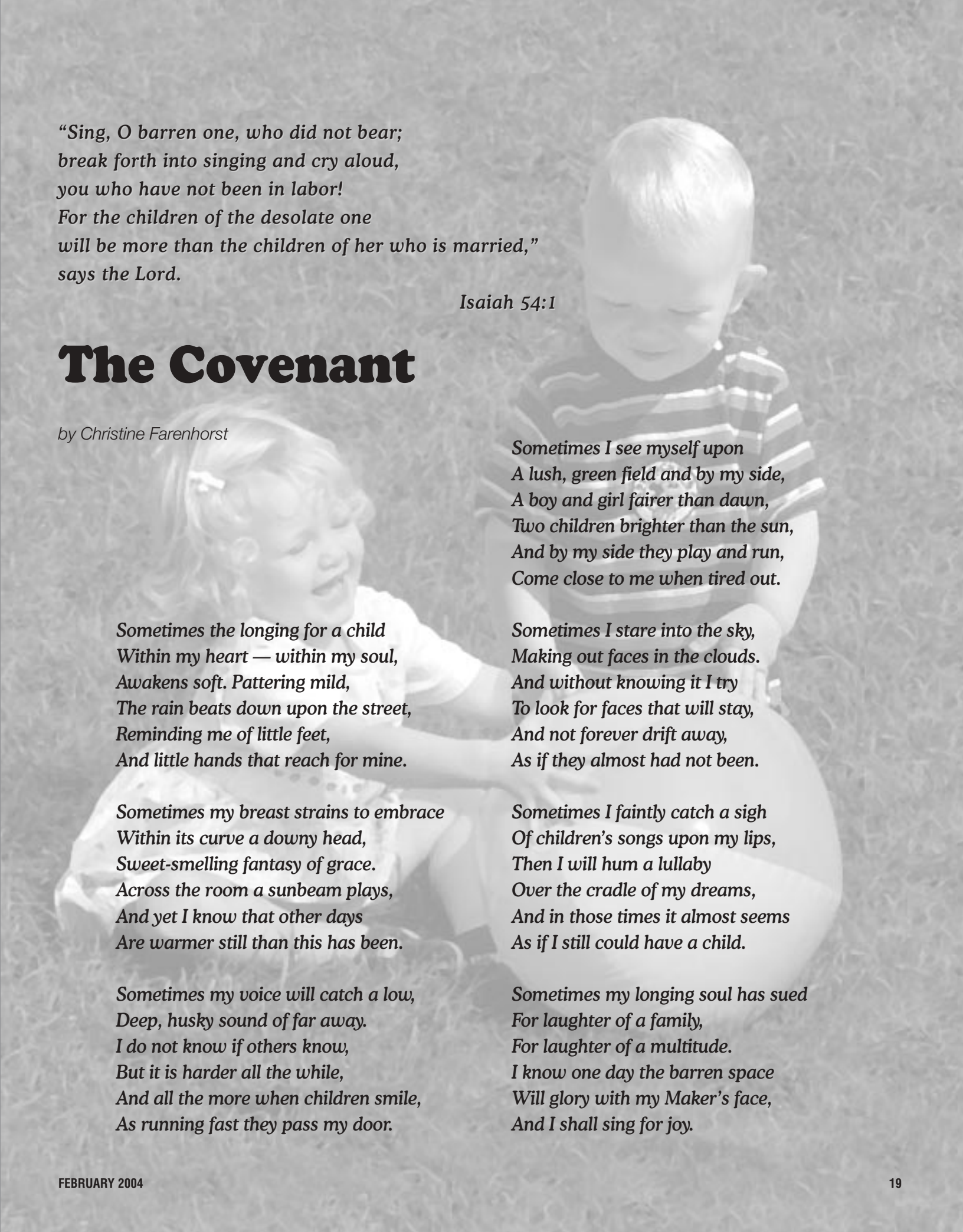
Are there any movies Christians should watch? We're starting to get skeptical! You don't need to write an article to contribute to this issue — you just need to tell us about some movies that are worth watching.

Send in your list of recommendations with a line or two about why you like each one, and why you think other Christians would enjoy them.

We need articles on a variety of issues, so don't feel limited to what's mentioned here. You can send your articles via e-mail or via regular mail to:

13820 106 A Avenue,
Edmonton, AB T5N 1C9
editor@reformedperspective.ca

REFORMED
Perspective



*"Sing, O barren one, who did not bear;
break forth into singing and cry aloud,
you who have not been in labor!
For the children of the desolate one
will be more than the children of her who is married,"
says the Lord.*

Isaiah 54:1

The Covenant

by Christine Farenhorst

*Sometimes the longing for a child
Within my heart — within my soul,
Awakens soft. Pattering mild,
The rain beats down upon the street,
Reminding me of little feet,
And little hands that reach for mine.*

*Sometimes my breast strains to embrace
Within its curve a downy head,
Sweet-smelling fantasy of grace.
Across the room a sunbeam plays,
And yet I know that other days
Are warmer still than this has been.*

*Sometimes my voice will catch a low,
Deep, husky sound of far away.
I do not know if others know,
But it is harder all the while,
And all the more when children smile,
As running fast they pass my door.*

*Sometimes I see myself upon
A lush, green field and by my side,
A boy and girl fairer than dawn,
Two children brighter than the sun,
And by my side they play and run,
Come close to me when tired out.*

*Sometimes I stare into the sky,
Making out faces in the clouds.
And without knowing it I try
To look for faces that will stay,
And not forever drift away,
As if they almost had not been.*

*Sometimes I faintly catch a sigh
Of children's songs upon my lips,
Then I will hum a lullaby
Over the cradle of my dreams,
And in those times it almost seems
As if I still could have a child.*

*Sometimes my longing soul has sued
For laughter of a family,
For laughter of a multitude.
I know one day the barren space
Will glory with my Maker's face,
And I shall sing for joy.*

Apologetics

(Part 1 of 2)

What is it?

What are a couple of the different types?

Is one type better than the other?

by Johan D. Tangelder

The need to defend Christianity against its accusers is as great today as at any other time in history. We are involved in a war of ideas for people's minds and hearts. But even as Christians complain about the forces we are fighting against – humanism, secularism, postmodernism, cults and new faiths – some earnest Christians wonder whether they should even try to defend their faith. It seems too hard.

Our Western culture, after all, has lost its Christian heritage. How can we make inroads into this culture when almost any thought or action is allowable, and all standards and values, no matter how perverse or bizarre, are all considered equal? Everyone seems to be following their own rules. They say, "There are lots of definitions of truth. Yours is only one of many. It is arrogant to say that Christianity is the only true religion." "It's true for you; it's not true for me" is a common response from students at secular campuses confronted by the claims of any exclusive religion. "Sure, the Muslims believe all sorts of odd things," students say. "At least I think they do. But look, it's their right to do so. It's fine for them. It's not my thing, but why should it be?"

THE TASK OF APOLOGETICS IS THREEFOLD:

1. The Gospel must be clearly defined to eliminate distorted or erroneous descriptions.
2. Apologetics seeks to blunt the attacks of those who would discredit the Gospel, while at the same time showing the inadequacies of non-Christian options.
3. Apologetics marshals evidence that will commend it to the modern mind.

In this climate Christian apologetics stands at a crucial juncture. The challenges are formidable. But in obedience to the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20), we must accept the challenge. Because we are so obviously a minority today, it is important that we tell our neighbors what we believe and why. It is important we learn how to defend our faith.

In *The Christian Faith in the Modern World* Dr. J. Gresham Machen (1881-1920) put it this way:

"I may be convinced with my whole soul that the Bible is the Word of God; but if my neighbor [insists he has] considerations to show that it is really full of error, I cannot be indifferent to those considerations. . . . Two contradictory things cannot both be true. We cannot go on holding to the Bible as the Word of God and at the same time admit the truth of considerations that are contrary to that conviction of ours. I believe with all my soul, in other words, in the necessity of apologetics, the necessity of a reasoned defense of the Christian faith, and in particular a reasoned defense of the Christian conviction that the Bible is the Word of God."

Definition and Purpose of Apologetics

What exactly is apologetics? It doesn't mean apologizing. Apologetics is derived from a Greek root meaning "to defend, to make a reply, to give an answer, to legally defend oneself." It was used in the ancient Greek court, where defendants were given the right to answer or "speak off" the charge brought against them. Plato's *Apology* offers a classic example. There the aged Socrates, accused of corrupting the morals of Athens' youth, stands before the people of his city to answer the charge. He pleads with them: "Never mind the manner, which may or may not be good; but think only of the truth of my words, and given heed to that: let the speaker speak truly and the judge decide justly."

In Christianity apologetics is a branch of theology which deals with the history of, and ongoing efforts at, establishing an effective defense of the Christian faith against any attack from those outside of that faith. In *Gereformeerde Apologetiek* (Reformed Apologetics) Dr. V. Hepp said that apologetics does not oppose persons but principles that touch upon a man's relationship with God. Therefore, it is a branch of theology.

It is important that we tell our neighbors what we believe and why.

Apologetics itself is most useful for those who have already started their quest for spiritual reality. It clears away objections to the Christian faith as well as providing reasons for it. An apologist, then, is someone who seeks to defend the Christian faith from attacks from within and without, and who seeks to provide compelling evidence on behalf of the Gospel. In summary, we can say that the task of apologetics is threefold. First, the Gospel must be clearly defined to eliminate distorted or erroneous descriptions. Second, apologetics seeks to blunt the attacks of those who would discredit the Gospel,

while at the same time showing the inadequacies of non-Christian options. Third, apologetics marshals evidence that will commend it to the modern mind.

Apologetics in Scripture

Scripture is full of apologetics. The Old Testament prophets often appealed to the facts of history, prophecy, creation, or providence to make their case with other nations. In Acts, Paul reasoned with unbelievers and gave evidence for the Gospel by appealing to creation and the facts surrounding Jesus' life and resurrection. His sermon on the Areopagus in Athens is an example of the apologetics he used to preach the Gospel to the pagans of the Roman empire (Acts 17:22-31). Paul also defended himself before the Jewish council (Acts 23:1ff), before Felix (Acts 24:1ff), and before Festus and Agrippa (Acts 26:1ff). He defends his gospel and apostleship in Galatians 1 and 2.

The New Testament does not only repeatedly use "apologia", believers are exhorted by the apostle Peter to engage in apologetics. He wrote, "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect" (1 Pet. 3:15). In other words, we are to give a rational answer to those who question our faith.

What are we called to defend? We are not called upon to defend everything that goes under the name Christian. Jude 3 gives an answer to this question. We are "to contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints." It is the truth in Scripture, "the faith" that we are to express and defend.

Different Approaches

The serious question in apologetics is the question of strategy. How do we approach the subject? The question of strategy is basic bedrock in Christian apologetics. In *Varieties of Christian Apologetics* Bernard Ramm points out that "unless an apologist is clear at this point he jeopardizes his entire system. Unless he is clear here, he will find it difficult to be clear elsewhere." If our point of departure is wrong, we won't get to our destination.

Today, apologetics is busily practiced. One apologetic work after another hits the

market. Christian bookstores usually have a section reserved for such works. But there is great disagreement among the apologists. Someone said that the sheer variety of approaches offered in defending the Christian faith in our postmodern culture is evidence of the vitality of contemporary orthodox Christianity. But life would be much easier for a Christian apologist if all those involved in the defense and propagation of the Gospel would think alike. However, that's not the way it is. There is no agreement about methodology, the relationship of philosophy to apologetics, or even its place in theology.

Believers are exhorted by the apostle Peter to engage in apologetics.

From among all the various approaches, I will single out two, from the evangelical and reformed schools of thought. The first is often called the "Evidentialist Approach." These people see value in supporting the claims of faith with specific evidences taken from outside the Bible. I will start with these evidentialists, who concentrate on the role of reason in the defense of the faith, and in the next article I will discuss a Reformed approach.

1. The Evidentialist Approach

The evidentialist (or objective) school may be represented with the motto "I understand and I believe." It lines up a barrage of rationalistic arguments to affirm the *credibility* of the Christian faith. It has genuine belief in the ability and trustworthiness of human reason in its search for religious knowledge. Evidentialists insist that objective truth can be established by logic and factual evidences. They argue on the basis of the highly questionable assumption that "everyone agrees what is reasonable." They claim, therefore, that any person graced with common sense and free from prejudice can ascertain that Jesus rose from the dead and can perceive in this the truth of the Christian faith.

This confidence in reason has its roots in the 18th century *Enlightenment*. The primary feature of the Enlightenment was its



Can you tell your neighbors and co-workers what you believe, and why you believe it?

assertion of the authority of reason. Reason, it was argued, was capable of telling us *everything*, including everything we needed to know about God and morality. The idea of some kind of supernatural revelation was dismissed as irrelevant. Reason reigned supreme. A classic example of rationalist apologetics is John Locke's (1632-1704) *The Reasonableness of Christianity as Delivered in the Scriptures* (1695). He argued that reason must be given the last word in the acceptance of the supernatural and the interpretation of Scripture. Impressed as he was with the ability of reason to discover all truth necessary to life, he felt less and less the need for revelation.

Today, one of most popular North American evangelical evidentialists is Lee Strobel. He is the award-winning, best-selling author of *The Case for Christ*, which sold 3 million since its release in 1998, and *The Case for Faith*, which has

sold 1.5 million copies since its publication in 2000.

Strobel extended his contract with Christian publisher Zondervan to 2008. Under the seven-figure agreement, he will pen four more books. The contract "calls for more similarly focused books that provides evidence and arguments for Christian faith." Strobel says, "My passion is to help people go through the investigation. It took me two years of investigating to see that evidence from history and science does point to the existence of God."

The former legal editor of *The Chicago Tribune* – and former atheist – set out to debunk Christianity years ago when his wife became a Christian. In his *The Case for Christ* he shows how his investigation resulted in his conversion to the faith that he set out to expose as fraudulent. Strobel says many Christians put too much emphasis on the emotional side of faith. "I run into Christians that have very timid faith because

they believe faith is based on emotions. They overlook the intellectual side of it. I want them to discover that. Most people describe conversion as a rush to emotion. I describe it as a *rush of reason*" (italics mine.)

The Failure of Reason

I believe that the evidentialist approach is deeply flawed because it believes that the Gospel revealed in Scripture is immediately available to anyone who can think rationally about these matters. It argues that people can be persuaded of God's existence through proofs.

But imagine for moment that someone does accept the proofs for the existence of God. That does not mean that he has become a Christian ("even the demons believe. . . and shudder" James 2:19b).

The Christian faith is simply not provable through scientific method. We do not have resources on our own to think about the triune God, or ideas such as truth, justice and peace. To be able to understand these things we must first know Jesus, who is for us the Way, the Truth, and the Life. One must come to the Christian faith believing that it is true and embrace it as such without any dependence on outside evidences. Faith is a free gift of God and not something that can be acquired or bestowed by the power of human reasoning and logic. As J. Gresham Machen pointed out long ago: "Of course a man never was won to Christ *merely* by argument. That is perfectly clear. There must be the mysterious work of the Spirit of God in the new birth. Without that, all our arguments are quite useless." Alarmed by polls indicating that only 28 per cent of Americans have a strong belief in "absolute truth" and that a corresponding relativism is on the rise, Douglas Groothuis urged pastors to begin setting forth a "rational defense of Christianity." Yet within the very same *Christianity Today* (March 9, 1992) column, he acknowledges that such arguments "seldom win a soul to Christ."

Evidentialists don't seem to realize that human reason has its many limitations. For one thing, we often make mistakes. Furthermore, it is limited by the information it has at hand. For example,


how can human reason alone come to the conclusion that God is triune and salvation is by grace and faith alone? My argument, therefore, is that the evidentialist approach as the first line of defense cannot be accepted because it presupposes that man can know God prior to the illumination of the Holy Spirit.

Furthermore, evidentialists don't seem to take into account the effect of sin on the human mind. How can the sin-stained intellect of the unbeliever grasp the things of God? Johannes G. Vos observes in his commentary on *The Westminster Larger Catechism*:

"In the sinful heart there is strong prejudice against God and the truth of God. The ordinary evidences are sufficient to convince a neutral, unprejudiced inquirer that the Bible is the Word of God. But the fact is that there are no neutral, unprejudiced inquirers. The whole human race has fallen into sin; the human heart has been darkened; the 'natural man' is gripped by a tremendous prejudice against accepting the Bible as God's Word. Apart from the special work of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts, there would not be a single true Christian believer in the world."

In other words, we cannot think of human reason apart from the doctrine of human depravity. Evidences are no match for human depravity. If we use them as battering rams against unbelief, they simply bounce back! Reason is always beneath the Word of God for it can never escape its own human limitations nor overcome its own weakened depravity and so give the human mind certainty of the truth of the Gospel.

Since the evidentialist approach is deeply flawed, how then should we defend and propagate the Christian faith? Scripture does warn us against using bad philosophy (Col. 2:8) and thinking that evidences alone can illumine the content of the Gospel or lead someone to faith (1 Cor. 1:18-25). But such warnings do not militate against searching for a more Biblical approach to apologetics, so next month we look at a Reformed approach.

Continued and concluded next issue. 

Political slogans you'll never hear

by Jon Dykstra

With a federal election just around the corner, Canada's political parties are busy churning out new slogans. If past elections are any indicator, we'll soon be called to "Make Our Voice Heard" "For A Positive Future" since now is "A Time For Change." While the slogans will all be different you can be sure they'll all be similarly meaningless.

But what if parties had to say what they were thinking? What if they had to be blunt and truthful; what would their slogans look like then? We submit to you they might look a lot like the ones included below:

LIBERAL

Proudly aborting the next generation of voters
UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT!!! Serving the same old menu.
For Lent, we gave up our principles
More free votes in Parliament. . . when our leaders says we may.
Now 100% Jean Chrétien free

CONSERVATIVES

We're against Gay Marriage. . . for now.
Two parties – one leader – no abortion policy.
Fiscally? Conservative! Morally? Bankrupt!
CHRISTIANS WELCOME. . . in the back of the bus.
We're the lesser of two evils!

NEW DEMOCRATS

Criminalizing Christianity one step at a time
We spell "Compassion" M-O-N-E-Y.
The tenth commandment was meant for rich people.
More Government is always the answer.
If we can't elevate the poor, we'll beat down the rich.

CHRISTIAN HERITAGE PARTY

Vote for the devil you know, a devil you don't know. . . or vote CHP.
Millions of Christians in one country. Just imagine. . .
God owns your vote. Invest it wisely.
They're butchers or bystanders – We're pro-life. What are you?
Pragmatism be damned! Vote your conscience this time!*

**Just as God's name can be used both properly and in vain, so too other words, commonly abused, can have a proper usage. For those who might be offended by the inclusion of one of the words in this slogan, consider for a moment whether its use might be proper. This is not casual cursing – this sentence says exactly what it means to say.*

The Galileo myth

STORIES THAT EVERYONE KNOW, OFTEN AIN'T SO

by Reuben Bredenhof

As we grow up, receiving instruction at home and at school, we hear many stories that are enduringly imprinted on our minds. Even years later, an adult is often able to recount in detail that vivid scene in the court of King Solomon when he had to rule in the case of the two prostitutes and the one baby, or is able to describe the story of our Lord and the little man Zachaeus who waited for him in the sycamore-fig tree.

But Scriptural stories are not the only ones imparted to us as we go through the years of our elementary and secondary education. We also hear other “timeless tales,” stories that everyone knows through one source or another. We all know, for example, the story of the flat earth; in the Middle Ages, people believed that the earth was flat and believed that those who went too close to the edge would fall off. It is usually said that this was the official teaching of the church, and was something that restricted any voyages of discovery. The church’s ignorance on this point is considered another aspect of the superstition and intellectual decline that typified the so-called Dark Ages. But though the “villains” of this story, the ignorant ecclesiastical leaders, tried to squelch any exploration, the “hero” Columbus bravely stood against

the power of the church and its feared Inquisition, and ventured out onto the high seas – and lived to tell about it. Other familiar tales from the past could be added to this one, stories that have been told so often and so widely that they attain the status of “myth.”

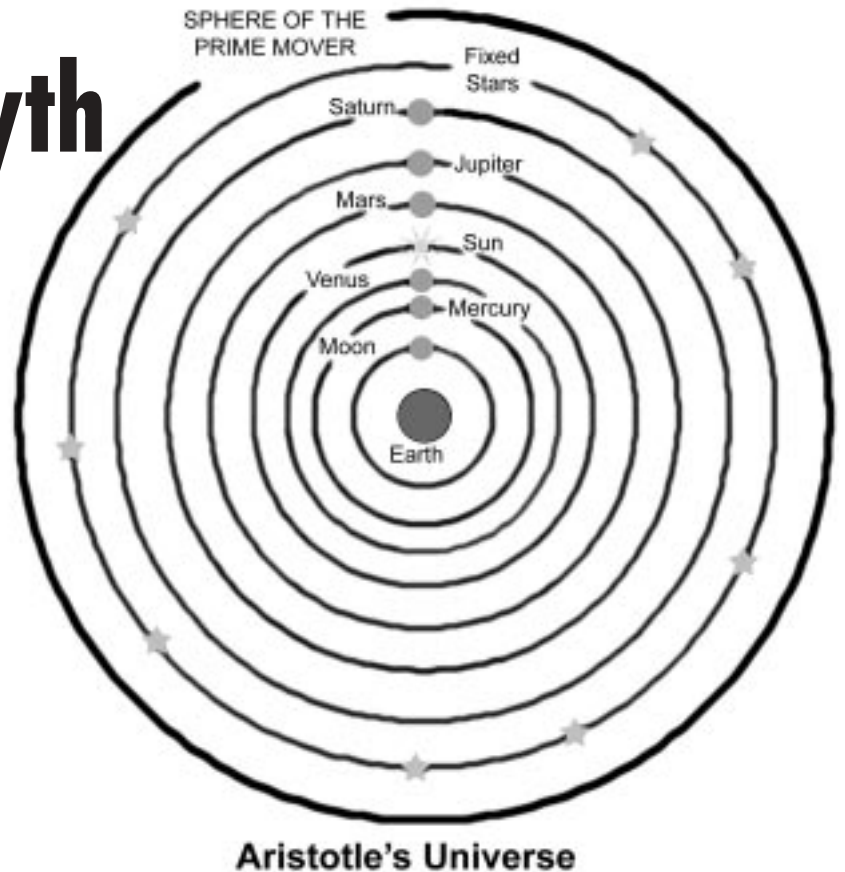
The purpose of a Myth

When we say “myth,” some might automatically equate this with fiction or fable. But “myth” in a wider sense is a grand story, sometimes true, sometimes not, that explains who we are and how we fit into the universe. A tale told and re-told and perhaps re-enacted on television becomes part of the understanding of our past and of our position today.

In the tale of the flat earth, we are confirmed in our view of the Middle Ages as a period of ignorance and superstition. The church was blindly opposed to scientific progress, while intelligent sailors coura-

geously showed the conventional understanding to be wrong – a well-known story, but one that is not true. Contrary to the details of this tale, historians have long recognized that all educated people of the medieval period knew that the earth was round, and that the account of the church’s suppression of the intrepid Columbus is pure fiction. And yet this myth is still re-told, for it nicely contrasts for our minds the rational modern world with the foolish bigotry that preceded it.

It is the place of modern myths that Philip Sampson examines in his book, *6 Modern Myths About Christianity and Western Civilization*. After providing the example of the flat earth in his introduction, he looks at other tales that are less innocuous, larger stories that influence the perception of a whole culture – myths that invariably assault Christianity and misrepresent the Scriptures, while lauding humanism and reason.



In Aristotle's model of the universe, earth isn't in the centre so much as it is at the bottom – the most imperfect of all places in the universe.

Sampson has selected six grand stories, the most common value-conveying tales. “[These myths] are the modern mind’s way of communicating its beliefs about the fundamental problems of origins and meaning. . . . A myth presents values and beliefs to us as though they were facts and history” (p.13). He observes that myths are not necessarily invented with the conspiratorial intention of obscuring the facts, but are told as reflections of the society that tells them.

The pattern of a Myth

Before beginning his work of showing how several “meaning-carrying” modern myths are truly fictional, Sampson summarizes their general characteristics. The vocabulary connotations in each diverse story are remarkably similar: religion is typically associated with belief, omens, ignorance, superstition, heresy, excommunication, torture, and blood; science is always associated with enlightenment, scholarship, intelligence, open-mindedness, and observation. Each story will also have a plot (usually the struggle of a free-thinking underdog against the ignorant church), a hero (an independent thinker), and a villain (the representative of the powerful church). These stereotyped characteristics already betray the selectivity and bias that underlie each myth.

In the book, six modern myths are first retold, often in the very words of the philosophers and historians that perpetuated these falsehoods and their intended cultural meanings. Sampson then carefully debunks these ideas, telling the real, more complex stories. He tells of Darwin and how his ideas were received (A Story of Origins), of Christianity’s impact on the environment (A Story of Mastery), of how missionaries treated native peoples (A Story of Oppression), of Scripture’s view on the human body (A Story of Repression), and of the church’s treatment of witches (A Story of Persecution). Let’s join Sampson as he deals with the first of the six myths, Galileo.

A story of a hero of science

The story of Galileo tells us how we fit into the modern world: “We occupy a small planet circling an average sun of one galaxy among many” (p.27).

“The Received Version” is probably familiar to our readers: the setting is Renaissance Italy; the plot is the warfare between science and religion; the characters are the plucky Galileo, armed only with a telescope, and the cruel Inquisition and her thumbscrews; the story’s end is that Galileo was tortured, condemned as a heretic, and left to rot in a prison cell, while science flourished.

The contrast is between the high ground of reason and observation and the cramped cell of religious dogma and truth. As many schoolchildren learn, “The Bible said that everything moves around the earth but Galileo’s observations showed that the earth moves around the sun” (p.30). It’s a familiar tale, but as Sampson observes wryly, “The main drawback. . . is

that most of it is untrue” (p.29). So what is the truth? Sampson then does some “de-mythologizing.”

The dominant model of the universe in western Europe up to the late Middle Ages was derived from Aristotle, who reasoned that the heavens, a perfect, unchanging realm, would also be unchangeable in their physical qualities and motion. The earth is at the centre (lowest point) of a universe of concentric spheres, but while the heavenly bodies are ever-perfect, the earth is made of imperfect, changeable matter. This Aristotelian cosmology was essentially the standard view, until the “revolution” of Copernicus (who died twenty years before Galileo was born), who revived the ancient Pythagorean hypothesis that the sun, not the earth, is at the centre of the universe.

A common sub-plot in this “cosmic” myth had to do with how man’s importance was tied to where the earth was placed in the universe. It is usually asserted that the pre-Copernican men had an exaggerated and arrogant sense of human importance and that was why they placed earth as the center of the universe. Then, when it was discovered that we are only “the third rock from the sun,” man was humbled, and simultaneously Scripture was undermined: “If man’s abode was not at the centre of things, how could he be king [of creation]?” (p.33).

But, as we have seen, the pre-Copernican cosmology was no compliment to earth’s occupants, for in that model the earth is the least important and most transitory place in the universe. Indeed, it was the Copernican system that elevated humanity, lifting the earth to the ranks of perfect heavenly bodies and its inhabitants to heavenly creatures. Far from engendering humility, the end result of the Copernican view was a proud glorification of man and his ability.

Mock the Pope at your peril

The question must be asked, though: Why Galileo as the hero? Why not Copernicus, who had earlier made the key contribution to the “new” cosmology?



Was Galileo punished for his views, or for being a bit of a wise guy?

Sampson notes that Copernicus is not an appropriate character, for he was a canon of the church, he enjoyed the support of the pope, and his book circulated without problem for many years. But Galileo – *he* was condemned by the church for teaching that the sun is the centre of the universe, and his book confiscated.

The retold modern tale features the persecuted Galileo as scientist and hero. It is said that he invented the telescope, discovered how the earth moves around the sun, conducted his famous experiment on the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and asserted, even in the face of the powerful church, that it is the earth that moves. The truth is, he didn't invent the telescope, likely didn't drop cannon balls from the Tower, and didn't discover the dynamics of the pendulum. He did make major contributions to astronomy, but could not prove that the earth moves around the sun.

Indeed, there was insufficient evidence at Galileo's time to prove the Copernican view. Copernicus had been hesitant at first to publish his opinions, not for fear of church punishment, as is said, but for fear of being ridiculed by fellow astronomers who still maintained the dominant Aristotelian cosmology. Galileo feared the same rejection, but persistently asserted that the earth literally moves around the sun, "and popularized his views in snappy Italian rather than the arcane Latin of the universities" (p.37). His book on cosmology became a bestseller.

Galileo's relations with the (Roman) church at this time were cordial. Most of the church leaders favoured his view over Aristotle's, though they acknowledged that more evidence was needed to establish his case. They judged that Galileo's view made excellent sense "as a hypothesis." But Galileo then began to push the envelope; to prove that the earth revolves, he proposed an ingenious but erroneous theory of tides, he argued that comets were a form of optical illusion, and he reinterpreted certain Scripture passages in the light of Copernican reasoning. Then the last

straw: he also wrote a "dialogue" in which his view and the Aristotelian view are represented by two characters. In the dialogue, he put a favourite cosmological argument of his friend Pope Urban VIII in the mouth of the conversation's simpleton. As Sampson notes: "this was not a wise move, and the rest is history" (p.38).

.....

***The retold modern tale
features the
persecuted Galileo
as scientist and hero.***

.....

The major cause of Galileo's troubles was then not his view of the earth's motion as such, but that he had made fun of his Holiness. Sampson notes that today most historians accept that the events surrounding Galileo's troubles with the church involved complex intrigues of politics and patronage rather than "dogmatic reservations" about Biblical teaching.

The dialogue was confiscated and Galileo summoned to Rome in 1633. But the stories of dank prison cells and torture are modern embellishments; he was detained, and forced to abjure heliocentrism,

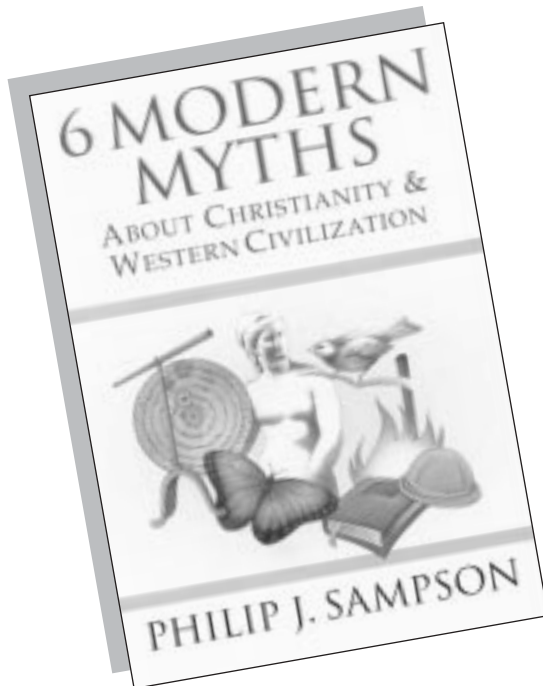
but he was given his own room and servants, in keeping with his position of favour in the Roman church. In the end he did not die a lonely and broken man, as the Received Version runs, but returned to his home with a church pension to live out his years in peace.

It is said that a larger result of the imagined escapade was that science long floundered under the church's domination. But Sampson, having dispelled the modern myth of a brave Galileo resisting an ignorant church, now points out another historical fact: rather than warfare between science and religion in this period, there are direct positive connections between them. The Reformation churches, in particular, replaced Aristotelian reasoning (still persistent in the Roman church) with insights from the Bible, and so provided the soil that enabled science to grow.

The relationship between Biblical Christianity and the rise of science is a complex one, but Sampson identifies four basic aspects of it in the Reformation.

Firstly, there was a restoration of the perspective that nature is created and not divine, and is therefore open to free inquiry and investigation.

Secondly, the principle of man's God-given dominion over creation, not domination, was rediscovered.



**6 Modern Myths About
Christianity & Western
Civilization**

by Philip J. Sampson

InterVarsity Press, 2001
197 pages; paperback, \$24.99 Can

Thirdly, reason was properly demoted as dependent on God and not vaunted as a “key” to unlocking God’s secrets, thus encouraging again the study of creation.

Fourthly, God’s sovereign care for creation was again recognized, with the corollary that certain God-ordained laws in the universe could be discovered through science.

The theme of conflict between religion’s ignorance and science’s enlightenment is at the heart of the Galileo myth. A proper historical study demolishes the oft-repeated tale that lauds free science and mocks repressive religion, and affirms instead the positive framework that Biblical Christianity affords to free investigation.

Postmodern stories

Modernity asserts that reason, facts, and scientific achievements underpin its self-confidence, yet it is persistently told fables that in reality receive the central place in the communication of its worldview. Indeed, it is nothing new that stories are used to pass on modernity’s core beliefs – many societies have used narrative in this way.

The question must be asked though, says Sampson: why do the modern myths have such a negative focus, concerned with the warfare between science and religion, reason and superstition? (p.153). He suggests that this myopic view represses another story, “one less congenial to the modern mind,” namely that of the damage science has done (e.g., the Chernobyl disaster) and of the brutal reality that confronts the idea of human progress (e.g., two world wars). “Modern myths constantly reinvent a superstitious image of religion in order to brush it aside and with it modernity’s role in oppression” (p.153). A well-told story provides an opportunity to neglect the facts and distract attention from corporate shortcoming and guilt.

Postmodernism has recognized the unrealities in modernism’s vision of the world, but the familiar stories have not disappeared. Rather, modern stories are still used, but now selectively, and with strange bedfellows. The modern myths’ presenta-

tion of enlightening science is combined with elements of “spirituality” (e.g., the tale of Galileo is accepted by the same person who puts credence in his daily horoscope). Today, tradition and religion are not rejected, but are incorporated with science, in accord with postmodernity’s spirit of eclecticism. And so the falsehood of re-told myths will continue to confront us in this postmodern age.

On the book

At first blush one might think that Sampson’s book is only another example of “revisionist history,” where historical events or periods are radically reinterpreted, usually to conform to the historian’s implausibly slanted thesis. But a consideration of the great amount of research carried out by Sampson, also in primary sources, should dispel any fear of revisionism. Indeed, every historian will write from his own perspective and presuppositions, making “objective” historiography impossible. At the same time, we can be honest and careful with the historical evidence that we examine and interpret.

.....

Galileo then began to push the envelope . . .

.....

Sampson’s honesty is observable throughout his book. Though depicting the modern myth as invariably characterized by stereotyped features, he resists the temptation to do the same in his retelling. For example, though refuting the image of an ignorant and repressive Christianity, he acknowledges where churches and popes were autocratic;

though disputing the extent of the witch hunts (also in Salem, Mass.), he concedes that many women were wrongly killed by Christians for exaggerated charges or suspicions of witchcraft.

6 Modern Myths About Christianity and Western Civilization is relatively short, but bursting with the fruits of Sampson’s research. A slight criticism would be his use of endnotes, which necessitate the use of two bookmarks (which aren’t that scarce, I know) – the interested reader always has to flip to the back of the book to read his often fascinating footnotes, as Sampson digs up varied and obscure sources. The book is not a light read, but it is a stimulating and exciting one, as we accompany the author to the courts of Renaissance Italy, to the jungles of South America, and to the colonial towns of New England. He also provides an abundance of “signposts” for the reader to follow him to his startling conclusions.

Sampson clearly works from a perspective that values the historicity and authority of the Bible. Though he has much to say that is negative about modernity’s credos and their narrative expression, he also makes positive statements about the value of a truly Christian worldview, one that touches all of life and offers a proper approach to all we encounter.

This book would be eminently helpful for any thoughtful Christian reader. Its appeal is broad because the stories Sampson treats are well-known to many of us – familiar stories, but ones whose values and bases are not usually recognized for what they are. With the help of this book we may continue to assert in the world the relevance of the Scriptures for everyday life and may continue to witness to the true freedom that the gospel of grace affords.



*Now with sample articles, sample issues,
and tips for aspiring writers.*

It’s all on the web at:

www.reformedperspective.ca

SEWAGE

NOT OUT OF SIGHT – OUT OF MIND

by Margaret Helder

In Montreux, Switzerland, on the banks of the beautiful Lake of Geneva, broods a medieval castle. This thirteenth century Chateau de Chillon, immortalized in Lord Byron's poem *The Prisoner of Chillon*, comes equipped with most of the facilities considered necessary for life at that time, including the famous depressing dungeon. What the edifice did not have, however, was plumbing. High up in the castle it did boast glorified outhouses, closet-like projections from the main structure. These featured a bench along the outside wall; in the bench were one or more holes. The user might feel a little nervous, one might imagine, with nothing but cold air between the user and rocks many feet below at the base of the castle walls. Many medieval castles were similarly equipped. Some of us might prefer the plumbing arrangements that less grandiose, but more modern establishments come equipped with these days.

Hampton Court near London, the beautiful palace of William III and Mary of England, included a discreet "closet" for the king's use, tucked away behind the elegant chambers and reception rooms. In this small room there was a velvet-lined chair with a hole in the seat. Under the chair was a chamber pot, which had to be emptied elsewhere. A servant stood by to take care of such tasks.

In these genteel times in England, it is said that gentlemen unfailingly walked on the curbside of any walkway. Ladies were thus protected from slop, wash water or worse, dumped from upper windows of townhouses into the gutters running along the street. Before dumping, it was customary to call out "*Gardez l'eau*," a French expression meaning "Watch the

water." In time this degenerated to "Gardy-loo" and eventually to the modern slang term "loo" for toilet. The gutters and ditches in the road were thus basically open sewers. Any courteous gentleman walking on the curbside was there also partly to protect a lady from splash water from passing carts or horses.

.....

***"Gardez l'eau"
degenerated eventually
to the modern slang
term "loo" for toilet.***

.....

In London the ditches sloped slightly to drain the waste toward the Thames River and ultimately to the sea. The word sewer in fact came from an old English word meaning "seaward." Not surprisingly the Thames River also basically became an open sewer. During the particularly hot summer of 1859, the stench from the river was so strong that many fled the city and parliamentary deliberations were suspended. Already in 1848, England had passed the National Public Health Act, which became a model code for the rest of the world. Every household was to have some kind of sanitary system, either flushing toilet or suitable outhouse. Also the government allocated 5 million British pounds for engineering research and development. Most significantly the government began to actually build a sewer system. The belated invention of flushing toilets made this possible.

Ancient toilets

Neither flush toilets nor sewer systems were really new to Victorian England. A godson of Queen Elizabeth I built a toilet for her in 1596 and he installed it in her Richmond Palace. He also built one for himself in his own home. Both owners used their conveniences, but the rest of society laughed them to scorn. It just goes to show how suspicious people are of anything new. Another two hundred years would pass before the modern toilet appeared as the result of efforts from such inventors as Alexander Cumming in 1775 and others following him.

Sewer systems however go much farther back in history than the flush toilet. The people of Crete, for example, whose Minoan civilization crashed about the time of the Israelites' exodus from Egypt, developed an elaborate drainage system. The capital city of Knossus was home to a large population crowded into about 22 acres. The elaborate drainage system below the city included pipes, some of which were buried almost eleven feet deep. In the palace there were even several water closets with flushing provided from large cisterns.

The Romans, however, were the plumbers par excellence. The term plumber, in fact, comes from the Latin word "plumbus" meaning lead. While early pipes were made of wood or clay, the later ones were fashioned from lead. The Romans were famous for their aqueducts, which carried water to their cities. Apparently however the first sewers in Rome were built about 750 BC, about 500 years before the first aqueduct. The large collector sewer system under Rome was called the "Cloaca Maxima," and it is still

The flushing toilet has been around for over 2000 years, since the time of the ancient Cretes. In all that time men still haven't learned to put the seat back down.

in use. It was designed to carry off surface water and any matter dumped into the system.

Canada's problem

Disposal of body waste and wash water has long been a problem for mankind. We like to think that modern societies have solved all the problems. Unfortunately many countries cannot afford adequate waste treatment. While such facilities tend to be expensive, they nevertheless contribute to the good health of the citizens. Especially as population density increases, sanitation becomes more and more essential. Surprisingly for such a wealthy part of the world, Canada's record on waste treatment is spotty at best.

The fact that a municipality collects sewage into a large system of underground pipes does not necessarily mean that this effluent is adequately treated before it is discharged into the environment. Solving the problem is not simply a matter of wishing and hoping. Consider, for example, the case of Halifax. Much older than many Canadian cities, this community has discharged raw sewage into their harbor for the past 254 years. Not too surprisingly, the harbor displays ample evidence of pollution and degradation. In response to this sorry situation, on November 12, 2003, work officially began on a program that is expected to result in significantly better water in the harbor. Nevertheless, although the Harbour Solutions Project was announced with suitable fanfare, it is still far from certain how much of the infrastructure will actually be built. The entire project is expected to cost more than \$300 million and take 54 months to complete. But the city has only \$80 million available to fund this program. This money was collected over many years from surcharges on citizen's water bills. In addition, Nova Scotia, an economically depressed province, has promised \$30 million spread out in small increments over fifteen years and the federal government has pledged a further \$30 million. That means that the munici-

pality has less than half the money it needs to pay for this development. Unfortunately also, these plans call only for primary sewage treatment, only one step better than no treatment at all.

Water discharged from homes is a nasty mixture of gray water (wash water), and sewage. Industry, for its part, releases noxious chemical brews into the wastewater system. Thus water treatment must deal with chemicals, solids and microbes, many of which cause disease. There are many ways to deal with sewage but most involve the following steps.

Primary treatment removes the heaviest solid material. The flow passes through screens and then enters a sedimentation tank where many suspended solids settle out. The sludge is removed and may be burned. This process typically removes about 30% of organic wastes. Disinfection with chlorine or ozone or ultraviolet light may follow before the effluent is released to the environment. In the case of Halifax, however, with their proposed advanced-primary treatment, up to 70% of suspended solids will be removed followed by a treatment with ultraviolet light to kill microbes.

Secondary sewage treatment is intended to follow primary treatment. The idea is to digest at least 85-90% of the remaining organic material and turn it into inorganic minerals. The two processes of choice are either activated sludge or a trickling filtration process. In the former process, the liquid is aerated and a mixture of useful bacteria is encouraged to multiply. In the process the nutrients are digested. The liquid then flows to a final sedimentation tank where the microbial sludge settles out and the effluent is then released into the environment. The trickling filter, alternatively, involves a bed of crushed rock, about six feet thick. Sewage

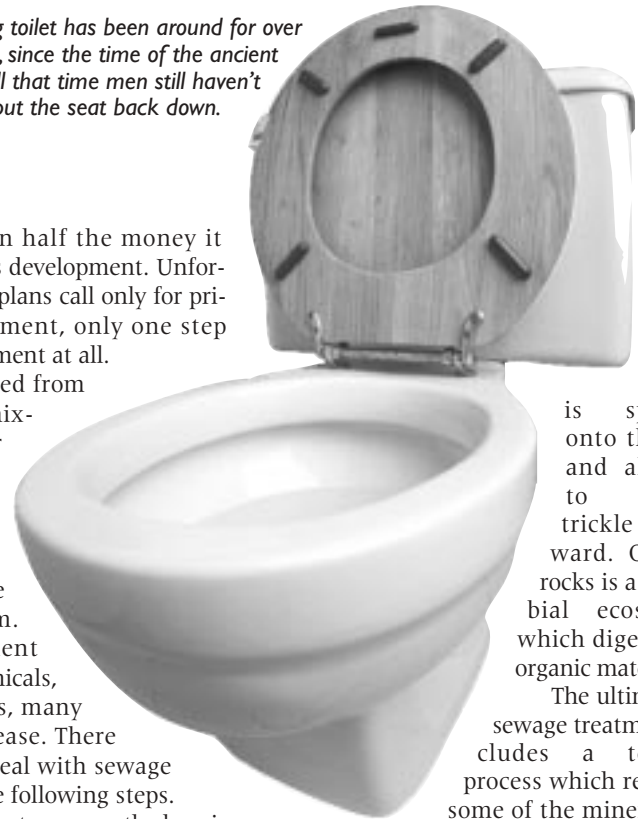
is sprayed onto the bed and allowed to slowly trickle downward. On the rocks is a microbial ecosystem which digests the organic material.

The ultimate in sewage treatment includes a tertiary process which removes some of the mineral nutrients from the water.

These nutrients, especially nitrates and phosphates, support excellent plant growth. If this growth is in the form of nuisance blooms of algae, however, the natural community of animals in the river or lake may be affected. A more natural waterway results when these nutrients are removed before effluent release. However such chemical techniques are expensive.

Not very neighborly

In 1972 the American Congress enacted the Clean Water Act which set national standards for pollution reduction and which mandated that all municipal sewer systems include both primary and secondary treatment. Thus it is that the west coast cities of Port Angeles and Port Townsend on Puget Sound have spent \$31 and \$10 million respectively on secondary sewage treatment. The Americans naturally are not amused that the nearby Canadian provincial capital of Victoria dumps 20 million gallons a day of raw sewage into that very same Puget Sound. As well as Halifax in Nova Scotia, and Victoria in British Columbia, St. John's in Newfoundland is the third provincial capital to release untreated sewage into Canadian coastal waters.



Canada's record is not very good compared to many European countries, which provide tertiary sewage treatment to over 70% of their populations. The Netherlands apparently has the best record of all. Some Canadian cities have, however, changed their polluting ways in recent years. For example, the city of Montreal was, for years, notorious for dumping raw sewage into the St. Lawrence River. Now however, the Island of Notre-Dame, the site of the world famous Expo 67, has been transformed into a marshland. This wetland is man-made and serves a special purpose. Sewage from the city of Montreal is released into the marsh. There microbes in the soil and water turn the organic waste into nutrients suitable for plants. The rooted aquatics (typical marsh plants) grow happily, turning the nutrients into plant matter which does not readily decompose. Good quality water eventually seeps out into the river. Environmentalists called such marshes living machines. The nearby American city of Burlington, Vermont processes all its sewage through such wetlands with the result that its effluent is exceptionally clean. These living machines do require a lot of land to work effectively. When suitable landscape is not available (or is too expensive) municipalities have to resort to more intensive treatment.

Australian experiments

Australians have long been very environmentally conscious. Thus it is no surprise that the city of Sydney was an early experimenter in sewage treatment. In 1877 this municipality decided to establish a sewage farm on the northwest corner of Botany Bay, a low lying sandy area covered only by scrub. The idea was to intermittently apply sewage to the land. In between applications, crops would be grown there. In its natural state this land could scarcely have been more nutrient poor, even by Australian standards. At first the intermittent system worked well and good crops resulted. By 1900, however, the flow rate

had doubled and then it doubled again by 1908. The land was saturated, smelled bad and nothing grew. In desperation, by 1916 the sewage was piped straight to the coast.

The Romans were the plumbers par excellence.

An alternative idea, tried in North Sydney was to use chemicals to precipitate matter out of the sewage. The system became functional in 1899. Within a year, it was apparent that the cost of chemicals was too high and so was the cost of de-watering and burning the sludge. Next various septic systems were tried with the effluent then released onto sand filters. By 1912 these sand filters were overloaded and smelly. As a result the sewage was diverted directly to the sea. By 1920 almost all of Sydney's sewage was piped directly to ma-

rine outfalls. Better sewage treatment came only after further study and the recognition that no technique is a panacea for all locations.

When the history of various cities is examined, it is apparent that adequate sewage treatment came only when the citizens (usually the rich and influential ones) recognized that their own health was jeopardized by untreated sewage in natural bodies of water. Disease causing microbes all too readily ended up in household water. Besides that, fouled beaches and rivers were aesthetically unpleasant. It is also a fact that adequate sewage treatment came about only when biologists and engineers cooperated to develop systems that worked. Although they are expensive, sewage treatment facilities are not options, but essential to the lives of healthy, happy citizens. It is to be hoped in the case of Halifax, that richer regions of the country (i.e. the federal government) will contribute many more dollars to this good cause. After 254 years, it is certainly time for action.

RP



*Two views of an entrance to the Cloaca Maxima.
This sewer system was built around 750 BC and is still in use today.*

PUZZLE PAGE ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

Send Puzzles, Solutions, Ideas to PUZZLE PAGE, 43 Summerhill Place, Winnipeg, MB R2C 4V4 OR robgleach@aol.com

NEW PUZZLES

Riddle for Punsters #97 - " "

Why should English teachers be hired to write computer programs?
Because they are already pro-_____ people.

Problem to Ponder #97 - "Likely Birth-days"

In a non-leap year, what is the probability of being born

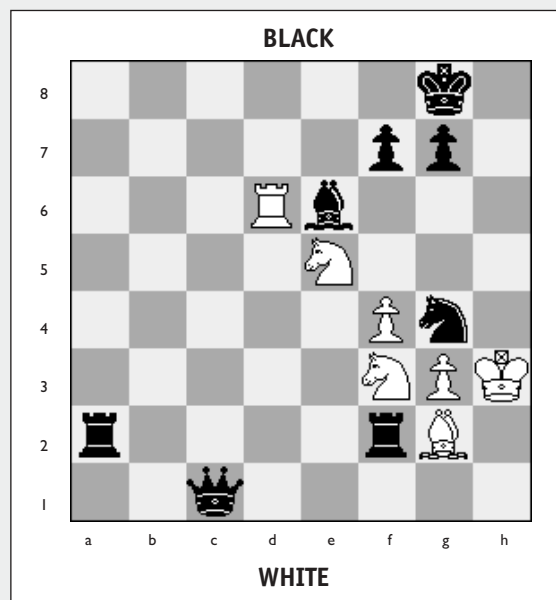
- on the first day of any month of the year?
- on the tenth day?
- on the twenty-eighth day?
- on the thirty-first day?

Word Challenge

By changing each letter, one letter at a time in any order, change
TRACK into GLIDE. For example, BAG T R A C K

BAG	T R A C K
BAT	- - - - -
HAT	- - - - -
HIT	- - - - -
	- - - - -
	G L I D E

Chess Puzzle # 97



White to Mate in 3

Or, If it is BLACK's Move, Black to Mate in 3

SOLUTIONS TO THE PREVIOUS (JANUARY) PUZZLE PAGE

Answer to Riddle for Punsters #96 - "Hard Business"

Why did the cement company hire Mr. Stone as the new manager?
It sounded like he had some c o n c r e t e ideas for improving business and,
although he could sometimes r o c k the boat, the company did not want to
c u b his enthusiasm.

Solution to Problem to Ponder #96 - "What Numbers Work?"

- What number is such that the cube of it equals the sum of its square and the square of double it? By trial and error, **0 and 5** work.

Formal solution: Let x be the number. $x^3 = x^2 + (2x)^2$ so $x^3 = x^2 + 4x^2$
so $x^3 = 5x^2$ so $x^3 - 5x^2 = 0$ so $x^2(x-5) = 0$ so $x = 0$ or $x = 5$

- What number is such that the average of that number and a number a dozen larger than it and a number 9 less than it equals 8? **It is 87.**

Formal solution: Let x be the number. $(x + x+12 + x-9)/3 = 88$
so $(3x + 3)/3 = 88$ so $3x + 3 = 264$ so $3x = 261$ so $x = 87$

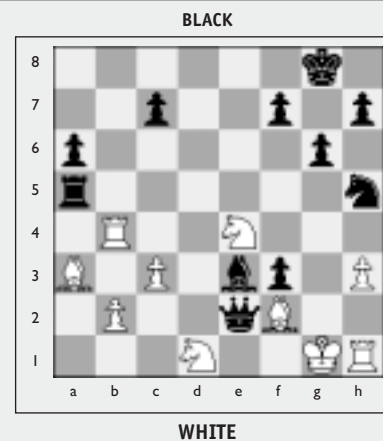
- What 4 consecutive even numbers have 300 as their sum? **72, 74, 76, 78**

Formal solution: Let x be the first number. The next even number is x+2,
then x+4, then x+6 so $x + x+2 + x+4 + x+6 = 300$ so $4x + 12 = 300$
so $4x = 288$ so $x = 72$ and $x+2 = 74$ and $x+4 = 76$ and $x+6 = 78$

- What 3 consecutive odd numbers have 1287 as their product? **9, 11, 13**

A formal solution is too difficult here. A "trial and error" method involves
narrowing down the possibilities. $7^3 = 343$ $9^3 = 729$ $11^3 = 1331$ so
 $(11)(11)(11) = 1331$ is close. Try $(9)(11)(13) = 1287$ Right! So **9, 11, 13**

SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 96



WHITE

WHITE to Mate in 3

Descriptive Notation

- R-N8 ch K-N2
- B-B8 ch K-R1
- B-R6 mate

Algebraic Notation

- Rb4-b8 Kg8-g7
- Ba3-f8 Kg7-h8
- Bf8-h6 ++

Or, If it is BLACK's Move,

BLACK to Mate in 4

Descriptive Notation

- _____ Q-K8 ch
- K-R2 B-B5 ch
- N-N3 BxN ch
- BxB QxB mate

OR

- _____ R-KN4 ch
- NxR BxB ch
- NxB Q-K8 ch
- K-R2 QxN mate

Algebraic Notation

- _____ Qe2-e1 +
- Kg1-h2 Be3-f4 +
- Ne4-g3 Bf4xg3 +
- Bf2xg3 Qe1xg3 ++

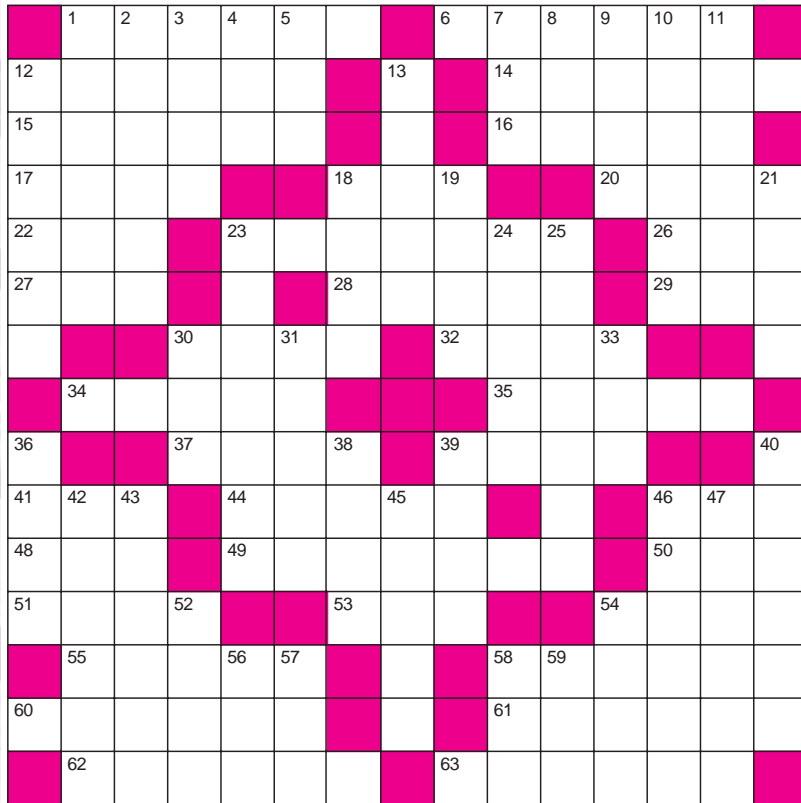
OR

- _____ Ra5-g5 +
- Ne4xg5 Be3xf2 +
- Nd1xf2 Qe2-e1 +
- Kg1-h2 Qe1xf2 ++

Crossword Puzzle

Series 11, No. 11

Last month's solution
Series 11, no. 10



Joyce

ACROSS:

1. Cat
6. European country
12. Salty
14. Certain cars
15. Obliquely
16. Recreational building
17. Mix batter
18. Roman god of the sun
20. Apprehends
22. Kind of champagne
23. Preliminary safety test
26. Dead letter office (abbr.)
27. Poetic word
28. Asian country
29. Atomic Energy Commission (abbr.)
30. Young horse
32. _____ accompli
34. Wash away with water
35. Carbon arc lamp, _____ light
37. One of four kids
39. Dispose of something for money
41. Roman household guardian god
44. Go very slowly
46. Foreign Service Officer
48. Poem
49. Hostile opponents
50. _____ Arbor
51. Brink
53. Cooking container
54. Idol
55. British noblemen
58. Suffer
60. To make lively
61. Flower colour
62. Transferred by deed
63. House basement

DOWN:

1. Not as slow
2. Islands now known as Tuvalu
3. Spreader of untruths
4. Traveler's destination
5. Fisherman's helper
7. Republic of South Africa (abbr.)
8. Before, poetically speaking
9. Adam's first home
10. N. American country
11. Make possible
12. Talks back
13. Soup base
18. Extreme religious body
19. Erik the Red's son
21. Foot cover
22. Fresh grocery section
24. Ground creeper
25. Taxes once levied by French kings
30. _____ au vin
31. Acquire knowledge
33. Sesame
36. Healing plant
38. One end of the pool
39. Baby by-product
40. Special rhyming poem
42. A number to be added to another
43. Entertain sumptuously
45. Exaggerate your acting
46. Bright region of the sun
47. Loud sleeper
52. A great lake
54. Something that is worshipped
56. Low voltage differential (abbr.)
57. Observe
58. The night before
59. Nothing, zip, nada