

**REFORMED**

# Perspective

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A  
MAGAZINE  
FOR THE  
CHRISTIAN  
FAMILY



# WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE NEWS

## Journalism's highest ideal is also their vilest

Editorial

Jon Dykstra

Garrison Keillor is a radio show host, not a theologian, but he was on to something when he said, “the Gospel is meant to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.” Through his law, God does indeed afflict the comfortable, confronting the unrepentant with their sins. And to those who are already afflicted – the broken and contrite – Jesus brings comfort; He forgives sins and makes it possible for us to live in communion, rather than rebellion.

But what would we think if newsmen wanted to take on this same role? A strikingly similar credo can be traced back to journalist Finley Peter Dunne (1867-1936), but this time the comforting/afflicting role is given to his own profession: “The job of the newspaper is to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.”

This credo is hugely influential, even spanning the globe. When I did a quick Google search on it for this article, I saw it popping up repeatedly in university and college newspapers (where idealism is at its highest) but also saw a reference to it this last month in Indonesia’s largest English-language newspaper, *The Jakarta Post*. They promised readers that they would remain true to this “age-old paradigm.”

It may seem pure arrogance for the media to want to take on a role that Keillor properly credits to the Gospel, but before we become too outraged let’s recognize that a journalist can endeavor to follow this “age-old paradigm” in humility. 1 Cor. 11:1 tells us to be imitators of Christ, so it is no sin to, in a smaller way, seek to do as our Lord did. Indeed, it can be godly to take up the plight of the afflicted, and take on corrupt politicians, lawyers, lobby groups and other all-too-comfortable sorts.

### Attack the comfortable!

But if a journalist seeks to follow Dunne and Dunne alone, then things can get quite twisted,

quite quickly. It’s a complicated business, this comforting and afflicting, and if a reporter won’t turn to God for guidance, they’re liable to mess up which they should be doing to whom.

*A young man was walking past a zoo when he noticed a little girl leaning into the lion cage. The lion seized the opportunity – and the little girl – grabbing her by the cuff of her jacket to pull her in. Quick as a flash the man ran to the cage and with as much might as he could muster, punched the lion squarely in the nose. This action so shocked the lion it let go of its prize, allowing the man to pull the little girl to safety.*

*A reporter happened to witness the whole thing and ran to the man to interview him: “Sir, that was the bravest thing I’ve ever seen!”*

*“It was nothing,” said the young man, “I saw this little kid in danger, so I acted. I’m just grateful God kept me safe and gave me the strength I needed.”*

*“Really?” said the reporter, “Well, I’ll make sure this won’t go unnoticed – tomorrow morning this will be on the front-page of my paper!”*

*The next morning the young man bought a newspaper and the front-page headline that greeted him read: “Christian Fundamentalist Assaults African Immigrant And Steals His Lunch!”*

That’s a bit of humor, but in real life it can get even more perverse. During the last US election Barack Obama was canvassing an Ohio neighborhood and met Samuel Joseph Wurzelbacher (known as Joe to his friends) while he was playing football with his son on his front yard. Obama wanted his vote; Wurzelbacher wanted to know more about Obama’s tax plan. When Wurzelbacher, a plumber by trade, suggested that Obama’s plan would punish “the American dream” he became a focal point in the campaign, with

both John McCain and Obama making repeated references to him in their subsequent speeches.

The mainstream media had, early on, decided to treat the first African-American presidential candidate as one of the afflicted they needed to comfort. They now decided that this “Joe the Plumber” must be one of the comfortable they needed to afflict. His history was investigated, and dirt was dug up. It turned out that Joe didn’t have the proper plumbing credentials, that he still owed \$1,182 from the previous year’s taxes and that his parents had, twice while he was growing up, gone on welfare. This was the depth of background information the media thought we all needed to know about any voter willing to question Obama’s tax plans.

### The difference

Christian and gentile journalists can agree on their job description – both embrace Dunne’s adage – but they disagree on who’s in need of comfort and who needs to be afflicted. That’s why *LifeSiteNews.com* stands up for the unborn and *CNN* stands up for abortion doctors, and why *Reformed Perspective* celebrates the family while *CBC* celebrates gay marriage.

Gentile journalists want to follow Dunne’s adage, but want no part of Keillor’s quote. They want to hold the powers-that-be accountable, but don’t want to be accountable to God. Now that’s arrogant! Is it any wonder that even their best efforts are warped and twisted?



## What’s Inside

Intolerance is a four-letter word that today is most often directed at Christians. Because we believe that there is not only a right, but also a wrong, we are called bigoted, and intolerant, and many other, nastier names. There is a sad irony in these attacks – we are called intolerant by a culture that will tolerate everything and anything except God’s truth, and the people who hold to it. And there is a clear hypocrisy as well. They say they accept all ideas as equally worthy of respect but they don’t respect the exclusive claims of Christ: “I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father, except through Me” (John 14:6). The first of our two tolerance articles exposes the hypocrisy of worldly tolerance, while the second equips readers to stand up to attack by the “tolerant.”

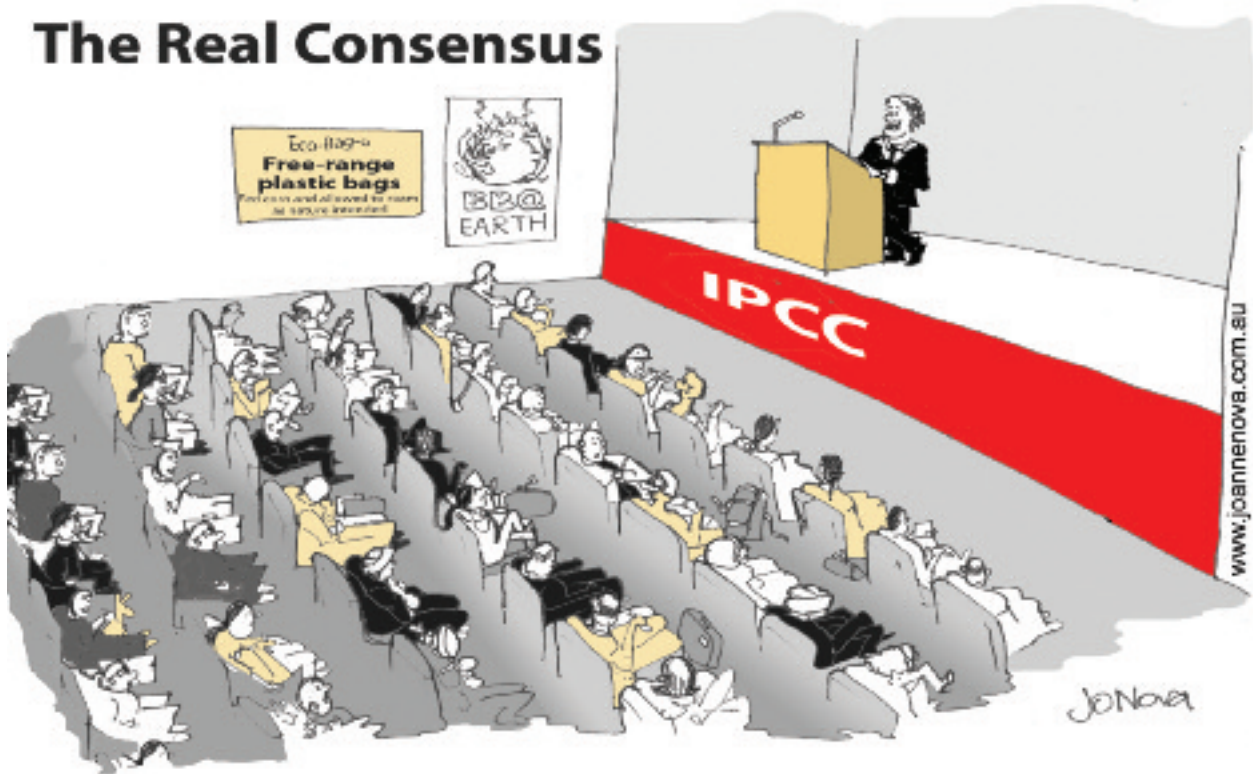
This month we also feature a rarity. We don’t publish a lot of poetry in *Reformed Perspective*. In fact, with the rarest of exceptions, we don’t publish any. This month, however, we present to you three poems that warrant an exception, or rather, we present to you three exceptional poems.

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# The Real Consensus



"Hands-up. Who thinks greenhouse gases have no effect, therefore we all need new jobs? Anyone?"

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# Readers' Response



Dear Editor,

In D. Allan Stares' article "18 Isn't Enough" (Jan., 2009) he makes his case for disenfranchisement. While he makes some valid points, I would have to disagree with him on several issues.

Mr. Stares does not think that, simply by turning 18, you should earn the right to vote. However, I would venture to say that in terms of knowledge, it is the younger members of our society who are probably most qualified to vote – they are the only ones *required by government* to study political and economic issues as well as current events!

Secondly, by exhorting Booker T. Washington's ideas, Mr. Stares implies that less intelligent people should be denied the right to vote because they are less able to make an informed decision. But education does not necessarily equate with the ability to make wise political choices. Those who pursue a higher level of education submit themselves to, and are influenced by, a culture which often encourages a left-wing view of the world.

If Mr. Stares had his way, a simple quiz would be administered before an election to gauge political knowledge. I myself would probably fail this quiz; however, I do not need to know the main policies of each political party to know, for example, that the Christian Heritage Party is the *only* pro-life, pro-family federal party in Canada.

By excluding some of the seemingly inept members of our society from voting, we would in essence be telling them that they are socially unequal and unfit to make wise decisions. But when Christ called his disciples, He chose simple, unschooled fishermen to follow Him. They, if given a test of Old Testament knowledge, probably would have failed. But that did not exclude them from following Jesus and later boldly proclaiming his message of salvation. Sounds like a pretty wise decision to me! Thanks be to God that He is in control and uses all for his glory.

Yes, Canada is a democracy, and Mr. Stares is correct in that we should not use our voting privilege to promote our own interests. But as long as we remain a democracy, we have to allow fair representation to all people, regardless of intellect.

Melanie Harthoorn  
Coaldale, Alberta



Dear Editor,

With interest I read your article "Fireproof: Love is never leaving your partner behind" in the February 2009 issue. However, I was disappointed with some of the comments and conclusions made in the review.

Unlike you, I did not find the acting, dialogue, and even the drama as being poor in the first 20 minutes. I enjoyed the movie from the outset. Further, in your review, you neglected to mention that virtually all of the actors were volunteers and also that the makers of the film endeavored to maintain integrity in every way so that even the "kissing" scene was done with Kirk Cameron's own wife. However, of more concern is your conclusion that *Fireproof's* theology is man-centered. The *Fireproof* I watched depicted a theology that was Christ-centered. Your conclusion was that "Caleb's motivation for turning to God seems to be based more on seeking help for his marriage than seeking reconciliation with His Holy Creator." I really didn't separate the two. I thought Caleb was convicted by his sin and therefore recognized his need for a Savior and that he, his wife and his parents recognized that their marriages were only saved because of God's work in their lives. Is it not the case that it's not what brings you to Christ but what keeps you with Him?

Finally, you gave the movie a 3 out of 5. . . 60%. For "enjoyment?" What would it have taken to have given it a 4 or 5? An Academy Award winner? It is unique indeed when a good Christian movie is made, but when it is, as Christians we should vigorously promote and recommend it. *Reformed Perspective* should have rated *Fireproof* a rare and absolute must-see and a clear 5 out of 5.

Tom Zietsma  
Stoney Creek, Ontario

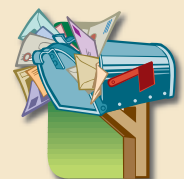


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# Nota Bene

## News worth noting

by Sarah Meerstra



### Ron Gray “wins” case

Allegations of “hate” laid against the Christian Heritage Party (CHP) and its former leader have been dropped and the case dismissed by the Canadian Human Rights Commission because, as the commission put it, “the content and context of the material which forms the basis of the complaint is not likely to expose a person or persons to hatred or contempt based on sexual orientation.”

No restitution will be made to Ron Gray or the CHP, for the more than \$50,000 in legal fees that were incurred as a result of this complaint.



already a criminal offence, and the defense against it belongs in criminal court, where the normal rules of evidence and the presumption of innocence apply. In a real court, these ridiculous charges would never have been admitted.”

Source: CHP News ([www.chp.ca](http://www.chp.ca)) January 27, 2009

Says Gray,

“The idea of protecting people and groups from ‘hate speech’ that incites to violence is still sound. But such incitement is

### Cutting kids to cut costs

Hundreds of millions of dollars of President Obama’s economic stimulus plan will go to providing federal funding to states to provide contraception and abortion services. Critics immediately questioned how such a measure would create new jobs or stimulate the economy. The justification? Advocates argue that it will indirectly lessen the burden on state budgets devoted to children’s health and education.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, though a professing Catholic, supported the measures for cost-cutting reasons. Catholic League President, Bill Donahue, commented, “We have reached a new low when high-ranking public office holders in the federal government cast children as the enemy.” It is a sad state when the solution to economic problems is “not by cutting expenditures, but by cutting kids.”

Source: LifeSiteNews.com January 26, 2009

### Dutch politician under fire

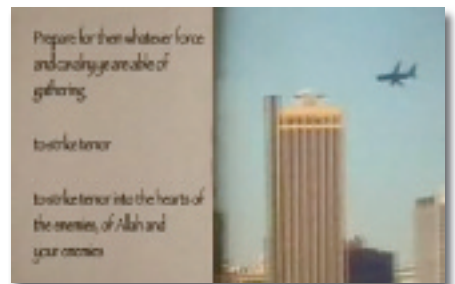
Dutch Member of Parliament Geert Wilder has been brought to trial for highlighting the darker side of Islam. The Dutch Court of Appeals in Amsterdam ordered a criminal prosecution of Wilders on charges of “incitement and hatred and discrimination.” This prosecution comes despite the fact that recent polls in the Netherlands suggest that a majority of Dutch citizens share many of his apprehensions about Islam and the ability or willingness of Islamic people to assimilate into European culture. Commentators have pointed out that now any Dutch person who speaks out against Islam could potentially be committing a crime.

“Apparently this is the Netherlands today,” Wilders commented. “If you speak out you might be prosecuted. To participate in public debate has become a dangerous activity.”

Ironically, no charges have been brought against Islamic groups who have issued death threats against Wilder for his comments.

Soon after the charges were announced the Dutch politician was also barred from entering Britain where he had been invited to show his 2008 short film *Fitna* to the House of Lords. The film pairs footage of violence done by Muslims with violent passages from the Koran. Wilders was barred entry after a Muslim member of the House of Lords, Baron Ahmed, threatened to bring a force of 10,000 Muslims to lay siege to the House if Wilders was allowed to speak.

Source: FrontPageMagazine.com January 22, 2009



### 300,000 invisible people

The *New York Times* clearly showed its ideological leanings when it offer absolutely no coverage of a 300,000 member pro-life march in Washington, DC this January.

“If 50,000 feminists had gathered on the Mall in D.C., to demand passage of the so-called Freedom of Choice Act,” one commentator observed, “it would have been above-the-page-one-fold cov-



Photo by Eric Martin and Rick Johnson

### We told you: same-sex marriage used to justify polygamy

Lawyers defending William Blackmore and James Oler, leaders of a polygamous sect near Bountiful, British Columbia, are appealing to the same-sex marriage laws to assert their clients’ right to marry multiple women. “If (homosexuals) can marry, what is the reason that public policy says one person can’t marry more than one person?” said lawyer Blair Suffredine in an Associated Press report.

Opponents of same-sex marriage have warned that this day would eventually come, although its proponents refused to draw such links. Authorities have, to this point, been reluctant to prosecute men such as Blackmore and Oler, for fear that the laws would not stand up under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Now, it looks as though the laws will be put to the test.

Source: LifeSiteNews.com, January 22, 2009



erage in *The Times*, accompanied by an aerial photo of the crowd.”

What did make the news that day? Articles on such breaking news as the meanings of road signs in the UK, the problem of smog in Boise, and the death of trees in the Western U.S. due to hot and dry conditions. Even among these, the largest pro-life march in the United States didn’t warrant the slightest mention.

Source: LifesiteNews.com January 26, 2009

### Charges dropped against BC teacher

The British Columbia College of Teachers has dropped all charges against Chris Kempling, the BC public school teacher who came under fire for speaking out in a local newspaper against homosexuality and the efforts to use the school system to normalize homosexuality.

Kempling has been battling the BCCT since 2001 and now says, “I am relieved my ordeal is finally over,” adding that he “could not thank enough” those who supported his battle for the right to religion and free speech.

Source: LifesiteNews.com February 4, 2009

### The ad that didn’t make the Super Bowl

NBC rejected a pro-life ad put together by a Catholic organization for this year’s Super Bowl broadcast.



The ad shows an ultrasound of an unborn baby and reads: “This child’s future is a broken home. He will be abandoned by his father. His single mother will struggle to raise him.

### A Reformed college in the Fraser Valley


Plans are underway for the creation of a Reformed post-secondary institution in British Columbia’s Fraser Valley. The initiative is motivated by the perceived need to encourage young people to continue to grow in faith and in knowledge of the Bible after high school and catechism instruction end, and to provide an alternative to other, more evangelical college options available to young people in the area.

Although such a college is still in the planning stages, a clear mission has been developed for the institution. Their mission statement reads as follows:

*The Reformed Bible College provides in-depth instruction in the Bible and in the defence of the Reformed faith. Growing knowledge of the Word of God together with an understanding of how to interpret and apply it in the contemporary world will help graduates to live Biblically. Academic instruction in the Bible and in how to promote and defend it in present day spiritual and social realities will help graduates to integrate faith and life, and will train men and women to fulfill their calling in church, family and vocation.*

Those interested in learning more can contact Peter deBoer at: #54, 20788 - 87th Avenue, Langley, BC V1M 3W7

Despite the hardships he will endure. . . this child. . . will become. . . the 1st African-American President.” It concludes with the tagline, “Life: Imagine the Potential.”

The TV network rejected the ad, saying that NBC and the NFL are not interested in advertisements involving “political advocacy or issues.” Despite this, however, the ad has become an Internet sensation on YouTube and by mid February has had nearly 1.5 million views. You can see that ad at [www.catholicvote.com](http://www.catholicvote.com). 

# THE FAMILY

## DO WE APPRECIATE IT LIKE WE SHOULD?

by Rene Vermeulen

As I was starting this article I came across an article on LifeSiteNews.com that talked of a new study touting the superiority of the traditional family unit. The study found that, “children have fewer problems at school and home when they live with both biological parents and frequently attend religious services.” Now that is no surprise to us, but it may be surprising to what extent the difference is made apparent. The survey found that “children in this group are five times less likely to repeat a grade, less likely to have behavior problems at home and school, and are more likely to be cooperative and understanding of others’ feelings.”

The family is a remarkable thing. It is attacked in the world, but fortunately in our Reformed circles, we appreciate it properly. Right?

Perhaps not. In an article by Rev. A. Veldman in *Una Sancta* (our equivalent to the Canadian *Clarion*) he wrote first about his observations of what he had experienced in his role as minister. He believed that many Christians are influenced by the society in which they live and our young are often influenced by the people they associate with on a daily basis. So, the pastor writes,

“Living in such a society, it becomes more and more difficult for God’s children to live holy lives and to still see God’s design when in the beginning He created man male

and female. God also ordained marriage as an institution in which male and female may come together in a wonderful unity, not in the first place to live for themselves but to also make their marriage instrumental to the furtherance of God’s kingdom, and this amongst other things also in receiving children from God’s hand.”

Receiving children, that has become somewhat questionable, hasn’t it? After all we are in charge. In the world in which we live we are able to determine matters. What I means is when my parents were having children some 60, 70 years ago there was little that could be done to determine whether or not to have children. Sure Reformed families were larger than those around us, but not always by much. Today everyone can get the pill or abortions too. We may recognize how wrong it is to do that, but Reformed families also seem to be getting smaller – we are being influenced by the world around us.

### It started with racism, and just kept going

An article that I came across recently in the Australian magazine *News Weekly* is called: “The menace of eugenics, yesterday and today.” The author of this article is a favorite of mine, one Bill Muehlenberg. Reading the article one realizes how much that is promoted today as normal is in fact an attack on what the Bible has to say about man and his activities.

Muehlenberg points out that the origin of eugenics and all that is associated with it must be found in the theories of Charles Darwin. The term "eugenics" (from the Greek term for "well-born" or "good birth") was coined in 1883 by English statistician and mathematician Sir Francis Galton (1822 -1911). While the Bible notes that we are all from one blood – we all come from Adam and Eve – Muehlenberg writes that,

"Galton, a cousin of Charles Darwin, believed that some races were superior to others, and that we could take evolution into our own hands by selectively breeding superior human beings. He said that 'blacks were genetically inferior, the Jews were parasitical, and that poverty was transmitted in the genes.'"

A student of Galton - Karl Pearson (1857-1936) – put this in even more explicit terms. He claimed:

"that blacks never produced great nations because of their genetic inferiority. He felt that the British were at the top of the Great Chain of being, with animals on the bottom, and Europeans, Chinese and blacks in between, in descending order. He spoke of the need for 'the sterilization of those sections of the community of small civic worth.'"

In the United States the leading proponent of eugenics was Margaret Sanger (1879-1966), who impacted the world in two huge ways. First, she influenced Adolph Hitler's own eugenic views. And second, she founded Planned Parenthood, which is the biggest promoter of abortion in the world. Later in his article Muehlenberg points out that Planned Parenthood International continues to fulfill Sanger's vision. It has supported China's one-child policy (under which couples who have a second child are often forced to abort) and in years past has called for compulsory abortion for out-of-wedlock pregnancies, compulsory sterilization of those who have already had


two children and tax penalties for existing large families.

This is the historical basis for the attack on the family. It started with racism, and now instead of focusing on other races, this hatred comes out against children, and large families.

### Are we buying into the world's attitude to the family?

Let me bring this all together by again quoting from Rev. Veldman:

"Often one hears comments like, 'it's quite a job to raise more than three or four children,' and so a couple may wonder whether they can handle this. Yet, when husband and wife share this task, also when the children are still young, it may give a different outlook on these matters. When the husband comes home after work and expects the meal to be ready, and after the meal he watches the news whilst the mother is busy cleaning the table, doing dishes and bathing the children, it should be no wonder that at a certain time she'll say, 'I can't handle more children.' Remember what we promised each other on the day of marriage, 'to be a help to each other always in all things that belong to this life and the life to come.' Yes also to this life: that helping hand in the kitchen, giving the children a bath, reading them a story, foregoing that game of golf on Saturday to have time for the family, and I could mention much more."

Let us all be aware what attacks there on families, especially Reformed families, and let us not be inclined to adopt the world's style of living, or their thinking. That means, beware of who you associate with, at work, at the university, and wherever you are in contact with people from the world. They may often not be aware that the ideas they have come from some strange influences. And we may not always be aware of what ideas and attitudes we are adopting from them. 



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*Jane DeGlint*  
(family, Christian living)

*James Dykstra*  
(history, education, computers)

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(media, politics, pro-life)

*Margaret Helder*  
(science, technology, creation)

*Sarah Vandergugten*  
(Christian living, women's roles)

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# Making business work with your conscience

by Mark Penninga and Jon Dykstra

At some of our recent ARPA Canada events across the country we introduced the audience to the following case study:

*A Reformed businessman who works in the Vancouver area sells insurance. As part of his job, he is required to provide marriage licences (that is just how it works in BC). Given the changed definition of marriage, it has happened a number of times that a same-sex couple came in for a marriage license. There is not always an option to refer them to someone else working in the office since sometimes he is the only person there who can do it.*

*How should he respond? Keep in mind that if he refuses he may be taken to a human rights tribunal where he would probably lose his case.*

- *Should he politely refuse, explaining that it goes against his religion and his conscience?*
- *If so, then would it be inconsistent to provide a licence for a heterosexual couple who has been divorced numerous times?*
- *If you think he should quit the job, does this also apply to other business people who may be asked to do work they are morally opposed to?*

This resulted in some heated discussions in the small groups that examined the issue. It became evident that this is an issue that more business people struggle with, regardless of whether they sell insurance or flowers, or provide services such as printing, plumbing, or photography.

## How did things get so complicated?

It used to be that if a business person did not want to provide a product or service because it went against his or her conscience, they had the freedom to do so. Things have changed quickly in Canada. Human rights commissions and tribunals have been aggressively punishing Christians who make decisions in accordance with their conscience and faith. These business people are called discriminatory, intolerant, and even hateful. The most recent case involves a doctor in Manitoba who looked “uncomfortable” when approached by two lesbians who wanted her to be their new family doctor. The patients were outraged and have now filed a complaint with both the

Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons and the Manitoba Human Rights Commission.

Cases like this often involve homosexuals who are upset that a Christian business person did not provide the product or service that they demanded. It is not simply that Christians are singling out homosexuals in this regard. Rather it seems to be the case that some homosexuals want to teach us a lesson and want to use the power of human rights commissions to do so.

The human rights commissions almost always side with the complainant and order a large fine as well as demand that the business person attend some classes to learn to become more tolerant. This has happened to a number of men from Reformed churches in recent years, as well as Christian ministries, pastors, magazines, and even a political party.

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***The time to deal with the matter is when a job is being considered***

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The threat of a human rights complaint scares most people into complying with demands that may go against their conscience. But what are we to do in these situations?

## Being consistent

One theme that has come out of the discussions at the ARPA Canada events is the need to be consistent when applying our faith to our business dealings. Regardless of whether we should be able to refuse our products and services, there is something wrong when we only do so when it pertains to the issue of homosexuality. If it is wrong to provide a marriage licence to a same-sex couple, it should be equally wrong to provide one to a couple that you know has been divorced numerous times. Our consciences have to be consistent with our faith and not simply to what turns us off.

### Making the decision in advance

Business people know that they live in a secular society and may have to make tough decisions about who they provide services or products for. It would go a long way if these issues were examined before we ever find ourselves in the situation.

Some jobs have requirements that will naturally lead to conflicts with our faith and consciences. If you accept a job in a gas station you will probably be asked to sell lottery tickets. Likewise, if you accept a job where you provide marriage licences to the public you will probably be asked to provide a licence for a situation that you disagree with, regardless of whether it is for homosexuals or heterosexuals (and in the not-so-distant future, possibly for marriages involving three or more people).

The time to deal with the matter is when a job is being considered. Are there options within the profession to withhold the service or product? If not, is it acceptable to refer some cases to other employees or workers? It may well be possible that an acceptable solution can be found at the beginning so that when the matter arises there are ways to deal with it that don't require a violation with your conscience or a potential human rights complaint. For example, pharmacists in many jurisdictions have agreements in place about not having to provide drugs that they believe are unethical (such as a morning-after pill).

Businesses can also develop policies that are available to the public which clearly explain which services and products they will not provide and why this is the case. Then, when an issue arises, they can refer the complaint to the policy to make it clear that they are acting in accordance with their faith or conscience rather than singling out this particular customer.

### Serving a sinner vs. aiding a sin

We have to also keep in mind that sometimes we should be providing a product or service to someone who may be living contrary to our faith. Doctors and physicians are expected to provide life-saving treatment to all patients, regardless of their lifestyle. Likewise, a plumber may have to do an emergency service call for a couple that is living together but not married. There are other ways in which we can speak up against a wrong lifestyle. We have to treat everyone with love and consideration, even if they are hostile to us. As Jesus said in Matthew 5, we are to love our enemies, and even pray for those who persecute us.

Still it's one thing to serve a sinner, and another to actually help them sin; the first is something we can and should do, while the second is clearly wrong. However, in our day-to-day business activities the distinction between the two might be quite hard to work out. So, for example, if a plumber refused to

do work for a lesbian because she is lesbian the plumber doesn't seem to have a solid Christian basis for his actions – we would not be able to interact with the world if we could not buy from and sell to sinners. But if a printing shop is asked to print brochures promoting gay marriage, we can understand why they might find this too much like aiding a sinner in his sin and want to refuse.

If this is a legitimate distinction – we can serve sinners, but we shouldn't aid them in their particular sin – then it seems a plumber might not run into many controversial situations. He installs baths and sinks and showers and drains: things everyone needs, and things we don't really have a reason to refuse to anyone. But other professions might lend themselves to controversy – a printing shop traffics in words and ideas expressed on paper, and some of those ideas are going to be good, and some of those ideas may well be so horrible we would want nothing to do with them.

In our culture today, all Christian businessmen should prepare themselves for this issue. Even the "safest" job may unexpectedly present these challenges – a plumber may be asked to do the plumbing in casino.

**The 2009 ARPA Challenge**

**Goal: 500 action items completed by year end. Click on the item below to record yours and help us reach the goal!**

- I sent in a letter to the editor
- I wrote a letter/email to a government official
- I had a meeting with a government official
- I filled in a government survey
- I did something else, not listed above

### ARPA Canada's Action Challenge

James 1:22 states  
*"Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. . . ."*

**We have to make sure that our actions testify to our beliefs. In this spirit, ARPA Canada is challenging the Reformed church community to complete at least 500 political action items in 2009.**

**To record your email, letter, phone call, visit, or other action item, just go to [www.ARPCanada.ca](http://www.ARPCanada.ca) and look for the Action Challenge on the left side of the page.**

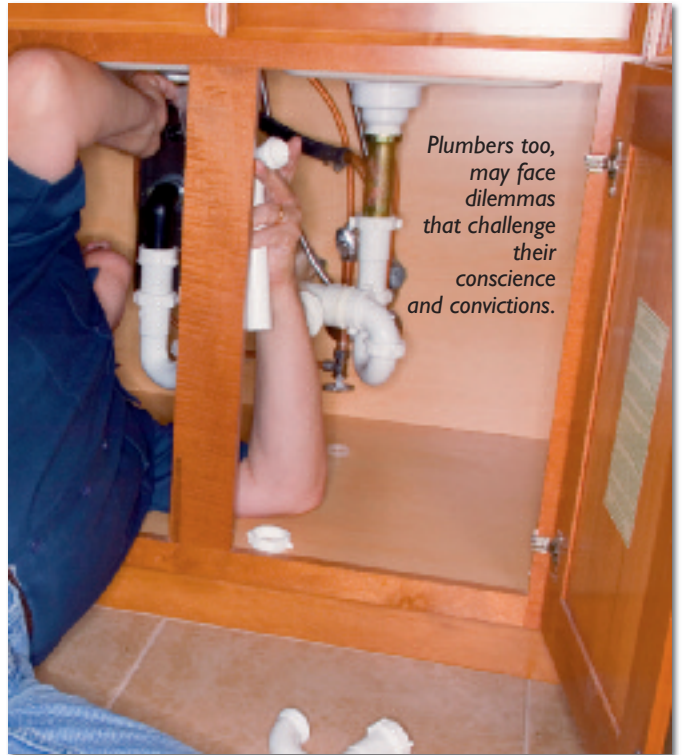
**Some controversies are inevitable**

Regardless of the preparation, sometimes we will still face situations where we have to make a decision on the spot. As Christians, we must never disobey our faith or conscience. We can gently explain our faith-based perspective and pray that God would cause it to be received with a soft heart. An example of this can be found in Acts 24 where Paul was brought before Governor Felix and declared “So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.”

If our response is instead met with a hard heart and somebody who wants to make an example out of you, it may well lead to a human rights complaint. Persecution for our faith is nothing new. Paul endured it often, and he provides a good example to follow. In Philippians 1:12-14 he writes:

“Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.”

It is important to learn from the Apostle Paul’s example of how to deal with legal and political troubles. Instead of running from them, he rejoiced that he was found worthy to be in chains for



*Plumbers too, may face dilemmas that challenge their conscience and convictions.*

Christ. He also used the opportunity to witness to authorities. Pastor Boissoin from Alberta is also using the human rights complaint and fine against him to witness to Christ (you can read about him on [www.ARPACanada.ca](http://www.ARPACanada.ca) or in the July/August 2008 *Reformed Perspective*).

When one of our brothers or sisters is being charged for living in accordance with their faith, it is important that we as a church community surround them with encouragement and support. Fighting a legal battle also costs a lot of money. We have to be prepared to make sacrifices for the truth. Organizations like the ECP Centre exist to help Christians out in these situations. Even if the outcome may be considered a loss in the eyes of the world, it is a victory for Christ if we consistently and steadfastly defend our faith.

**The bottom line**

Much of this would not even be an issue if it were not for the tyranny of Canada’s human rights commissions and the many politicians who refuse to do anything about them. In a country as diverse as Canada, it is essential that citizens be able to tolerate differences. Human rights commissions and tribunals are not promoting unity or tolerance. They are simply using an iron fist to promote their idea of what should be tolerated and what should not. Their ideas just so happen to consistently promote the religion of secular humanism.

Canadians need to stand up and urge their MLA’s, MPP’s and MP’s to take action against the human rights commission and tribunals. Even if you have already, please call or write your government official and urge them to action. You can go to [www.ARPACanada.ca](http://www.ARPACanada.ca) for an in-depth report on this matter, as well as more action suggestions. If you don’t have internet access, simply give us a phone call at 1-866-691-ARPA.



**Better to suffer for doing good. . .**

**“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. 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, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behaviour in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. It is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.”**

*1 Peter 3:15-17*



# Connecting to the Younger Generation

by Jane deGlint

The challenges caused by generation gaps are part of life. Yet, they vary substantially in size. In a traditional society they are usually well managed, since the gap is relatively small. The values and skills of one generation are confidently passed on to another. This is the more so if the treasured traditions are not influenced by outside influences. At a fairly young age and with relatively little effort the young readily take their place in the adult world. Together old and young uphold the values and maintain the standard of living. For centuries this was the structure that defined the Reformed churches, especially those located in isolated areas.

The challenges take on a more dramatic proportion in times of change. Not only does the shape of the gap become ragged and erratic, the tested methods of bridging it appear unworkable. The transfer of insight and skill becomes blocked. Traditions and convictions crumble, as the words of the old do not reach the ears of the young. This is the situation in many Reformed homes and churches today.

There are a variety of circumstances that have caused this dramatic change. Higher education has lost its elite status. It is now widely available and accessible to all layers of the population. Also many Reformed young people, including second and third generation immigrants, have crossed the threshold of the academic world. The more educated the younger generation becomes, the more likely they are to elevate themselves above their parents. Freeing themselves from the past with its fixed patterns and restrictive traditions, they set about to change the way things are done.

Moreover, a change in predominant worldview has turned our society around. The relatively old societal shift from God-centeredness to man-centeredness continues to make inroads among church members, especially the younger generation. Reason wins out over faith. Rights are demanded. Traditions are questioned. Obtaining wealth supersedes grateful service to God and man.

To make it more complicated, we are also part of a shift from a scientific to a spiritualistic worldview. Alongside blatant denials of the Creator, we encounter an acceptance of witchcraft and wizardry. Parents often find themselves at odds with the interests and activities of their children. Instead of a bridging, there seems to be a widening of the gap. The pre-

vious confidence of the young causes a powerless bewilderment in the old. The older generation is muted, the younger deaf.

Rapid technological advances have added their impact on traditional patterns in society. The avant-garde of technology is the new aristocracy. The faster these high-tech changes take place, the more likely it is that parents and other significant adults watch in confusion at how the gap widens. The technically savvy elevate themselves to establishers of a new tradition, where technology plays an important role. Technical expertise is in itself not a hindrance for church membership. However, it does interfere with the respect for spiritual leaders whose technical insight has stagnated in a previous age. It is not uncommon that a young person takes on the role of benevolent teacher for the outdated generation.

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***All these changes have not  
diminished the necessity of the  
older generation to provide  
spiritual guidance***

.....

In addition to all this, there is the changed attention span. Text scanning is more efficient in dealing with information overload than studious reading. Channel flipping makes it possible to watch three television programs simultaneously. Flashing images take the place of a calm documentary. Clearly, the learning process has adapted itself to a changed world. However, the new methods do not always match the teaching styles of the old.

But all these changes have not diminished the necessity of the older generation to provide spiritual guidance, nor have they lessened the willingness of the younger generation to be instructed in wisdom and truth. The changes have restructured our society and altered the learning methods, but they have not taken away the need for the youth to grow in faith. God's faithfulness still extends through the generations. Children of believers are receptive to the teachings of their Covenant Lord.



They are willing to learn the steps of the Spirit. They hunger for good spiritual food, which must be prepared for them by their parents and church leaders.

Yes, the onus of bridging the gap lies with the older generation. They will have to learn not to take the superior attitude of the younger generation personally. They will have to understand that their articles, books and sermons might at times be boring to those with different learning and listening skills. They will have to acquaint themselves with the societal changes.

On the other hand, there are things that the older generation must not change. They must continue to love the youth of the church. They must stay involved with the joys and disappointments of the younger generation. They must remain convinced that the Lord of the covenant has appointed them to teach the youth how to walk in his ways. Their passion for reaching out to the coming generation must be expressed unhindered, even in their most senior years.

Out of this love and passion the older generation will learn to listen to the young generation. They hear many good things. Today's youth performs well in the electronic age. Many accept the responsibilities of life, such as keeping up with schoolwork, holding a job, raising a family. But the attentive older person also observes that several young people run stuck in their spiritual life. Here and there the complaint is voiced that the church does not invigorate enough, that the words spoken from the pulpit do not come across, that there is a fair bit of formality and even hypocrisy among the members of their congregation.

These are serious obstacles. It takes wisdom and discretion to deal with them. It would not be beneficial to react in extreme ways. We cannot throw out all traditions, nor can we demand unconditional obedience to the accepted rules. But we must be willing to evaluate why and how we pass on the Word.

It becomes clear that the solution does not lie in a complete overhaul of the worship service. The Lord and his Word belong in the centre. The congregational singing is not entertainment, but worship. These two premises become in fact the pillar that

forms the foundation for bridging the gap. All generations of believers find their joy in worship.


It is apparent that not every sermon reaches all the people in the pews. The reason for this inefficiency could lie in the contents, the preacher or the hearer. But even if the hearer is willing and the preacher is gracious, there remains a difficulty. The younger generation is unable to process the flow of words.

Placing ourselves in the mindset of a contemporary young person, we understand what kind of Word administration would grab and hold his attention. It might be beneficial to read the text first. After a very short introduction, possibly a reflection of the path the minister traveled in choosing the text and coming to grips with it, the theme for the sermon is given. The congregation responds in song. Several sections of the Bible are read. If the theme was concise, the young person will easily pick it up in each section. His mind and heart are set in motion, which can be expressed in another verse of a Psalm or hymn. The way has been paved for the sermon. After the text has been properly anchored in its context, the minister holds it up in the light of the Scriptures. Numerous facets start to sparkle. Unexpected images light up. Bible texts receive a new dimension or an added layer. The minister is again surprised himself about all the lines he saw, and the connections, and the glimpses of glorious worship and eternal service.

After the young and the old worshipped together at the throne of God, they become more appreciative of each other. The seniors express admiration for the way young Christian men and women take on the challenges of living in a humanistic society. The young adults discover how the older generation has grown in wisdom through many trials and struggles. Having seen this godly example, the younger generation becomes eager to learn more about those who went before them. Mutual suspicion transforms into mutual appreciation. The younger generation becomes eager to learn more about the times and circumstances of those who walked life's trails before them. The older becomes curious about technological advances.

This process of mutual recognition takes time, as it has through the generations. There will be setbacks and disappointments. But we have the promise that the Lord will be faithful. Whether the generation gap is predictable or erratic, the Lord will teach the old how they have to reach out to the young, and he will prepare the young to be receptive to the words of the old. The message of truth is the pillar on which all generations can safely build their lives as children of the Most High.

*"Blessed is the man who fears the LORD,  
Who finds great delight in his commands.  
His children will be mighty in the land;  
The generation of the upright will be blessed."*

Psalm 112:1-2 

# Tolerance

by Jay Adams

The common word on the streets today is “tolerance.” That idea, however, is wrong – very wrong. . . dead wrong! There’s no such thing as tolerance. No one is tolerant. Tolerance is a myth; indeed, it is a dangerous myth. Anyone who claims to stand for tolerance, anyone says he is tolerant – whether he’s aware of it or not – is lying.

*“Wait a minute. I disagree. I’m tolerant, no matter what you say. And, furthermore, I resent being called a liar.”*

You’re a liar!

*“Now, hold on. How can you say that? You don’t even know me. How can you call me a liar?”*

Because you’re lying – that’s what liars do.

*“It simply isn’t right of you to pre-judge me, your reader, when you have never met me.”*

Oh? Why not? You seem to be agitated over a simple statement that I made out there in the blue. I didn’t ask you to chime in. You put yourself in the category of liars.

*“I can’t have people going around calling others liars without challenging them. After all, by implication, since I’m a tolerant person, you included me.”*

If you are truly tolerant of differing points of view you wouldn’t go about challenging those who say something that disagrees with yours. If you’re truly tolerant, then why don’t you cheerfully agree that I have every right to go about telling your friends and relatives that you’re a liar?

*“That wouldn’t be right. I don’t like people to make unfounded judgments. And, besides it would be a nasty thing to do.”*

Are you saying that you’re intolerant of such a claim? Or of anyone who makes it?

*“No. I’m tolerant of views that differ from mine.”*

Then, you wouldn’t mind if I talk to your friends – right?

*“Wrong.”*

What makes it wrong to do so?

*“The fact that it’s simply untrue.”*



***“You  
- yes, you -  
are intolerant!”***

But I say that it is true.

*“Let’s stop this bickering right now. Would you be satisfied if I conceded that you have the right to be wrong?”*

Ah! So, you’re so tolerant that you are ready to tolerate “error” “to make it go away?”

*“That isn’t so. I accept only those things that are true.”*

So you don’t tolerate error? It doesn’t matter to you whether others are in error or not so long as you are right? Does that mean you are tolerant of error in others and, therefore, of what you call my lies and my position of intolerance?

*“I want others to know the truth too.”*

Then, why don't you accept the truth that you're a liar?

*"Because it's not true."*

'Tis.

*"Taint."*

'Tis.

*"Prove it."*

OK. You claim that you're tolerant when we know that it's not true. So you say/deny that you tolerate error in yourself/others.

*"There you go – calling me a liar again! And, I certainly don't know that it's true."*

All this discussion, and you haven't yet gotten the point? I say you're a liar simply because you've already demonstrated that you are. You claim to accept truth alone, yet you won't admit that you're a liar or that you're intolerant. That's two lies right there.

*"You're impossible!"*

That's number three.

*"OK, there's one thing I can't tolerate – you! You're intolerable."*

Good. First thing you've said that's right so far. You're coming along. But since it's true, that too proves you're a liar. You said that you are tolerant, but let me ask you, are you intolerant not only of my intolerance but of intolerance in general? Seems that a tolerant person would have to be in order to be consistent.

*"Well. . . ."*

See, that's the reason why anyone who claims to be tolerant isn't. You said that you resented being called a liar. That sounds like an intolerant attitude to me. You can't tolerate intolerance or you're tolerating what you claim to abhor. Put it the other way: you claim to abhor what you ought to tolerate – if you were truly tolerant. That position is contradictory in itself. To be intolerant of intolerance is contradictory. You can't have it both ways. Of course, you can lie about it. Let's move on. Why do you think that intolerance is dangerous?

*"Don't think that it is."*

Every Christian does. Are you a Christian?

*"Yes."*

Jesus said that He was the way to the Father (if you remember) and that nobody can come to the Father but by Him. The

apostle also said that there is no other Name under the sky by which a person may be saved—but only by Jesus' Name.

*"Yes, but. . . ."*

No 'buts' about it, so far as the Bible is concerned. No one can be saved except by Jesus Christ. All other ways are erroneous, indeed, nothing but lies. So they are dangerous, leading people astray, away from the only true way to God. Right?

*"But I tolerate other people's views."*

Why? That's dangerous. It's dangerous to them. The idea again is that you can tolerate error in others, but not in yourself, right? It doesn't matter what happens to them—just so you can be tolerant. Is that it?

*"That's not fair."*

Who's talking about fairness? By what standard do you determine whether or not something is fair? But, let's go on rather than getting into a round of that. Do you believe in Christian missions?

*"Of course."*

Then you believe in intolerance. The whole concept of missions is based on a doctrine of intolerance – intolerance of the evil religions of men that lead them to eternal damnation. Moreover, and of greater importance, these false religions dishonor the true God. Missionaries believe that false beliefs must be destroyed before they destroy those who hold them. God doesn't tolerate false belief or unbelief. Read Romans 1.

*"I have read it. But we can be polite."*

Of course, often we can. But who's talking about politeness? And by the way, tell me, did Jesus tolerate the Pharisees and the Sadducees?

*"Well. . . ."*

Do you remember some of the things He said to them and about them?

*"Certainly."*

Was Jesus always polite when he did? Why are you tolerant when Jesus wasn't? You're a Christian. Follow Him!

*"I give up. You're hopeless!"*

You mean intolerant?

*Dr. Jay Adams is Dean of the Institute for Nouthetic Studies and the author of more than 100 books. This is from his blog which can be found at ([www.nouthetic.org](http://www.nouthetic.org)).*



# TWO TYPES OF TOLERANCE

## The world is willing to tolerate just about anything. . . except the truth

by Jon Dykstra

When it comes to tolerance there's just one thing that Christians and the rest of the world can agree on: the bare bones definition. Open any dictionary and we can find a pretty straightforward explanation of *what* tolerance is – Dictionary.com says it is, “a permissive attitude toward opinions and practices that differ from one's own.” Tolerance is offering a measure of respect to people we differ with.

But when we started debating about what it is we should tolerate, and to what extent, and why we should be doing it, there's no agreement. It turns out the world has a very different basis for tolerance than we Christians.

### Equal part indifference and relativism

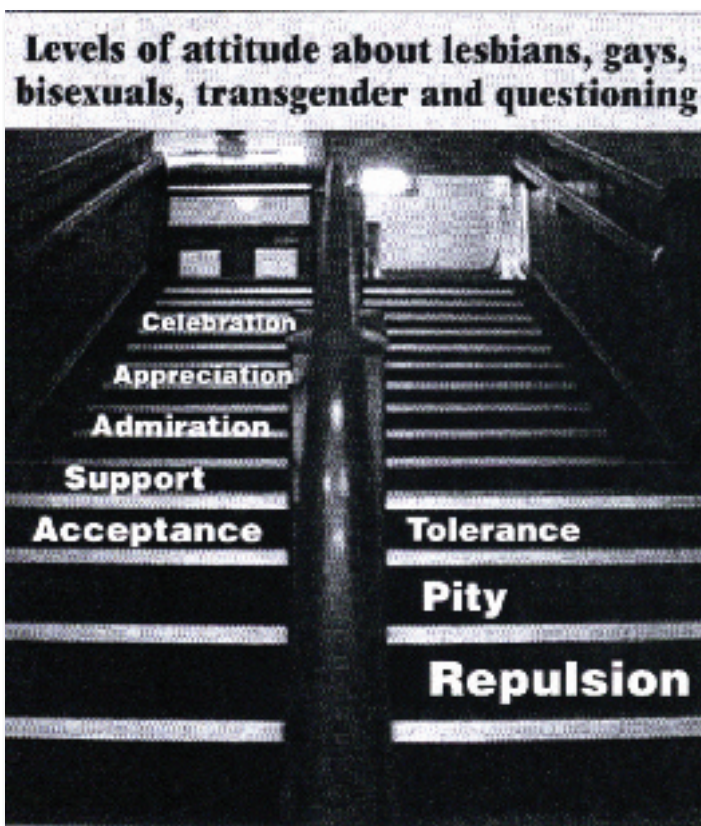
Theirs is a tolerance based on relativism and indifference. We should show respect to others because their ideas are as valid as our own and because. . . well, why not?

This leaves the world eager to embrace everyone willing to be equally indifferent and just as relativistic. They'll tolerate just about anything. . . except us.

Christians come off as quite obstinate under this worldly understanding of tolerance. We don't believe all ideas are equally valid; we believe in absolute truth – that Christ is *the* Truth. To make matter worse, we take our beliefs quite seriously and won't keep quiet about them. Those are two sins that when combined simply can't be tolerated.

*This handout from the British Columbia Teacher's Federation shows the end goal of the world's relativistic "tolerance." If all views are equally valid, then tolerating a view should eventually and inevitably lead to celebrating that view. After all, if all views are equally valid, there's no reason not to celebrate all views.*

*(Handout 8, Breaking the Silence – January 2009; British Columbia Teachers' Federation)*



That's why the world can celebrate the right of man to wear women's clothing to his workplace – cross-dressing is just another way of dressing, no better or worse than any other – but can't tolerate a Saskatchewan marriage commissioner who wasn't willing to marry two homosexuals because it violated his conscience. Because Orville Nichols believes that what God says about marriage is true – that it is intended for one man and one woman – and true for everyone, and because he takes his beliefs seriously, he had to be fined.

The world's relativistic tolerance can be seen in the BC government's recent capitulation to two activists who wanted to make the school curriculum more "gay-friendly." The government gave in because they viewed homosexuality as just another lifestyle, no better or worse than any other.

Under this sort of tolerance Christians can cause controversy just by praying "in Jesus' name." When Pastor Rick Warren was invited to offer a prayer at President Obama's inauguration commentators spent the week before the

event debating whether he would dare bring up Jesus' name. In the US and Canada there is growing pressure that public prayers be inclusive. It's fine to call on "God" or "the Creator" or a "Supreme Deity" because these are all titles that Muslims, Jews and many other faiths can agree on as well. But if a Christian pastor invited to make a public prayer decides to eliminate any possible confusion as to just who he is praying to, by invoking Jesus' name, then the relativists will be up in arms. That sort of a prayer is too exclusive – it's too arrogant.

Under this sort of tolerance Christians who take their beliefs seriously will always come off as intolerant.

### Self-contradictory

But if we take a closer look at the world's sort of tolerance we'll see that even they can't measure up to their own standard.

In his Townhall.com article *The Intolerance of Tolerance* Christian apologist Greg Koukl gave the details of an encounter he had with a high school class in Des Moines. He started off his presentation to them by writing a single sentence on the board:

*"All views have equal merit and none should be considered better than another."*

That got all the heads in the room nodding in agreement. When Koukl finished writing the first sentence he quickly followed it with a second line that wasn't as well received:

*"Jesus is the Messiah and Judaism is wrong for rejecting that."*

Hands flew up. "You can't say that," one student protested, "That's disrespectful." The class pointed out that this second statement violated the first one. What the students didn't realize is that the first statement also violated itself.

"I pointed to the first statement and asked, 'is this a view, the idea that all views have equal merit and none should be considered better than another?' They agreed. Then I pointed to the second statement – the 'intolerant' one – and asked the same question: 'Is *this* a view?' They studied the sentence for a moment. Slowly my point began to dawn on them. . . . If all views have equal merit then the view that Christians have a better view on Jesus than Jews is just as true as the idea that Jews have a better view on Jesus than Christians. But this is hopelessly contradictory. If the first statement is what tolerance amounts to, then no one can be tolerant because 'tolerance' turns out to be gibberish."

### True tolerance

So if the world's tolerance is nonsense, then what good reason do we have to be tolerant?

Well, if we look to the Christian perspective we'll find that not only do we have a completely different motivation for tolerance, our version of tolerance actually makes sense.

We Christians don't treat all *ideas* as equally worthy of respect – instead we treat *people* that way. It's clear that some ideas are foolish and shouldn't be respected (you want to teach Grade One kids about homosexuality? Certainly not!). But we are all made in God's image (Gen. 1:26), we are all commanded

to love our neighbor as ourselves (Mark 12:31), and we are all told to "do to others what you would have them do to you" (Matt. 7:12). Those are three good reasons to act respectfully to people we differ with, even people who hold to some foolish ideas.

And while the world's tolerance is based on the relativistic notion that there is no truth, Christians know there really is Truth out there to be encountered. So we tolerate the frank exchange of ideas, even dumb ideas, to better allow people to seek after the Truth. That's why Reformed pastor Douglas Wilson was happy to conduct several debates with avowed atheist Christopher Hitchens. Hitchens may have some very wrong ideas, but Wilson tolerates them in the hopes that their ongoing discussion will point people both to the error of Hitchens' sort of thinking, and the Truth of Wilson's Christian beliefs.

Today if you reject someone else's *ideas* you are accused of disrespecting the *person*. But true tolerance recognizes that not all ideas are created equally, but that instead all people are owed a modicum of respect. True tolerance allows for disagreement, but dictates that in so far as it is up to us, this disagreement should be explored in a civil manner.

### How to respond

The words "intolerant" and "Christian" have become synonymous in our culture. When we won't congratulate homosexuals for their sinful lifestyle, or when we protest against abortions we're compared to goose-stepping Nazis, or sheet-wearing Klansmen. We're called intolerant, and the label sticks, not because it's fair, but because it's used often, loudly, and never justified.

"Insults," one philosopher noted, "are the arguments used by those who are in the wrong." We're called names because those that insult us have no real case to make; instead of reasons, all they have are rants. The best way to respond to unfair insults – and sort – is to ask for a definition.

"You just called me intolerant – what do you mean by that? Why am I intolerant?"

"Because you said homosexuality was wrong!"

"I'm intolerant because I disagree with someone?"

"Yes!"

"Well, you're disagreeing with me – doesn't that make you intolerant?"

The best response to irrationality is to expressly ask for the reasoning behind it – that's how we expose it for the foolishness it is (Prov. 26:5).

### Conclusion

The world's tolerance is based on the relativistic notion that there is no truth, so all *ideas* are equally valid. Christians base their tolerance on the sure knowledge that all *people* should be treated with respect, and that there is indeed Truth, which can be found by those who seek it.

We need to talk to the world about tolerance and contrast the Christian basis for tolerance with their own.



# Today I Jumped

WE ALMOST DIDN'T GO:

- A SOCCER GAME OF 6-YEAR-OLDS,  
A SANDWICH GRABBED AT HOME,  
A SHOPPING MALL TO BUY SOME BOOKS,  
A STOP TO WATCH SOME BASKETBALL –

“OMA, SHALL WE SKIP THE BEACH?”

“NO, PLEASE, I'D LIKE TO SEE THE LAKE.”

AH, YES, A LATE SEPTEMBER SWIM!

I TOSSED ASIDE MY FAITHFUL CANE  
AND SHUFFLED THROUGH THE SAND.

I WALKED INTO THE RIPPLING WAVES  
TILL WATER REACHED MY WAIST.

I TURNED TO FACE THE FOLKS ON SHORE –  
THUMBS UP AND SMILES AND CHEERS.

THEN, IN A FLASH, A WHITECAP FORMED  
AND BUMPED ME FROM BEHIND.

IT MADE ME JUMP!

BOTH FEET WENT UP AT ONCE!

IT NUDGED ME UP – AND UP AGAIN!

I HADN'T JUMPED IN YEARS!

MY TOES TINGLED

MY BODY BOUNCED

MY EYES CRIED

MY SOUL SANG.

FOR A FLEETING, MOVING MOMENT  
THE NIMBLE ME RETURNED.

I REMEMBERED AND REJOICED!

Today, I jumped!

*Patricia Haveman*

# The Blackbird

I once saw a blackbird,  
The common, small blackbird,  
Flap slowly – his wingspread  
Not wide. Heard him sing.  
Raucous treading of  
Notes that denied  
Melodies.

Blue-black feathers he had,  
Glossy smoothness he had,  
That forgave coarseness of  
Speech and saddened, hoarse  
Singing. Soft glittered  
His eyes. Blackbird  
Melodies.

Photo by Willie Lunchmeat

*Christine Farenhorst*

# Gateway to Heaven

A gateway built for a soul so small,  
A very small path, for the one, not for all.  
I hear that it happens to many a soul,  
A journey so short, but a journey in full.

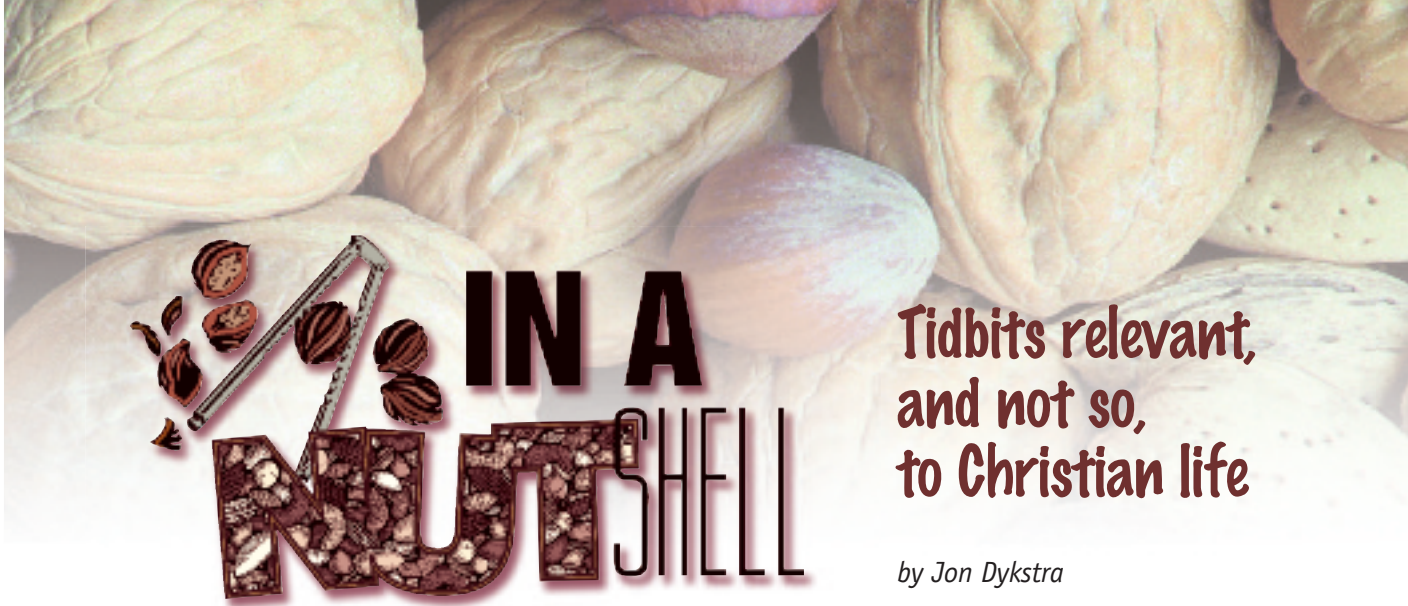
There weren't any fingers, there weren't any toes.  
There weren't any memories of joys or of woes.  
There was only life, and in life, our love.  
And then came that gateway, that took him above.

I don't know his gender, I don't know his name.  
And he didn't know what to make of his frame.  
Life is a gift, and God is its giver.  
His life was given, and then it was over.

Such a small soul. Such a small gate.  
Such a small child with such a small fate.  
Through our own tears, I looked up and smiled.  
God used our marriage to bring Him a child.

Lord, in this moment of pain in our lives  
Fill us with comfort. Silence our "Whys?"  
Look on this little one, take care of him.  
Bring him to heaven. Please Lord. Amen.

*By a father, who together with his wife, lost their baby in the womb,  
and written in response to Gloria Faber's October 2002 article  
"And we gave her a name. . . The Experience of Miscarriage"*



## Tidbits relevant, and not so, to Christian life

by Jon Dykstra

### Pious sounding evasion

When evangelist Ray Comfort first heard the St. Francis of Assisi quote, “Preach the Gospel; where necessary, use words” it, rather ironically, left him “upset beyond words.”

This quote is used to encourage a type of “lifestyle evangelism” that involves “less talk, and more walk.” Instead of preaching the Word to their gentle friends and neighbors, Christians are supposed to just let their light shine by living good lives. Now there is something to this idea – God does tell us we can impact the unbelieving with the way we live our lives (1 Peter 3:1-2). But that doesn’t negate the need to preach the Word using actual words (Romans 10:14).

On his website ([www.raycomfort.com](http://www.raycomfort.com)) Comfort exposes the empty piety of the St. Francis quote with a short story about a refugee camp. In this camp thousands of children were on the brink of starving to death even though there was food enough to give them. Why weren’t they being given the food? Because one of the aid workers had held up a sign that said: “Feed the starving children. Where necessary, use food.”

Such an approach would obviously be insane, but, Comfort insists, no more so than thinking we can preach the Gospel without using words.

### Only so much green to go around

Assume that global warming is rampant – we’ve seen a global cooling trend over the last 10 years, but still, let’s pretend Al Gore is right. And further, let’s assume that there is something we can do about global warming. Would we want to?

Conservative estimates put the cost of complying with the Kyoto Protocol at more than \$150 billion US per year. That’s a lot of money, and there are a lot of other things that could be done with it. The Copenhagen Consensus Center ([www.copenhagenconsensus.com](http://www.copenhagenconsensus.com)), a group made up of a handful of Nobel Laureates and other experts, has compared Kyoto’s costs with what else the money might be used for.

- \$1 billion per year spent on insecticide treated bed-nets and malaria treatments would save 500,000 lives.
- \$200 million spent on getting low cost drugs to the world poorest health systems could avert 300,000 heart attacks.
- It would cost just \$60 million to get micronutrients like vitamin A and zinc to 80 per cent of the world’s 140 million undernourished children.
- For just \$286 million it would be possible to get salt iodization and iron fortification – a given in the western world – to 80 per cent of the populations most affected by these deficiencies.
- For \$1 billion per year a million lives could be saved in the Third World through tuberculosis identification and treatment.

There is only so much wealth to go around, so we need to prioritize our spending. Should global warming be at the top of our list when there are so many other pressing problems that can be addressed with that money?

### “Earth thrown in”

“If you read history you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were those who thought most of the next. The apostles themselves, who set out on foot to convert the Roman Empire, the great men who built up the Middle Ages, the English evangelicals who

abolished the slave trade, all left their mark on earth, precisely because their minds were occupied with Heaven. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this one. Aim at Heaven and you will get earth ‘Thrown in.’ Aim at earth and you will get neither.”

– C.S. Lewis

### Obamania

Obamania has gone far beyond respect. The throngs who turned out for Barack Obama’s inauguration January 20 weren’t there for the ushering in of a new president – they were there to welcome a savior. When Lincoln was president there were also some who regarded him too highly, but Lincoln knew he was no god. Once, when he was hosting a reception at the White House an elderly guest cried out, “Mr. President, I’m from up in New York State where we believe that God Almighty and Abraham Lincoln are going to save this country.” Lincoln’s response was to the point. “My friend,” he replied, “you’re half right.”

On his blog ([www.dougwilson.com](http://www.dougwilson.com)) Douglas Wilson has also taken to task Obamania. Wilson writes:

“[Obama needs to] rebuke all of it, and give glory to God instead. One time at an Elvis concert, a row of young girls stood up in the middle of the concert with a long banner they had made which said, ‘Elvis is king.’ Elvis stopped, pointed at them, and said, ‘No. Jesus Christ is king.’ They all sat down, abashed, which several millions of politico-idolaters today need to be taught how to do. And things have gotten pretty bad when Elvis is a model we have to look up to.”

# PICKING YOUR POCKET FOR A PERFORMANCE

## Why we need to stop compulsory taxpayer arts funding

by Michael Wagner

One of the most high profile controversies during Canada's recent federal election was the issue of government funding for the arts. Prime Minister Stephen Harper defended a decision of his government to reduce such funding by \$45 million, saying that "ordinary people" did not benefit from it. His comments were widely attacked by the arts community, especially writers, actors, and moviemakers who generally benefit the most from government generosity.

Margaret Atwood, arguably Canada's most famous living writer, had an article published in the *Globe & Mail* newspaper in which she castigated Harper for reducing arts funding. He had only reduced the funding by a relatively small amount, but from the tone of her article one would almost think that he had eliminated it altogether.

### Rebutting herself

The funny thing is, much of the evidence she offers to support government funding actually seems to suggest that such funding is unnecessary. She says that "ordinary people" do, in fact, enjoy the arts, and she points to things like book clubs, dancing classes, participation in choirs, garage bands, quilting, gardening, and home woodworking as artistic activities that millions of Canadians like to do, as evidence of her view. Because Canadians enjoy the arts, the government should continue to fund the arts.

Ironically, many of the activities she lists are not funded by the government. So the evidence would seem to suggest that these arts don't, in fact, require government money. Why fund activities that Canadians are already doing on their own?

The argument normally runs that without government funding, the arts in Canada will wither and die. Atwood's evidence suggests that without government funding the arts will nevertheless flourish because so many Canadians enjoy them. Or at least some of the arts will flourish, namely, those that a sufficient number of people genuinely like.

Atwood's most bizarre argument against funding cutbacks is that "Every budding dictatorship begins by muzzling the artists, because they're a mouthy lot and they don't line up

and salute very easily." In other words, not supporting artists with taxpayer's money is the equivalent of "muzzling" them – if you don't subsidize, you are censoring. This is a bewildering line of reasoning. If it were true, it would mean that Christians, too, are being muzzled since we are not funded to spread our message.

### Why do we have to support our opponents?

More importantly for Christians, however, is that sometimes government arts funding is used to promote evil. There was controversy over this issue earlier this year when the federal government considered placing conditions on Canadian movies that received funding. The Christian activist group Canada Family Action Coalition was in the forefront of the effort to enact restrictions on the kinds of movies receiving government funds because some movies that had received taxpayer money included soft porn. Why should taxpayers be forced to finance pornography? This isn't the only time that government has funded immoral "art."

There was controversy in Alberta in the 1990s when it was discovered that the provincial government was funding lesbian and homosexual themed drama performances. There was also a big controversy in the United States in 1989 when it was revealed that the US government had funded anti-Christian and homosexual themed "art."

From a Christian perspective, this kind of abuse of taxpayers' money provides good grounds for questioning arts funding altogether. Various forms of immoral sexuality are very much in style among the media and entertainment elites of society, so the funding they receive for their art will often be used to further their anti-Christian worldview. Let them finance their art with their own money. They can promote their worldview on their own dime, like you and me.

### The argument for

In Canada the federal government spends a great deal of money supporting various aspects of the arts. Publishing is one cultural industry where this money is spent. Many Canadian

writers and publishers receive government grants. Is this really a good thing for Canadian literature?

Due to Canada’s relatively small population, it doesn’t really constitute a big enough market for local books. It would be difficult for Canadian writers to earn their livelihood writing for such a small market. To ensure that there is a vibrant community of writers in Canada, the federal government subsidizes many of them and the publishers that publish their books. In this way there is an ever-increasing supply of specifically Canadian literature. Canadians can read stories about their own country rather than stories about Britain or the USA, countries with large domestic book markets. So there is, in a sense, a convincing rationale behind the government subsidy of Canadian literature.

**More arguments against**

However, there are also good reasons to challenge government funding of Canadian literature. There is the basic free market argument that if enough Canadians actually want Canadian literature, then they will buy Canadian books and thereby sustain Canadian writers. If Canadians aren’t willing to buy enough Canadian books, it’s because they don’t want them. It’s wrong for the government to compel Canadians to pay for these books through their tax dollars.

But there is also a good literary reason to oppose the government subsidies, namely, that the subsidies lead to the writing of low quality material. Literary critic John Metcalf discusses this in his book *Freedom From Culture: Selected Essays 1982-92*. Ironically, although he argues against government subsidies for books, this book itself was published thanks to various government subsidies.

Because the subsidized books bring income to their publishers regardless of their actual sales in the market, there is less incentive for them to be done well.

“These subsidized books do not have to break even or show a profit. They do not have to be well designed or beautifully printed; they do not have to be well advertised; they do not have to be vigorously sold. The failure to reach an audience with them carries no consequences; in the next financial year failure will be rewarded with further subsidy.”

So the lack of market incentives results in a lower quality of product.

The actual literary value of this subsidized literature suffers notably. The availability of government money for publishing,

“results in a flood of books which would not be published in a normal literary environment. It leads to a progressive and inevitable dilution of literary quality and contributes to a corruption of taste and a weakening of critical standards.”

If a writer must satisfy readers to earn a living, he must write well. That is, in a free market situation he or she must produce books that others want to buy or get a different job. However, if he or she is being subsidized by the government, and will not suffer financial consequences for poor writing, a strong incentive for the highest quality writing has been removed. Or as Metcalf puts it, “Subsidy subsidizes bad writing.”

In this respect, a lot more poor quality writing is published as a direct result of government funding of Canadian writers. Subsidy has “produced crates of unreadable and unread books.”

To have a genuine national literature there needs to be a genuine audience. And for the most part there is, at best, a very small audience for these books. Metcalf says that the federal government granting agency, the Canada Council, “has put into place a parody of the entire machinery of a literary culture; for the benefit of no readership, subsidized books are reviewed in subsidized journals by subsidized writers.” What’s wrong with this picture?

**A worthy goal pursued badly**

Having a national literature for Canada is a worthy goal. Every nation needs its own stories. Paying Canadians to write stories is basically the government solution to this need – there is now a body of Canadian literature. But according to Metcalf, it’s not very high-quality literature for the most part. In his view the writing of literature should be left to the market. Certainly there would be less Canadian literature in such a scenario. But it would likely be higher quality literature. The pressure to please an audience is a powerful incentive to write well. Government funding removes or at least diminishes the significance of that incentive.

There are, therefore, good reasons for Christians to question government arts funding. In some cases, at least, it’s probably unnecessary. As Margaret Atwood points out, many Canadians are involved in artistic activities simply for their own enjoyment. At other times, government funding is used to produce “art” that attacks Christian moral standards. And finally, it appears that some of the cultural products that result from government funding are not very good.



.....

***The argument normally runs that  
without government funding,  
the arts in Canada will wither and die***

.....

# Little Pelagians

by Natika Spaanderman

“Sinful? You believe that at your age you are sinful?”

Just recently I was in hospital recovering from open-heart surgery to close a hole in my heart. At the age of 19 and having been brought up as a Christian, I was pretty convinced that I, along with the rest of the world, was sinful. Yet here was the hospital’s pastor introducing himself as a Christian and telling me that I was certainly not so.

I was surprised – to me it seems so obvious we live in a world of sin. All around us we see its effects. Poverty, sickness, natural disasters, environmental problems, drug and alcohol abuse, crime, abortion, violence and much more indicate to us that man did indeed fall very deep into sin in Paradise. However, this pastor didn’t see it. He told me he believed Man is born innocent, free of sin.

## Centuries ago

I remember a little bit of my church history, so I knew that this pastor’s beliefs had very ancient origins. Pelagius, an important historical figure but dangerous heretic was mainly responsible for the spread of this false doctrine. In the early 400s Pelagius denied that man was born sinful – he denied original sin – teaching instead that man is born innocent, with a free will to do good, and is therefore able to choose God. His teachings were condemned by the General Council of Ephesus in 431 and continued to be rejected as heresies throughout history.

That’s why I thought of Pelagius’ teachings as something outdated and restricted to ancient church history. Yet, more than 1,500 years later, there are people and churches, like the hospital pastor, who deny the doctrine of original sin.

## Acting pelagian

However, Pelagius has a wider following than just people like this pastor – his legacy impacts us too. Pelagius’ centuries-old teachings remain inside us, as we often act like “little pelagians.” How often do we praise ourselves when we do something “good?” Do you ever characterize yourself as a “good Christian” based on the things you have done for the church? Are our “good works” motivated by our desire to honor and glorify God or our desire to impress those around us? Our totally corrupt nature allows us to believe that we are capable of doing good works apart from God, rather than attributing everything we do to God and the workings of His Spirit.

And while few of us would spout Pelagian doctrine out loud, we often act as if we believe we have an innocent heart. Or at least, we underestimate our sinful nature. We forget or conveniently ignore that we are *totally* depraved and place ourselves in sinful situations. Oh yes, we may not start off doing anything wrong, but we place ourselves in situations where we know we will be tempted and believe that we are strong enough to resist the powers of the devil and our own sinful flesh. How different is this from Pelagius who also believed that we are not totally depraved?

## Conclusion

At the heart of our Reformed faith exists the knowledge that we are born and conceived in sin (Psalm 51:5). Paul says in Romans 5:12 “Therefore just as through one man sin entered the world and death through sin and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.” We are totally depraved and even our good works are not good enough, which means that we are unable to contribute to our own salvation (Ephesians 2:9). Instead, God has chosen us and will only accept our “broken and contrite hearts” (Psalm 51).

The pastor who came to visit me never intended to highlight the total depravity of our sinful nature. He came with the intention of talking to me about the saving work of Christ according to Pelagius but left me with the assurance that we are even more totally depraved than we perceive ourselves to be. Pelagius, the heretic with his false teachings, is a strong reminder to us that we need to fully rely on God for our salvation.



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# Trailer Park Trash Truth

*There's no place like home*

by Melanie Harthoorn

I live in a trailer – my family is, as people jokingly call us, “trailer park trash.” But I would like to dispel some myths about the trailer park lifestyle held by the general population.

## Myths

Firstly, as tempting as it is to lounge on old lawn chairs clad in mustard-stained shirts in a yard strewn with garbage and old tires, we don't. In fact, we're not even allowed to. Our trailer park has many rules such as:

- no cars up on blocks for extended periods of time
- beer bottles are not to be discarded on the front lawn
- no loud and wild parties.

Secondly, our efforts to beautify our home are not a waste of time. We may not have a fancy house, but what we do have we take care of.

Lastly, we are happy here. If we are miserable it is not because we need a bigger home or a bigger yard, but because we are succumbing to our sinful covetousness of our neighbor's bigger house.

## The truth

We don't have a problem with our accommodations, but others do. After seeing our house one church member wanted to know “How can you possibly live there?” Our house isn't fancy, but I know there are some in our churches who can remember first immigrating to Canada as poor Dutch settlers and not having much more than a glorified chicken coop to call home! And it was many of this same group of poor Dutch immigrants who started setting aside money to start the Christian schools we have today. They might have dreamed of having big houses but they knew it wasn't the most important priority. That's a lesson we seem to be forgetting. As a church we are far wealthier than in the immigrant days of our grandparents. That is wonderful. What isn't so wonderful is that we seem to have become so accustomed to being wealthy we don't count big houses as a blessing, but rather have them as an expectation. The same could be said about any number of material possessions.

Granted, it may be practical for us to one day move somewhere with a fenced yard for our new daughter to play in, or to a larger home if the Lord blesses us with more children. But we must learn to be content wherever we live, whether it is a chicken coop, a trailer, or a big house. It's not about finding a home where you can be happy; it's about being happy in the home you're in.

To our fellow trailer park “trash” we say, Take heart! One day our dwelling place will be with the Lord; then the home we live in, or the car we drive, or the clothes we wear will not matter.

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth,  
where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal.  
But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,  
where moth and rust do not destroy,  
and where thieves do not break in and steal.  
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

Matthew 6:19-21



# WHAT EXACTLY IS A STEM CELL?

by Cor Hoff

We've all heard of stem cells, but it's about time we got to know them better. These cells are being promoted as the next big thing in medicine, as the means of curing dozens and even hundreds of diseases, and repairing all sorts of injuries. But as good as that sounds, there is also a very dark side to stem cells, and that concerns where we get them from. It turns out we can get them either from willing donors, or we can kill for them. In our depraved world, guess which of these two ways is getting the most support?

## The basics

But let's not get too far ahead of ourselves here. Let's start off by figuring out just what a stem cell is at its most basic. The US National Institute of Health defines a stem cell by what it can do:

"Stem cells have the remarkable potential to develop into many different cell types in the body. Serving as a sort of repair system for the body, they can theoretically divide without limit to replenish other cells as long as the person is still alive. When a stem cell divides, each new cell has the potential to either remain a stem cell or become another type of cell with a more specialized function, such as a muscle cell, a red blood cell or a brain cell."

Normally cells can only become what their "mother" cells were before them. So blood cells divide to form other blood cells, and nerve cells can only form other nerve cells. Stem cell's special ability to change into any sort of cell is called pluripotency which is why they are sometimes also called pluripotent cells.

At the time of conception we all start off as just one single stem cell, a pluripotent cell. That cell divides and we grow from being one cell to two cells to four cells to eight cells and we keep on going. These cells at that time are all pluripotent cells. Then there comes a time at about 100 cells that the pluripotent possibility of the cell becomes active. Some cells make a heart, others a

liver, yet others become muscle cells and so on until there is a complete body with all its functions ready to grow into a full grown baby.

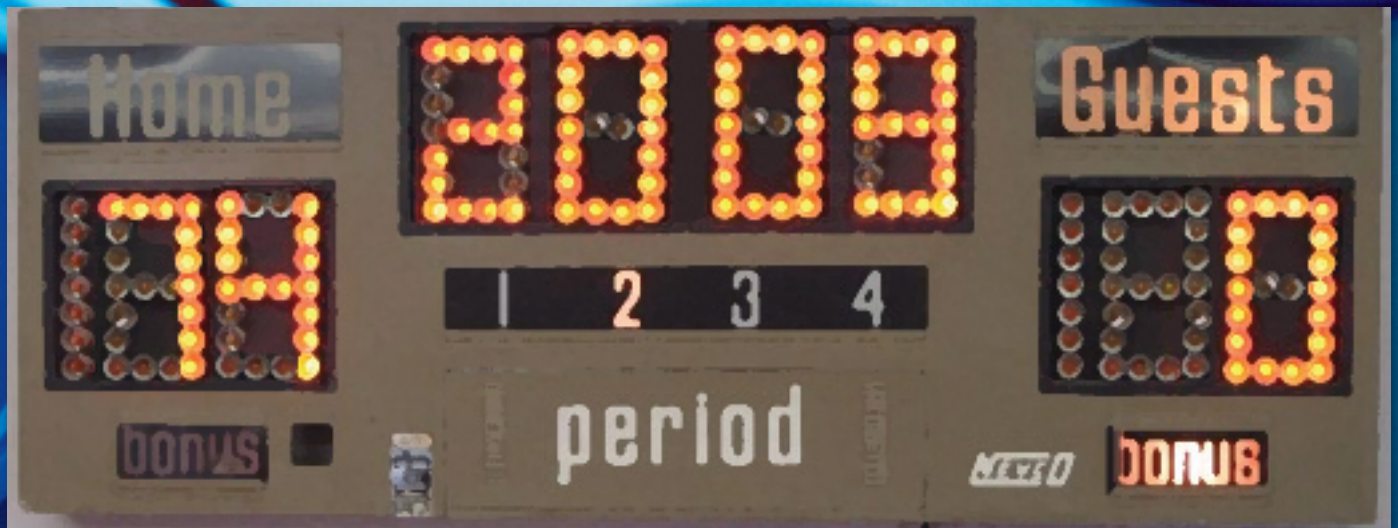
## Embryonic stem cells

Stem cells come to us in varying ways. Presently the most popular and at the same time the most unethical and ineffective source of stem cells is getting them from embryos. The National Institute for Health lists 74 diseases treatable by adult stem cells and list none successfully treated by embryonic stem cells and yet the pressure keeps mounting to throw research dollars at the unethical, and ineffective embryonic stem cells

These stem cells can only be obtained by taking them from an embryo at a very early stage of development and, consequently, killing the embryo. The embryo is killed and its pluripotent cells are taken to be used in experiments.

In these laboratory experiments, these embryonic stem cells multiply very fast "in vitro" – in a dish. But when they have been implanted in people with varying health challenges, they seem to be very prone to the development of tumors. Jean Peduzzi-Nelson writes in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel (JSoonline.com), "Embryonic stem cells, injected into mice showed a slight benefit but one fifth of the mice died of tumors caused by the embryonic stem cells."

The US National Institute for Health lists no successful medical treatments derived from embryonic stem cells – embryonic stem cells aren't ethically acceptable, and even if they were, haven't shown themselves to be medically useful. And yet President Obama, in one of his first decisions on the first day of his presidency, authorized spending federal dollars on embryonic stem cell research. Before Obama this funding had been severely restricted, on Christian principle, by President Bush. Millions of American Christians are dismayed that this murderous research is not only legal, but now being done with their money, their tax dollars.



This scoreboard is keeping track of successful medical treatments developed from Adult Stem Cells – a total of 74 – versus those from Embryonic Stem Cells – a grand total of zero.

### Cord blood

We can also obtain stem cells from the blood found in the umbilical cord of a baby after it is born. Many parents are saving these blood stem cells at birth and storing them for later use, if needed. These are the same stem cells that were responsible for the development of the baby and of course ethically there is no problem – no one is killed to get these cells. Additionally, these cells match the baby, so should he ever need a stem cell transplant he can use these cells, and not have to worry about any chance of rejection. These stem cells are effective in their use but limited in volume – there is only a small amount of blood in the umbilical cord, but recent research using these cells has shown some promise in repairing damaged tissue. About 500,000 stem cells are taken from the cord blood and in a laboratory these are multiplied to 2,000,000.

These are of course not embryonic cells and therefore ethical.

### Adult stem cells

Bone marrow is another way we can obtain stem cells without killing anyone – stem cells can be found in the bone marrow of everyone living. So far several thousand people have had their health returned via stem cells obtained from marrow. The process involves an injection with a product that encourages the bone marrow to release extra stem cells. Then these stem cells are gathered from the blood of the patient and stored. A variety of treatments can be performed using these stem cells, and because they are derived from the patient's own body, they are not rejected by his body. As I said earlier, the US National Institute for Health listed 74 diseases treatable by adult stem cells and they list none successfully treated by embryonic stem cells.

There are also many other places in the body besides bone marrow where stem cells can be found, such as in the eyes, the skin etc. But it's worth stopping for a moment to think about the potential found just in the stem cells found in bone marrow. There may be as many as 150,000,000 stem cells there, and they are replenished by cell division on a daily basis. It was thought for a long time that they were responsible only for the making of new red blood cells. Research has discovered that these stem cells are able to become the cell they ought to be for a particular part of the body, be it organs or tissue.

Stem cells have been in the news on many occasions but the media seems to focus mostly on embryonic stem cell research. However, if you go to PubMed.org you can access more than 150,000 studies on embryonic stem cells and another 30,000 plus papers on adult stem cells, and if you spend any time looking at them you'll find again and again that adult stem cells have curative abilities unhindered by the negative side effects associated with embryonic stem cells.

### Conclusion

The National Health Institute claimed that stem cells are effective for 74 treatable health challenges. That's fantastic news! And Time magazine recently stated that a tremendous explosion of stem cell health benefits is going to turn the wellness industry in a whole new direction. It certainly pays to be watchful for this wondrous opportunity for great health as a healing opportunity inherent to our created well-being.

We need also to lobby and inform our politicians to let them know of the amazing potential of adult stem cells, and why embryonic stem cell research is unacceptable.

*If you want to learn more about donating cord blood, see Mark Penninga's article "Giving birth to healing" in the January 2008 issue, or on our website, in the Pro-life 101 section at [www.ReformedPerspective.ca](http://www.ReformedPerspective.ca).*



# Adult Stem Cell Treatment Leave College Student Free of Multiple Sclerosis Symptoms

by Thaddeus M. Baklinski

Edwin McClure, a Virginia Commonwealth University graduate student, and one of the participants in clinical trials involving adult stem cells, says that he is completely cured of the multiple sclerosis symptoms that began to afflict him in high school.

"It's a blessing," the young student told Bloomberg News. "My disease has been halted."

A team of researchers at Northwestern University School of Medicine in Chicago, including Dr. Richard Burt, the team leader and the hospital's Division Chief of Immunotherapy, developed the treatment for multiple sclerosis (MS) using stem cells taken from the patient's own bone marrow.

"For the first time ever in the history of treating MS we have reversed disability," Dr. Burt said of the results of clinical trials using adult stem cells.

"All therapies to date. . . have focused on slowing the progression of disease," he said. But with the new treatment, he said, "This is the first time we have turned the tide on this disease."

McClure first showed symptoms of MS in 2000 when he was a senior in high school. "I couldn't deal with heat. I had really bad balance," he said. He also said that his vision began to be seriously distorted.

"It threw me for a loop," McClure said. "This is a disease that typically hits 40-year-old white women and I'm like, 'I'm an 18-year-old black male.' Somebody didn't get the memo."

Hearing about the Northwestern University clinical trial from Dr. Katarina Bilikova, McClure flew to Evanston, Ill., to participate.

During the course of the treatment, which researchers described as a "re-setting" of the body's immune system, doctors took out McClure's own stem cells from his bone marrow. He then was given a course of chemotherapy to destroy all existing immune cells in his body. The stem cells were then re-injected and developed into "naïve" immune cells that regenerated his immune system.

Three years after undergoing the procedure, McClure said his symptoms have disappeared.

"It opened up the fence that MS had me locked into," Edwin said in a Fox News report. He added that he and his mother Bernice also attribute the success of the treatment to their faith.

"Without having God in our lives, I don't think any one of us would have made it through," Bernice McClure said.

*This article is reprinted from the February 24, 2009 edition of LifeSiteNews.com with their permission.*



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Deadline for inclusion in the June issue is April 10.



# Soup & Buns

## The Definition of Patience

by Sharon L. Bratcher

Patience. It's a word we would never bother looking up in the dictionary because we already understand its meaning. But sometimes a well-known word can leap to life with new meaning and application when we read its formal definition. So consider what *Dictionary.com* has to say about patience.

**Patience:** *putting up with provocation, annoyance, misfortune, delay, hardship, or pain, with fortitude and calm and without complaint, loss of temper, irritation or the like. It is an ability or willingness to suppress restlessness or annoyance when confronted with delay.*

Wow. Simply put, patience means not showing annoyance or anger with people or things that aren't acting as we desire! From this definition we can deduce that we are very often. . . *not* patient!

This definition leads me to believe that the practice of "patience" or "impatience" relies almost completely on the words that come out of our mouths and the body language that we exhibit (heavy sighs, eye-rolling, stomping, slamming doors) when we do not like what is being said or done. Is patience an attitude then, or an action?

### Patience is an attitude

It definitely starts with an attitude – we have to *decide* how we are going to react, and we do that by recognizing what is right and wrong and then making our choice.

In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul tells us that, "Love is patient." That means that love puts up with provocation, annoyance, misfortune, delay, hardship, or pain, with fortitude and calm and without complaint, loss of temper, irritation or the like and it has an ability or willingness to suppress restlessness or annoyance.

In Romans 12:9-21 Paul tells us how to behave like Christians. Part of that includes verse 12, which states, "rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulations, be steadfast in prayer." That means that when we have tribulation (which means trials, troubles, problems, aggravations) we are supposed to put up with them with fortitude and calm and without complaint, loss of temper, or irritation; we are to suppress restlessness and annoyance.

### Excusing ourselves

But patience is not easy, and it has become difficult to recognize right from wrong because our culture not only excuses

*impatience*, it exalts it as a right and a virtue. It is "only understandable" to be impatient in traffic or standing in line, when confronted with confused or ignorant people, or in obtaining whatever it is that *we* need or want. Television commercials suggest that we grab each other's breakfast food, race to beat our spouse to the better car, and complain loudly whenever things displease us. Life is all about indulgence and not letting anyone or anything get in our way.

It is also very easy to excuse our behavior by blaming our *impatience* on our workload, our temperament, our upbringing, our heritage, our gender, or our age (whether young or old!).

### Recognizing the sin of impatience


So let's get the definition of patience correct first – let's *know* right from wrong, because God tells us in several places that we *are* to be patient, including with family and church members.

How do we talk to and about our church family? 1 Thessalonians 5:14 tells us that as we "warn the unruly, comfort the faint-hearted, and uphold the weak," we are to "be patient with all" of them. This is different than "tsk-tsking" as we look down our noses. Paul tells us to express *all* the fruit of the Spirit spoken of in Galatians 5:22-23: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness and self-control. This involves not demanding our own perceived "rights" or our own way. It involves loving others more than ourselves for "love overlooks a multitude of sins" as well as mistakes and small differences (1 Peter 4:8). And it involves trusting God to take care of the details when there are delays and difficulties. We must drop the hurry *and* the worry about what others might think of us.

Either we are acting patiently, or we are not. God's written and preached Word can give us strength that helps us choose patient behavior. We exhibit this fruit of the Holy Spirit best when we are walking closest to Him.

The Apostle Paul said in Romans 7:7-25 "So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me" (7:21). So true. But having a better definition of this sin will at least help us to identify our inclination towards it, and make it less excusable.

God tells us to be patient: to put up with daily trials without complaint or irritation. The best news is that He promises strength through the Holy Spirit, and forgives our confessed sins daily as well.

*"Faithful is He who calls us, who also will do it"* (1 Thess 5:24). 

# ENTICING ENIGMAS AND CEREBRAL CHALLENGES

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

## NEW PUZZLES

### Riddles for Punsters #153 – “Sensible sailor”

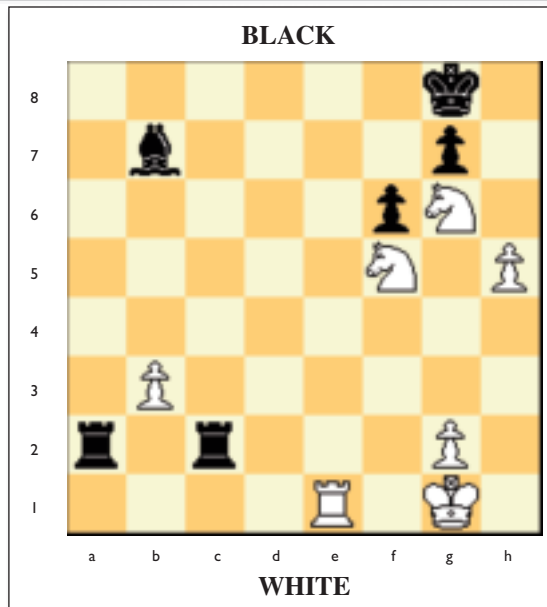
Why did the sailor not take his date to a really expensive restaurant?  
He did not want her to think he was the type to go o \_\_\_\_\_ d.

### Problem to Ponder #153 – “Do not ‘shun’ these words”

Determine the words below, **all ending with “ation”**, that relate to the Christian faith. Note that the first two words in each column indicate bad things but the rest are words for good things. The number in brackets after the clue indicates the number of letters in each “ation” word.

- |                                  |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| State of not changing (10)       | Eternal punishment (9)           |
| Destitute, empty land (10)       | Defiling of something holy (11)  |
| Eternal redemption (9)           | Learning church teachings (14)   |
| Removal of sinful nature (14)    | Removal of guilt due to sin (13) |
| Future state of blessedness (13) | Joyful feeling (7)               |
| Joyful festivity (11)            | State of being joyful (10)       |
| Picture or example (12)          | Act on behalf of someone (14)    |
| End of a journey (11)            | Gathering of believers (12)      |

### Chess Puzzle # 153

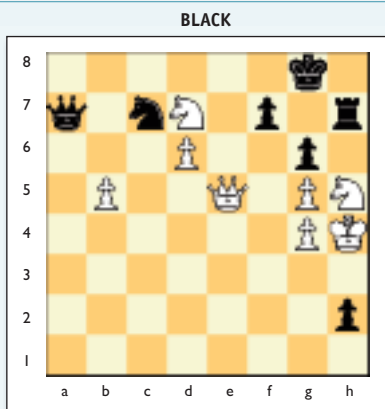


**WHITE to Mate in 2**

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

## SOLUTIONS TO THE PREVIOUS (FEBRUARY) PUZZLE PAGE

### SOLUTION TO CHESS PUZZLE # 152



#### WHITE to Mate in 4 Descriptive Notation

1. N-B6 ch K-R1  
(Note the h5 knight is pinned)
2. NxR ch P-B3  
(delaying mate by one move)
3. QxP ch KxN
4. Q-N7 mate

#### WHEREAS

1. N-B6 ch K-B1
2. Q-K7 mate

#### Algebraic Notation

1. Nd7-f6 + Kg8-h8  
(Note the h5 knight is pinned)
2. Nf6xh7 + f7-f6  
(delaying mate by one move)
3. Qe5xf6 + Kh8xh7
4. Qf6-g7 ++

#### WHEREAS

1. Nd7-f6 + Kg8-f8
2. Qe5-e7 ++

#### WHITE

#### BLACK to Mate in 3 Descriptive Notation

1. \_\_\_\_\_ P-R8=Q ch
2. K-N3 Q(/R2)-N8 ch
3. K-B4 Q-B7 mate

#### OR

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Q-B7 ch
2. K-R3 P-R8=R (or=Q) ch
3. Q-R2 QxQ mate

#### Algebraic Notation

1. \_\_\_\_\_ h2-h1=Q +
2. Kh4-g3 Qa7-g1 +
3. Kg3-f4 Qg1-f2 ++

#### OR

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Qa7-f2 +
2. Kh4-h3 h2-h1=R (or=Q) +
3. Qe5-h2 Qf2xh2 ++

### Answer to Riddles for Punsters #152 – “Travel Troubles”

Sam decided to drive downtown after the night shift at work but when he tried to park his vehicle he could not put it into reverse so he automatically assumed that his car needed a major repair. After transmission of his problem to the towing company, he clutched his wallet and got gared up to pay a big bill which was standard for such a repair.

### Answer to Problem to Ponder #152 – “Investment Ups and Downs”

There has been a lot of uncertainty lately about economies worldwide. Investors are especially concerned about the ups and downs (mostly downs!) of stock markets. Suppose Kinsley, on advise from a family member, bought 1000 shares of Microhard Corporation at a price of \$8.00 per share. After some time she saw that the shares went up in value by 30% so she bought 500 more shares at the new price per share. After a further 20% increase in value, the shares suddenly tumbled and lost 50% of their value.

Kinsley paid 1000 shares x \$8 per share = \$8000. The shares increased in value by 30% (so by  $0.30 \times \$8 = \$2.40$ ) and were worth  $\$8 + \$2.40 = \$10.40$  per share, so the 1000 shares' new worth was  $1000 \times \$10.40 = \$10400$ . She bought 500 shares at \$10.40 per share so at a cost of  $500 \times \$10.40 = \$5200$ . **Thus she paid a total of \$8000 + \$5200 = \$13200** for the 1000 + 500 = 1500 shares. The value of those 1500 shares increased by 20% so by  $0.20 \times \$10.40 = \$2.08$  increase so were worth  $\$10.40 + \$2.08 = \$12.48$  per share as a result. Then a 50% drop in value meant each share lost  $0.50 \times \$12.48 = \$6.24$  so each share became worth  $\$12.48 - \$6.24 = \$6.24$ .

a) **If Kinsley panics at this point and sells all her shares at the new low value, how much money has she gained or lost overall?**

Selling the shares means Kinsley will get  $1500 \times \$6.24 = \$9360$  but she paid \$13200 for those shares so her panic has the result that **she loses \$13200 - \$9360 = \$3840**.

b) **If she instead does not sell the stocks** and gradually see the stocks bounce back up by 50% of their low value, **how much money has she gained or lost overall?**

If she allows them to increase in value by 50% of the \$6.24 per share. The gain is  $0.50 (\$6.24) = \$3.12$  so each share becomes worth \$9.36, making the 1500 shares worth  $1500 (\$9.36) = \$14040$  which is  $\$14040 - \$13200 = \$840$  more than Kinsley paid, so she **gains \$840**.

c) What if, by some fluke, Kinsley **managed to sell all 1500 shares when their value was highest**, then used all that money to **buy shares when they were at their lowest value**, then saw them bounce back up in value by 50% (as above)? **Now how much money has Kinsley gained or lost overall?**

The maximum value was \$12.48 per share so by selling the 1500 shares at that time Kinsley would receive  $1500 (\$12.48) = \$18720$ . If she used that money to then buy shares at their lowest value of \$6.24 per share, she could buy  $\$18720 / \$6.24 = 3000$  shares. After the 50% increase in value (to \$9.36 per share) those 3000 shares are worth  $3000 (\$9.36) = \$28080$ . As a result, **Kinsley's overall gain would be \$28080 - \$13200 (originally paid) = \$14880**, a tidy sum! HOWEVER, in real life it is very rare to be able to sell at the highest and buy at the lowest. More common is panic selling which results in an overall loss. In investments, as in all matters of life, we need to act as wisely as possible then **trust in God to take care of everything else**.

# Crossword Puzzle

Series 16 No 4

Last month's solution  
Series 16 No 3

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |   |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |    | 6  | 7 | 8  | 9  | 10 |    | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 |    |    |    |    |    | 15 |   |    |    |    |    | 16 |    |    |
| 17 |    |    |    |    |    | 18 |   |    |    |    |    | 19 |    |    |
| 20 |    |    |    |    | 21 |    |   |    |    | 22 |    |    |    |    |
| 23 |    |    |    | 24 |    |    |   | 25 | 26 |    |    | 27 |    |    |
|    |    |    | 28 |    |    |    |   | 29 |    |    |    | 30 |    |    |
| 31 | 32 | 33 |    |    |    |    |   | 34 |    |    |    | 35 | 36 | 37 |
| 38 |    |    |    |    |    | 39 |   |    |    |    |    | 40 |    |    |
| 41 |    |    |    | 42 | 43 |    |   |    |    | 44 | 45 |    |    |    |
|    |    |    | 46 |    |    |    |   |    |    | 47 |    |    |    |    |
| 48 | 49 | 50 |    | 51 |    |    |   | 52 |    |    |    | 53 | 54 | 55 |
| 56 |    |    |    |    |    |    |   | 57 |    |    |    | 58 |    |    |
| 59 |    |    |    | 60 | 61 | 62 |   |    |    | 63 | 64 |    |    |    |
| 65 |    |    |    | 66 |    |    |   |    |    | 67 |    |    |    |    |
| 68 |    |    |    | 69 |    |    |   |    |    | 70 |    |    |    |    |

|    |   |   |   |    |   |   |   |    |    |   |   |    |    |    |    |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|----|----|---|---|----|----|----|----|---|---|----|----|---|---|---|
|    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4  |   | 5 | 6 | 7  |    | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 |    |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |
| 13 | C | A | R | P  |   | D | E | C  |    | P | L | E  | B  | E  |    |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |
| 14 | M | A | N | O  | R |   | O | T  | A  |   | H | O  | T  | E  | L  |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |
| 15 | A | R | I | S  | E |   | C | U  | R  |   | Y | O  | D  | E  | L  |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |
| 16 | I | T | S | E  | L | F |   | T  |    | A | L |    |    |    |    |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |
| 17 | M | S | E |    | U | L | E |    | E  | C | U |    | A  | A  | S  |   |   |    |    |   |   |   |
| 18 |   |   |   | 29 | A | D | A |    | 30 | A | S | T  | M  |    | 31 | A | L | E  |    |   |   |   |
| 19 | L | A | G |    |   |   |   | 35 | E  | M | U |    |    |    | 37 | G | R | O  | W  |   |   |   |
| 20 | O | N | E |    |   |   |   | 39 | S  | E | R | V  | A  |    | N  | T |   |    | E  | N | E |   |
| 21 | O | G | L | E  |   |   |   |    |    | U |   |    | 44 | N  | A  | R |   |    | 45 | M | E | R |
| 22 | S | E | E |    |   |   |   | 47 | S  | A | G | E  |    | 49 | R  | A | M |    |    |   |   |   |
| 23 | E | R | E |    |   |   |   | 51 | U  | L | U |    |    | 52 | D  | I | V |    | 53 | B | A | M |
| 24 |   |   |   |    |   |   |   | 56 | F  | L | A | T  |    | 58 | S  | E |   | 59 | V  | E | R | E |
| 25 | S | E | R | I  | F |   |   | 64 | Y  | A | K |    |    | 66 | R  | A | I | L  | S  |   |   |   |
| 26 | A | G | A | T  | E |   |   | 68 | A  | R | E |    |    | 69 | S  | I | N | E  | S  |   |   |   |
| 27 | C | O | P | E  | R |   |   | 71 | N  | O | N |    |    | 72 | E  | R | G | S  |    |   |   |   |

**ACROSS:**

1. More colorless
6. Actors' accessories
11. This runs in the spring
14. Lady's name, meaning peace
15. Resume
16. A light armored patrol car
17. Wanderer
18. Cave, of old
20. Big bird
21. French direction
22. Building addition
23. Abbreviation for the Saudi Riyal currency
24. Solo thing
25. Foot wiper
27. Not wet
28. \_\_\_ Lanka
29. Put off
31. Slow roasted meat and veggies
34. Modify equipment
38. Roman emperor
39. Make a wager
40. Flower holder

41. Polish dumplings
44. Tended the garden
46. Baby carriages
47. Boat mover
48. Expert
51. Environmental Protection Agency
52. Make a mistake
53. Mimic
56. Safe place
57. Grow old
58. Short for Vietnam
59. Mine findings
60. Alfred, Austrian psychiatrist who rejected Freud's theories
63. Not once
65. The father of Abner, O.T.
66. Maker of tractors
67. Intense bright light
68. Estrogen Replacement Theory (abbr.)
69. Plant disease
70. Each one

**DOWN:**

1. Certain trees
2. Smell
3. Mammal from Madagascar
4. Lady's name, or ER Nurses Assoc.
5. Bright color
6. Leak-green chalcedony
7. Lease an apartment
8. Cdn. province
9. Each one
10. What to wear on cold days
11. What things get put on, like tv, or camera
12. Boring tool
13. Written authorization to vote
21. Ms. Blyton's first name
24. Mineral source of sulfur
25. Get introduced to someone
26. Near the tail end
28. Bird dive
29. Formal attire
30. Moon machine
31. A variant DNA sequence, pronounced "Snip"
32. Golf accessory
33. To do this is human
35. Temporary trend
36. A Japanese city on bay with same name
37. Dry hay
39. Enclosed space around altar in old churches
42. Explosive device
43. Int'l airport
44. Had on a dress
45. Face feature
48. Communication device
49. More scarce
50. Not concealed or secret
52. Type of heron
53. Aromatic herb
54. Horse trained to pace
55. Nail file
57. Of or for aircraft
61. Derivative, for short
62. Something to stand on
63. Temporal Lobe Epilepsy (abbr.)
64. Kind of computer file